



# **Audit Report**

**National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health  
(NEBOSH)**

**13 February 2024**

# Contents

<b>1 Background</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Scope	1
1.2 Audit Report and Action Plan Timescales	2
1.3 Summary of Audit Issues and Recommendations	3
1.4 Risk Rating of Issues	4
<b>2 Detail of Audit Issues and Recommendations</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Issues	5
2.2 Recommendations	5
<b>3 Acceptance of Audit Findings</b>	<b>6</b>

# 1 Background

This was the sixth audit of the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation in 2009.

NEBOSH was formed in 1979 as an awarding body with charitable status, and offers qualifications designed to meet the health, safety, and environmental management needs of all places of work. NEBOSH examinations and assessments are set by its professionally qualified staff and assisted by external examiners, most of whom are Chartered Safety and Health Practitioners or Chartered Environmentalists operating within industry, the public sector or in enforcement. NEBOSH's headquarters are in Leicester.

## 1.1 Scope

SQA Accreditation carries out quality assurance activity in line with its *Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy*. This states the type and frequency of our quality assurance activities, describes our reporting procedures and indicates how the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated.

As this was a scoped, in-person audit of NEBOSH, only specific regulatory requirements were included within the scope of the audit. Our quality assurance activities are conducted on a sampling basis and, consequently, not all aspects of the awarding body's systems, procedures and performance have been considered in this report to the same depth.

SQA Accreditation audit reports are written by exception focusing only on those areas where corrective action is required or recommended. Consequently, this approach to audit reporting does not detail areas where compliance or good practice was found.

The audit was designed to ensure NEBOSH complies with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements namely:

- ◆ *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2021)*
- ◆ all *Regulatory Principle Directives*
- ◆ the awarding body's Accreditation Licence

Awarding body documentation considered for review by the Audit Team includes all documents banked on NEBOSH's SharePoint site at the time of audit and information supplied to support audit activity. Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during SQA Accreditation's quality assurance activities is treated in the strictest confidence.

## 1.2 Audit Report and Action Plan Timescales

NEBOSH audit date:	13 February 2024
Audit Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on:	06 March 2024
Audit Report to be signed by NEBOSH:	19 April 2024
Action Plan to be emailed to <a href="mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk">regulation@sqa.org.uk</a> by NEBOSH:	19 April 2024

The process will apply in relation to the timescales specified above:

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the Audit Report by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Audit Report and return by email to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified above.
- ◆ The awarding body will also be emailed a copy of the Action Plan.
- ◆ The awarding body must complete and return the Action Plan in accordance with the timescale specified above and email this in Microsoft Word format to [regulation@sqa.org.uk](mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk).
- ◆ SQA Accreditation will confirm when the Action Plan is appropriate to address the Issues and present it to Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) for approval.
- ◆ Following approval by ACG, the awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the approved Action Plan by email.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Action Plan and return by email to SQA Accreditation.

The findings of this Audit Report and the associated Action Plan will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following signed agreement.

SQA Accreditation will continually monitor progress towards completion of the proposed actions identified in the Action Plan and update the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating as appropriate.

### 1.3 Summary of Audit Issues and Recommendations

An Issue has been recorded where evidence shows that the awarding body is not compliant with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements. The awarding body must address the Issue and specify corrective and preventative measures to address this through its Action Plan.

The Action Plan is emailed to NEBOSH as a separate document to the Audit Report, and must be submitted to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified in 1.2. As a result of the audit and post-audit activities, one Issue has been recorded and three Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 16	NEBOSH must remove from its website the requirement to contact SQA Accreditation within 14 days of the date of issue of the complaint outcome (step 3).	Very low

A Recommendation has been noted where SQA Accreditation considers there is potential for enhancement. The awarding body is advised to address any Recommendations in order to reinforce ongoing continuous improvement. However, measures to correct or prevent these are not mandatory and therefore do not form part of the Action Plan.

Recommendation	Detail of Recommendation noted
1. Principle 9	Documentation should reflect current working practice; for example, PD017 Assessment Authorisation Meetings Terms of Reference v4 and Policy and PD015 Procedure Assessment lifecycle V4 should be updated.
2. Principle 7	It is recommended that NEBOSH review their procedure for reviewing webpage content to ensure accuracy of information.
3. Principle 16	It is recommended that NEBOSH add further options to their website for a learner to complain to SQA Accreditation in addition to writing, for example, telephone or email.

## **1.4 Risk Rating of Issues**

SQA Accreditation assigns a rating to each Issue recorded, depending on the impact on or risk to the awarding body's operations, its SQA accredited qualifications and/or the learner. Issues recorded during the audit will count towards NEBOSH's Quality Enhancement Rating which will, in turn, contribute towards future quality assurance activity. Further detail on how the Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated can be found on the [SQA Accreditation website](#).

## 2 Detail of Audit Issues and Recommendations

The following sections detail Issues recorded and Recommendations noted against SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements.

### 2.1 Issues

**Regulatory Principle 16. The awarding body and its providers must have open and transparent systems, policies and procedures to manage complaints.**

As part of audit preparation, SQA Accreditation Auditors reviewed the content of the Customer Feedback and Complaints webpage [Accessed 22/01/24]; the page states: 'The complainant has 14 days from the date of issue of the complaint outcome (step 3) to make an application for regulatory review of the unresolved complaint.' SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Complaints Handling Procedure (v3, August 2021) states: 'Normally, you must make your regulatory complaint within six months of:

- ◆ the event you want to complain about, or
- ◆ finding out that you have a reason to complain'.

This has been recorded as **Issue 1**.

## **2.2 Recommendations**

### **Regulatory Principle 9. The awarding body and its providers must maintain accurate documents, records and data.**

One of the SQA Accreditation Auditors observed an Assessment Authorisation Panel and an Assessment Performance Panel meetings prior to the audit. During these observations, NEBOSH demonstrated additional steps which are not currently documented. During audit discussions, NEBOSH representatives advised that these steps have improved the outputs and that they are in the process of updating documentation to reflect these improvements.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 1**.

### **Regulatory Principle 7. The awarding body must have an effective approach for communicating with its staff, stakeholders and SQA Accreditation.**

In preparation for the audit, SQA Accreditations Auditors reviewed the content of the Customer Feedback and Complaints webpage. They noted that some content referred to a new Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) arrangement for escalation; however, as stated on the website, this was introduced in December 2012. It is recommended that NEBOSH review their procedure for reviewing webpage content to ensure accuracy of information.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 2**.

### **Regulatory Principle 16. The awarding body and its providers must have open and transparent systems, policies and procedures to manage complaints.**

While reviewing NEBOSH's website, Auditors noted that the website only offers one way to complain to SQA Accreditation, which is by writing. To increase accessibility, it is recommended that NEBOSH include other alternatives, for example telephone, email, and/or a link to SQA Accreditation's website.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 3**.

## **3 Acceptance of Audit Findings**