



Audit Report

The Prince's Trust

27 September 2017

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1 Background

This was the second audit of The Prince's Trust since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation on 16 April 2014.

The Prince's Trust is a registered charity, incorporated by Royal Charter. Through a series of programmes, The Prince's Trust supports 13 to 30 year olds who are unemployed or those struggling at school and at risk of exclusion. The Prince's Trust offers SQA accredited qualifications in Personal Development and Employability Skills at Award and Certificate levels, which are delivered in schools, colleges and Prince's Trust centres throughout Scotland. The organisation's main office is in London with regional centres and offices throughout the UK.

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 full audit of The Prince's Trust, all 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 The Prince's Trust complies with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements namely:

- ◆ SQA Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles* (2014)
- ◆ all *Regulatory Principles Directives*
- ◆ the awarding body's Accreditation Licence

Awarding body documentation considered for review by the Audit Team includes all documents banked on The Prince's Trust'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

The Prince's Trust audit date: 27 September 2017

Audit Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 25 October 2017

Audit Report to be signed by The Prince's Trust: 7 December 2017

Action Plan to be e-mailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by The Prince's Trust: 7 December 2017

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

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent two signed copies of the Audit Report by post.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign both copies of the Audit Report and return one by post to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified above.
- ◆ The awarding body will also be e-mailed a copy of the Audit Report (for information only) and an electronic copy of the Action Plan.
- ◆ The awarding body must complete and return the Action Plan in accordance with the timescale specified above and e-mail this in Microsoft Word format to 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 two signed copies of the approved Action Plan by post.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign both copies of the Action Plan and return one by post 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 Issues and specify corrective and preventative measures to address them through its Action Plan.

The Action Plan is e-mailed to The Prince's Trust 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, three Issues have been recorded and one Recommendation has been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 1	The Prince's Trust does not have a robust system for recording and updating conflicts of interest. The current process relies on staff or associates disclosing information and is not led by the awarding body, leaving it exposed to risk.	Medium
2. Principle 5, 12 and 13	<p>The awarding body is required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ review the status of its documentation to determine which is awarding body policy and where this requires to be retitled ◆ review the articulation of its complaints documentation to ensure users are clear on which policy/process should be followed ◆ review the content of the <i>Centre Handbook</i> and <i>Support Packs</i> for consistency, accuracy and consider where relevant information should reside ◆ amend the wording within <i>Enquiries and Appeals</i> documentation to describe the correct stages of escalation to SQA Accreditation 	Medium
3. Principle 10	The competency profiles do not adequately describe the specific qualifications which must be held by those involved in the assessment of qualifications.	Medium

A Recommendation has been noted where SQA Accreditation considers there is potential for improvement. The awarding body is advised to address any Recommendations noted as good practice. 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 3	It is recommended that the awarding body completes a formal stage in its annual operation planning to indicate where objectives have been achieved or realised.

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 The Prince's Trust'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 1. The awarding body shall have clearly defined and effective governance arrangements.

The Prince's Trust has assigned responsibility for recording and updating conflicts of interest to its employees and associates. The awarding body's guidance on conflict of interest states that 'Individuals have a responsibility to ensure they have read and understood the policy and sign the Declaration. Individuals must disclose any subsequent changes to their personal Conflict of Interest Declaration as soon as they occur or become aware of any potential or actual conflict.'

The Lead Auditor was concerned that The Prince's Trust was largely reliant on its own employees or associates disclosing and updating any conflicts of interest and does not proactively request this information. This increases the awarding body's exposure to risk and leaves it vulnerable if employees or associates fail to disclose or deliberately withhold a known conflict of interest.

The Audit Team reviewed records for staff members and external verifiers and found that some of the information had not been reviewed annually in line with the awarding body's own guidance.

The Prince's Trust does not have a robust system for recording and updating conflicts of interest. The current process relies on staff or associates disclosing information and is not led by the awarding body, leaving it exposed to risk. This has been recorded as **Issue 1**.

Regulatory Principle 5. The awarding body shall provide clear information on its procedures, products and services and ensure that they are accurate and appropriate to SQA accredited qualifications.

and

Regulatory Principle 12. The awarding body and its providers shall have open and transparent systems to manage complaints.

and

Regulatory Principle 13. The awarding body and its providers shall have clear, fair and equitable procedures to manage appeals.

A full review of The Prince's Trust documentation was carried out prior to the audit to ensure that information was accurate and up to date. Some documents within the key *Support Packs* appeared to have been written and intended as awarding body policies but this was not reflected by their titles.

After discussion it was established that some documents were indeed policies intended for the qualifications accredited by SQA Accreditation. Most of the identified documents intended as policies resided in the *Qualifications Support Pack 00 Centre Handbook* such as *Malpractice and Maladministration, Reasonable Adjustments, Conflicts of Interest and Complaints*. There was uncertainty regarding the status of the latter document as The Prince's Trust also has an overarching *Complaints Policy* which is followed in the event of a complaint.

The awarding body must look at the articulation of its complaints documentation and carry out a review of other key documents to determine if they are in fact awarding body policies and therefore need to be retitled correctly.

Following this review The Prince's Trust must also decide whether other guidance which again could be interpreted as policy documents would be better centralised within the Centre Handbook; for example, the section on Enquiries and Appeals within the *Qualifications Support Pack 03 Making Claims and Results*. This was very detailed but the Handbook lacked any reference to these stages.

The awarding body's guidance in this area states that learners can appeal to SQA Accreditation and requires change to make it clear that they may complain to the Regulator after having followed due process.

In summary the awarding body is required to:

- ◆ review the status of its documentation to determine which is awarding body policy and where this requires to be retitled
- ◆ review the articulation of its complaints documentation to ensure users are clear on which policy/process should be followed
- ◆ review the content of the *Centre Handbook* and *Support Packs* for consistency, accuracy and consider where relevant information should reside
- ◆ amend the wording within *Enquiries and Appeals* documentation to describe the correct stages of escalation to SQA Accreditation

This has been recorded as **Issue 2**.

Regulatory Principle 10. The awarding body shall ensure that it has the necessary arrangements and resources for the effective delivery, assessment and quality assurance of SQA accredited qualifications.

During their 2015 audit, The Prince's Trust received an Issue around the lack of competency and qualification requirements for assessors, internal verifiers and external verifiers. The competency profiles are still not detailed enough to describe the actual qualification requirements which those involved in the assessment process must hold.

The competency profiles do not adequately describe the specific qualifications which must be held by those involved in the assessment of qualifications. This has been recorded as **Issue 3**.

2.2 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 3. The awarding body shall have clearly defined business planning processes which show evidence of management commitment, decision making and ongoing review.

The Prince's Trust carries out annual business planning to establish objectives for the forthcoming years. The Operational Plan April 2017-2018 contains measurable objectives but when questioned how the plan was reviewed and how progress towards objectives was monitored there was no stage beyond the initial plan for this. It is recommended that the awarding body completes a formal stage in its annual operation planning to indicate where objectives have been achieved or realised.

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

3 Acceptance of Audit Findings

For and on behalf of The Prince's Trust:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

Print name

Print name

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SCOTT MARKWICK

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Signature

Signature

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Designation

Designation

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SENIOR REGULATION MANAGER

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Date

Date

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25 OCTOBER 2017

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