



# **Provider Monitoring Report**

**Engineering Construction Industry Training Board  
(ECITB)**

**20 September 2018 to 10 October 2018**

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# 1 Background

Two providers were monitored between 20 September 2018 and 10 October 2018.

## 1.1 Scope

SQA Accreditation carries out quality assurance activity in line with its *Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy*. This involves monitoring a sample of the awarding body's approved providers or assessment sites. Provider monitoring visits will be conducted in a consistent manner within and between providers.

The aim of monitoring is to:

- ◆ ensure the awarding body's compliance with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements
- ◆ confirm that quality assurance arrangements are being conducted by the awarding body in accordance with its prescribed arrangements
- ◆ ensure that quality assurance arrangements are being conducted in a consistent manner, within and between providers
- ◆ ensure that providers are receiving the appropriate guidance, support and documentation from the awarding body in order to facilitate a high standard of qualification delivery
- ◆ inform future audit and monitoring activity for the awarding body

All Principles may be included within the scope of the provider monitoring activity.

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

SQA Accreditation provider monitoring reports are written by exception focusing only on those areas where corrective action is required or recommended.

## 1.2 Provider Monitoring Report Timescales

|   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ECITB provider monitoring dates:  | 20 September 2018 to 10 October 2018 |
| Provider Monitoring Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on:                            | 14 November 2018                     |
| Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by ECITB:   | 9 January 2019                       |
| Action Plan to be e-mailed to <a href="mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk">regulation@sqa.org.uk</a> by ECITB | 9 January 2019                       |

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

- ◆ The awarding body will be sent two signed copies of the Provider Monitoring Report by post.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign both copies of the Provider Monitoring 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 Provider Monitoring 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](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 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 Provider Monitoring 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 Provider Monitoring 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 ECITB as a separate document to the Provider Monitoring Report and must be submitted to SQA Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified in 1.2.

As a result of the provider monitoring activity, two Issues have been recorded and two Recommendations have been noted.

| Issue                    | Detail of Issue recorded   | Risk rating |
|--------------------------|--|-------------|
| 1. Principles 5, 12 & 13 | While reviewing the provider-devised <i>Competence Assurance Procedure</i> (April 2018) for Provider 1, the Accreditation Auditor noted that both the complaints and the appeals policies referenced the contact details of an awarding body, rather than SQA Accreditation, as the qualification regulator. | Low         |
| 2. Principle 14          | Provider 1 did not have formal arrangements in place to inform assessment staff of ECITB procedures and timescales for dealing with malpractice and maladministration.   | Low         |

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 4  | ECITB may wish to consider organising assessor and internal verifier workshops for its providers who are delivering SQA accredited qualifications.   |
| 2. Principle 10 | ECITB awarding body should consult with ECITB standards setting body (SSB) on the inclusion of the expert witness adviser when reviewing the appropriate ECITB standards setting body assessment strategy. |

## 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 provider monitoring will count towards ECITB'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 Good Practice, Issues and Recommendations

The following sections detail:

- ◆ good practice noted by providers
- ◆ Issues recorded and Recommendations noted against SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements

### 2.1 Good Practice

The following areas of good practice were noted by providers:

Provider 1 highlighted:

- the support given from the two external quality assurance visits per year, which ensures assessment practice is valid
- good communication of updates to providers
- improvement of administration since online system has gone live

Provider 2 highlighted that:

- qualifications provided by ECITB are relevant to industry requirements
- ECITB assessment documentation provides a clear and auditable trail upon completion

### 2.2 Issues

**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.**

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

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

While reviewing the centre-devised *Competence Assurance Procedure* (April 2018) for Provider 1, the Accreditation Auditor noted that both the complaints and the appeals policies referenced the contact details of an awarding body, rather than SQA Accreditation, as the qualification regulator.

This is erroneous, with the potential risk that a competitor awarding body is sent information about ECITB candidate/centre complaints and appeals which are not relevant to the other awarding body.

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

**Regulatory Principle 14. The awarding body and its providers shall ensure that it has safeguards to prevent and manage cases of malpractice and maladministration.**

ECITB Awards & Qualifications, *SCQF Quality Assurance Procedures Manual* (policy version 2.1, September 2017), Section 10 *Malpractice, Maladministration and Whistleblowing Policy* states that 'It is a requirement of the Regulators that your staff (including any contractors/partners), involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications, and your customers/learners, are fully aware of the contents of our policy and the guidance offered, and that your centre has formal arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.'

Provider 1 showed the Accreditation Auditor its corporate malpractice policy contained within its *Code of Practice*. However this did not contain information to make customers/learners, fully aware of the contents of ECITB *Malpractice, Maladministration and Whistleblowing Policy*.

Therefore, Provider 1 did not have formal arrangements in place to inform assessment staff of ECITB procedures and timescales for dealing with malpractice and maladministration.

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

## 2.3 Recommendations

**Regulatory Principle 4. The awarding body shall continually review the effectiveness of its business services, systems, policies and processes.**

Provider 2 discussed with the Accreditation Auditor the previous benefits from ECITB's organised assessor and internal verifier workshops.

Therefore, ECITB may wish to consider organising assessor and internal verifier workshops for its providers who are delivering SQA accredited qualifications.

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

**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.**

The *ECITB Awards & Qualifications, SCQF Quality Assurance Procedures Manual* states that 'The ECITB awarding organisation reserves the right to register and approve an approved centre's assessors, internal quality assurers and expert witness advisers (EWAs) and will use the appropriate Standards Setting Body's (SSB) Assessment Strategy to determine if the applicant is occupationally competent to assess or quality assure the relevant qualifications.

- A registered EWA can provide mandatory direct observation of any candidate in the relevant qualification for **ANY** approved centre as long as the assessor/EWA protocols are followed.

- Approved centres must inform their external quality assurer via e-mail when an EWA is to be used for observational performance evidence. All relevant details of the observation procedure must be included within the email to the external quality assurer, i.e. centre number, internal quality assurer name, assessor name, EWA name, candidate name, site name, etc.
- The EWA must be a person who meets specific criteria regarding their status within the organisation and must be someone to whom the candidate works and/or reports, i.e. supervisor, lead technician, line manager or person within the project quality chain, project manager, quality control engineer, colleague or workmate etc. The assessor must include within the candidate portfolio an organisation chart for the site showing the relationship of the EWA to the candidate.
- The EWA shall meet the criteria for assessor occupational expertise as specified by the ECITB Standards Setting Body Assessment Strategy.
- An assessor must have no more than three EWAs in total actively providing testimony for candidates allocated to that assessor at any one time.'

However, *ECITB Assessment Strategy for Craft, Technician and Technical Vocational Qualifications (Revised April 2014)* does not contain any reference to an expert witness adviser.

Therefore, ECITB awarding body should consult with ECITB standards setting body (SSB) on the inclusion of the expert witness adviser when reviewing the appropriate ECITB standards setting body assessment strategy.

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

### 3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings

For and on behalf of ECITB:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Print name**

**Print name**

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**Signature**

**Signature**

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**Designation**

**Designation**

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