Provider Monitoring Report

Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)

17 June 2022 to 1 July 2022

Contents

1 Background

Two providers were monitored remotely on 17 June 2022 and 1 July 2022.

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: 17 June 2022–1 July 2022

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 3 August 2022

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by ECITB: 14 September 2022

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by ECITB: 14 September 2022

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

♦ The awarding body will be sent a copy of the Provider Monitoring Report by email.

♦ The awarding body must sign the copy of the Provider Monitoring 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.

♦ 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 Action Plan and return by email 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 emailed 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, five Issues have been recorded and four Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principles 5 and 6	Staff at provider 2 raised a concern about the lack of information and promotion of SQA accredited ECITB qualifications outside Scotland, specifically in England.	Medium
2. Principle 9	At provider 2, the internal quality assurance sampling record had not been maintained as an accurate account of activity and had both missing data and erroneous data.	Low
3. Principle 9	The Data Protection Policy at provider 1 had not been reviewed according to the specified review date.	Low
4. Principle 14	The relevant policy at provider 2 only referenced Reasonable Adjustments, with no mention of Special Consideration.	Low
5. Principle 16	The Complaints Policy at provider 2 is a joint complaints/appeals policy and only details complaints/appeals about assessment decisions. Complaints policies must be worded to allow complaints to be made about anything that has impacted the learner experience.	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. Principles 5 and 6	ECITB should seek stakeholder opinion about previously withdrawn SQA accredited ECITB qualifications to ascertain whether there is renewed market need.
2. Principle 6	ECITB may wish to examine the functionality of the Membership Services Portal to ascertain if improvements can be made.
3. Principle 9	ECITB may wish to give some guidance to providers on the content of Data Protection policies.
4. Principle 9	ECITB may wish to remind providers that qualification titles should be accurate in all documents.

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:

♦ high standards of ECITB as an awarding body
♦ very good customer service
♦ quick certification
♦ supportive and knowledgeable External Quality Assurers

Provider 2 highlighted the:

♦ ability to use Expert Witness Advisors (EWAs) in SQA accredited ECITB qualifications
♦ ability to use assessment methods such as technical discussions rather than online tests to assess underpinning knowledge in SQA accredited ECITB qualifications
♦ good customer service from the awarding body
♦ supportive and knowledgeable External Quality Assurers

2.2 Issues

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

Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body must continually review the effectiveness of its services, systems, policies and processes.

Staff at provider 2 raised a concern about the lack of information and promotion of SQA accredited ECITB qualifications outside Scotland, specifically in England. Staff highlighted to the Accreditation Auditor that they much preferred the SQA accredited versions of ECITB qualifications because of the ability to use Expert Witness Advisors and use assessment methods for underpinning knowledge that do not involve online tests.

However, staff felt strongly that the awarding body did not actively promote these qualifications to providers outside Scotland, instead promoting Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) versions which do not meet provider or candidate needs in the same way.

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

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

Provider 2 supplied an extensive internal quality assurance sampling record to the Accreditation Auditor. However, on scrutiny, the interim and summative sampling columns had not been completed for any qualifications and, in another column, there were incorrect dates recorded for sampling which became apparent when cross referenced with the associated reports.

From the reports presented, the Accreditation Auditor could provide evidence that interim and summative sampling had indeed taken place, and when it had taken place. There was also evidence of a separate sampling record in operation and the provider intends to combine all records in a centralised system in due course. However, the internal quality assurance sampling record had not been maintained as an accurate account of activity.

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

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

The Data Protection Policy at provider 1 had not been reviewed according to the specified review date. Staff at the provider were aware of this discrepancy and had passed it to the relevant department for attention, but were still awaiting action at the time of the provider monitoring.

This has been recorded as **Issue 3**.

Regulatory Principle 14. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that its qualifications and their delivery and assessment are fair, inclusive and accessible to learners.

Page 5 of the *ECITB Awarding Organisation Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy and Procedure RV2-1* states: 'Approved Centres are required to have their own Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration procedure'.

However, the relevant policy at provider 2 only referenced Reasonable Adjustments, with no mention of Special Consideration. ECITB must ensure that provider's policies include Special Consideration.

This has been recorded as **Issue 4**.

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

The Complaints Policy at provider 2 is a joint complaints/appeals policy and only concerns complaints/appeals about assessment decisions. Hence there is no route for learner complaint about anything other than assessment decisions. Complaints policies must be worded to allow complaints to be made about anything which has impacted the learner experience.

This has been recorded as **Issue 5**.

2.3 Recommendations

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

Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body must continually review the effectiveness of its services, systems, policies and processes.

Staff at provider 2 felt that a raft of qualifications which were withdrawn in 2016, particularly the Diploma in Installing Engineering Construction Plant and Systems — Mechanical Fitting at SCQF level 6, should be reinstated as there is now an employer need due to industry changes.

When the provider contacted ECITB regarding this, ECITB explained that there was an RQF equivalent, but the provider considers the SQA accredited ECITB versions to be more suitable, as discussed in Issue 1. Staff also commented that other training providers and employers are not aware of these previous qualifications, and hence did not know that there was ever an alternative. ECITB should seek stakeholder opinion about previously withdrawn SQA accredited ECITB qualifications to ascertain whether there is renewed market need.

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

Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body must continually review the effectiveness of its services, systems, policies and processes.

Staff in provider 2 commented that the ECITB Membership Service Portal used for registration and certification is difficult to navigate, as it has too much information on screen and has a limited search facility.

ECITB may wish to examine the functionality of the Membership Services Portal to ascertain if improvements can be made.

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

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

Provider 1 was operating with both a Data Protection Policy (which was out of date as referenced in Issue 3) and a separate General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) policy which contained mostly duplicate information. The Data Protection Policy at provider 2 did not mention UK GDPR or the Data Protection Act (2018).

ECITB may wish to give some guidance to providers on the content of data protection policies.

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

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

The qualification titling in one portfolio sampled in provider 1 referenced another awarding body instead of ECITB. The qualification titling in one of the verification reports sampled at provider 2 referenced National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) instead of Diploma qualifications.

ECITB may wish to remind providers that qualification titles should be accurate in all documents.

This has been noted as **Recommendation 4**.

3   Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings