



# **Provider Monitoring Report**

**Future (Awards and Qualifications) Limited  
(FutureQuals)**

**21 November 2018**

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# 1 Background

One provider was monitored on 21 November 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

FutureQuals provider monitoring date: 21 November 2018

Provider Monitoring Report approved by  
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 19 December 2018

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by FutureQuals: 25 March 2019

Action Plan to be e-mailed  
to [regulation@sqa.org.uk](mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk) by FutureQuals: 25 March 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 FutureQuals 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 6, 7 and 14	<p>Provider staff indicated to the Accreditation Auditor that FutureQuals had not imposed any sanctions after a malpractice investigation. A Level 1 sanction had in fact been imposed but the wording of the <i>FutureQuals Sanctions policy June 2017</i> is not clear in this regard. Additionally, the terminology of 'recommendations' used in the malpractice/maladministration review form (Form M3) from the awarding body to the provider was not accurate, as these were in fact actions which had to be completed.</p> <p>Secondly, despite its best efforts, the provider could only provide the Accreditation Auditor with some of the malpractice investigation records. The <i>FutureQuals Malpractice and Maladministration policy September 2017</i> is not clear on how long records should be retained in this regard.</p>	Medium
2. Principle 10	The correct unit specifications were not used in the assessment of one cohort of candidates for First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6, R539 04.	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.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Detail of Recommendation noted</b>
1. Principles 5 and 6	Some awarding body documentation needs to be reviewed for clarity and accuracy.
2. Principle 15	FutureQuals may wish to consider whether dealing directly with learners for replacement certificates would result in a more streamlined process.

## 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 FutureQuals' 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 the provider:

- ◆ helpful advice and feedback from the External Quality Assurer that was provided in a timely manner
- ◆ detailed layout and content of the quality assurance yearly planner used by the awarding body

### 2.2 Issues

**Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body and its providers shall maintain accurate documents, records and data.**

**Regulatory Principle 7. The awarding body shall have effective arrangements for communicating with its staff, stakeholders and SQA Accreditation.**

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

The provider monitored had a recent incidence of malpractice which the provider reported to the awarding body. During the course of the FutureQuals audit in November 2018, it was discovered that this malpractice had not been reported to SQA Accreditation in accordance with Regulatory Principle 14. This matter was discussed at the audit and raised as an Issue within that audit report.

The outcome of the malpractice investigation was that both candidate and assessor malpractice had occurred in the form of forged signatures on the candidate's portfolio.

In terms of awarding body actions following the confirmation of malpractice, the *FutureQuals Sanctions policy June 2017* details sanctions and how these would be applied. However, provider staff indicated to the Accreditation Auditor that FutureQuals had not imposed any sanctions after the malpractice investigation.

On page 4 of the policy, sanction levels are described in terms of Level 2 – Level 5, then on page 9, the policy details the entry into an action plan. In discussion with the awarding body, the Accreditation Auditor was able to establish that the action plan is in fact a Level 1 sanction and this had been applied in full to the provider in this instance. However the policy is not at all clear in this regard hence why the provider may have considered that a sanction had not been applied.

Additionally, having now reviewed the malpractice/maladministration review form (Form M3) completed by the awarding body and sent to the provider, the Accreditation Auditor considers the use of the word, 'recommendations' in the review form to be misleading as these recommendations were in fact actions which were followed up by the awarding body and completed by the provider. The use of 'recommendations' as terminology may also have contributed to the provider considering that sanctions had not been imposed.

Secondly, despite its best efforts, the provider could only provide the Accreditation Auditor with some of the malpractice investigation records. With regard to the retention and storage of evidence and records, page 29 of the *FutureQuals Malpractice and Maladministration policy September 2017*, states that, 'all relevant documents and evidence should be retained in line with the FutureQuals policy and procedures.' However, this statement is not clear on how long these records should be retained.

This has been recorded as **Issue 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 provider monitored had delivered one First Aid at Work course in August 2018 to a cohort of four candidates, following the reaccreditation of the first aid qualifications on 1 October 2017. However, upon viewing the candidates' evidence logbooks, the Accreditation Auditor noted that the candidates had not been assessed against the current units; rather, the previous unit specifications had been used. The Accreditation Auditor highlighted this to provider staff who considered it an oversight, as the awarding body was proactive in communicating changes to qualifications. An external quality assurance visit had not yet taken place at the provider, since the course was delivered in August 2018. Hence, the matter would not have been identified by the awarding body.

It should be acknowledged that the changes to the reaccredited first aid qualifications are minimal. In essence, learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been reworded to make them clearer and more succinct. In addition, those delivering the qualifications adhere to the Resuscitation Council UK Guidelines and as such the practice would be in accordance with these guidelines. The provider is also a leading sector professional and therefore would be delivering and assessing to current best practice.

Nonetheless, the correct unit specifications were not used in the assessment of one cohort of candidates for First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6, R539 04.

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

## 2.3 Recommendations

**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 6. The awarding body and its providers shall maintain accurate documents, records and data.**

Upon reviewing awarding body documentation as part of provider monitoring, the Accreditation Auditor noted the following items which require to be reviewed for clarity and accuracy.

- ◆ Page 11 of the *FutureQuals First Aid at Work qualification specification* is missing additional information for the Emergency First Aid in the Workplace unit.
- ◆ The front cover of the *FutureQuals Emergency First Aid at Work Qualification Logbook* refers to 'SCQS' instead of SCQF and all other qualifications have an evidence logbook rather than a qualification logbook.
- ◆ Registration timescales for qualifications of 10 guided learning hours or above are within 12 weeks of the start date, as stated on page 33 of *the FutureQuals Centre Operations Manual*. However, both first aid qualifications demand 10 hours or above but require registration prior to the start date of the course, as stated in the *FutureQuals Emergency First Aid at Work qualification specification* (page 15) and the *FutureQuals First Aid at Work qualification specification* (page 18).
- ◆ According to page 35 of the *FutureQuals Centre Operations Manual*, certificates are despatched within 20 working days; however, according to *the FutureQuals Emergency First Aid at Work qualification specification* (page 16) and the *FutureQuals First Aid at Work qualification specification* (page 19), certificates are despatched within 5 working days.
- ◆ The qualification title in a recent external quality assurance report made additional reference to a level not relevant to the SQA accredited qualification.

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

**Regulatory Principle 15. The awarding body and its providers shall have effective, reliable and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners.**

The process used by FutureQuals for replacement certificates is detailed on page 35 of the *FutureQuals Centre Operations Manual*. At the provider monitored, staff had requested the replacement of a lost certificate for one candidate and a name change on another certificate, in accordance with the stated process. Staff found this process to be quite protracted, as they had to request various pieces of documentation from the candidates over time and pass these to the awarding body.

FutureQuals may wish to consider whether dealing with learners directly for replacement certificates would result in a more streamlined process.

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

### 3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings

For and on behalf of FutureQuals:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Print name**

**Print name**

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**Signature**

**Signature**

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