



# **Provider Monitoring Report**

**Highfield Qualifications**

**17 October 2018 to 30 October 2018**

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# 1 Background

Two providers were monitored between 17 October 2018 and 30 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. Consequently, this approach to provider monitoring reporting will not detail areas where compliance or good practice was identified by SQA Accreditation.

## 1.2 Provider Monitoring Report Timescales

Highfield Qualifications provider monitoring dates:	17 October 2018 to 30 October 2018
Provider Monitoring Report approved by Accreditation Co-ordination Group on:	16 January 2019
Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by Highfield Qualifications:	27 February 2019
Action Plan to be e-mailed to <a href="mailto:regulation@sqa.org.uk">regulation@sqa.org.uk</a> by Highfield Qualifications:	27 February 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 Highfield Qualifications 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 has been recorded and no Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 6	The provider was unable to evidence that a potential conflict of interest had been reported to the awarding body and was logged as such.	Medium
2. Principle 5	The provider began to offer Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) versions of qualifications ahead of Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) qualifications due to the differences between the two not being communicated by the awarding body.	Medium

## 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 Highfield Qualifications' 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 2 highlighted that the online platform is good, and that the awarding body has straightforward processes and is easy to deal with.

### 2.2 Issues

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

At provider 2 the lead assessor described a scenario in which they delivered a qualification to an individual in order to be able to employ them as an assessor. The delivery of the course and assessment was for the sole purpose of ensuring that the individual would meet Highfield Qualifications' requirements for an assessor. There were no other candidates on this course. This was not logged as a possible conflict of interest.

The *Highfield Conflict of Interest Policy 30 March 2017 Version 5* defines a conflict of interest as where 'a person who is connected to the development, delivery or award of qualifications at Highfield has interests in any other activity which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to his or her interests in that development, delivery or award and impact on our compliance with the requirements of our regulator's requirements'.

*Highfield Centre Agreement 3 January 2017 Version 5* states that the provider will 'prevent and manage any potential/actual conflicts of interest in the delivery of qualifications by the centre'.

*Highfield Centre Agreement 3 January 2017 Version 5* also states that 'the centre is responsible for ensuring any centre staff undertaking Highfield qualifications via its centre manage this conflict of interest proactively and demonstrate this to Highfield when required;'

While the provider said that Highfield were aware of the situation at the time, the provider was unable to produce evidence of this.

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.**

During discussion with provider 2, it became apparent that they thought that RQF versions of First Aid qualifications were more up to date and were more widely recognised throughout the UK than the SCQF versions. As a result, they had been registering Scottish candidates for the RQF versions rather than the SCQF versions.

This was a result of the awarding body's online system promoting the RQF versions to the provider providers without any explanation of the difference between the available versions..

Highfield must ensure that the information available to providers on their online system is clear accurate and appropriate to SQA accredited qualifications.

This has been noted as **Issue 2**

## **2.3 Recommendations**

There were no Recommendations.

### 3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings

For and on behalf of Highfield  
Qualifications:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Print name**

**Print name**

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**Signature**

**Signature**

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**Designation**

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