



Provider Monitoring Report

ITC First

28 January 2021 to 5 February 2021

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1 Background

Two providers were remotely monitored between 28 January and 5 February 2021.

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

ITC First provider monitoring dates: 28 January and 5 February 2021

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 3 March 2021

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by ITC First: 17 April 2021

Action Plan to be emailed
to regulation@sqa.org.uk by ITC First 17 April 2021

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 e-mailed to ITC First 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, three Issues have been recorded and two Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principles 6 and 11	<p>Provider-devised <i>Equal Opportunities Policy</i> document, last reviewed 1 June 2020 and given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 1, referred to all nine protected characteristics, but did not reference the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The provider-devised <i>Equality and Diversity Policy</i> document, dated 17 July 2020 and given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 2 does not reference all nine protected characteristics — it is missing pregnancy and maternity.</p>	Low
2. Principles 6 and 11	<p>Provider 1 does not have a policy for reasonable adjustments, nor is it completing <i>ITC First C4: Access to Training and Assessment Form Special Needs in Advance of the Course [1.1]</i> to apply for reasonable adjustments to be made by ITC First awarding body.</p>	High
3. Principles 6 and 13	<p>Neither the <i>P5 ITC First Appeals Policy and Procedures [2.3]</i>, February 2020 awarding body document, reviewed by the Accreditation Auditor prior to undertaking remote provider monitoring, nor the provider-devised <i>Appeals Policy and Procedure</i>, 17 July 2020, given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 2, makes it clear that SQA Accreditation cannot overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements.</p> <p>In addition, the contact details given to candidates in the provider-devised <i>Appeals Policy</i> by provider</p>	Medium

	1 directs candidates to make appeals to a competitor awarding body and not SQA Accreditation, as the qualifications regulator.	
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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 4 & 5	ITC First may wish to consider reviewing questions four and six in the first multiple choice question paper for Emergency First Aid at Work and First Aid at Work qualifications, to ensure they are clear and concise.
2. Principle 10	ITC First may wish to remind its external quality assurers to check that internal verification/moderation of tutors is taking place, when this can be undertaken considering the current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

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 ITC First'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:

- ◆ awarding body systems are efficient and user friendly
- ◆ confident information supplied by ITC First is up to date

Provider 2 highlighted:

- ◆ both website and ITC First web office are user friendly
- ◆ easy to upload information onto ITC First web office
- ◆ generally, an overall good awarding body

2.2 Issues

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

Regulatory Principle 11. The awarding body shall ensure that its qualifications and their assessment are inclusive and accessible to learners.

Provider-devised *Equal Opportunities Policy* document, last reviewed 1 June 2020 and given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 1, referred to all nine protected characteristics, but did not reference the Equality Act 2010.

The provider-devised *Equality and Diversity Policy* document dated 17 July 2020 and given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 2 does not reference all nine protected characteristics — it is missing pregnancy and maternity.

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

Both ITC First *Qualification Specifications Guidance for Centres: ITC Certificate in Emergency First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6* and *ITC Certificate in First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6*, state under heading 5.1 Selection of Learners that 'Each centre should have and implement a reasonable adjustment and special consideration policy. These systems and the resulting data must be made available for quality assurance purposes.'

The Accreditation Auditor was informed by Provider 1 that they did not have a policy for reasonable adjustments. It did state in its booking letter to employers that 'if your delegate has any condition which may pose a problem or may prevent you from taking a full or active part on this course, we may be able to make a reasonable adjustment with prior notification'. Any requests received by the employer are then forward to Provider 1 by email.

Provider 1 was unaware at the time of the remote provider monitoring that they needed to complete *ITC First C4: Access to Training & Assessment Form Special Needs in Advance of the Course [1.1]*, which states 'if a candidate notifies you on arrival at a course that they have a relevant condition, that may require reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to have a fair opportunity at the assessment. This may be due to a range of factors, including temporary or permanent illness or injury, sensory impairment, reading or writing difficulties, or other extenuating circumstances. A decision has to be made as to what adjustments can be made, and these decisions and any actual adjustments then recorded on form C4.'

Provider 1 does not have a policy for reasonable adjustments, neither is it completing *ITC First C4: Access to Training & Assessment Form Special Needs in Advance of the Course [1.1]* to apply for reasonable adjustments to be made by ITC First awarding body.

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

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

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

Neither the *P5 ITC First Appeals Policy & Procedures [2.3]*, February 2020 awarding body document, reviewed by the Accreditation Auditor prior to undertaking remote provider monitoring, nor the provider-devised *Appeals Policy and Procedure*, 17 July 2020, given to the Accreditation Auditor by Provider 2, makes it clear that SQA Accreditation cannot overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements.

In addition, the contact details given to candidates in the provider-devised *Appeals Policy* by Provider 1 direct candidates to make appeals to a competitor awarding body and not SQA Accreditation, as the qualifications regulator.

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

2.3 Recommendations

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

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.

Provider 2 suggested that ITC First should review questions four and six in the first multiple choice question paper for Emergency First Aid at Work and First Aid at Work qualifications, as the provider felt these questions to be ambiguous.

ITC First may wish to consider reviewing questions four and six in the first multiple choice question paper for Emergency First Aid at Work and First Aid at Work qualifications, to ensure they are clear and concise.

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 *VI ITC First Assessor and Quality Assurer File [3.1]*, states on page 11 that 'The person in charge of internal quality assurance should be in possession of all relevant documents including the Record of Internal (Verification/Moderation) Quality Assurance of Assessment decisions for each tutor (eg PR6).'

At the time of the remote provider monitoring for Provider 2, the internal quality assurer informed the Accreditation Auditor that an annual internal verification for one of their tutors delivering the Emergency First Aid at Work course was originally scheduled to be undertaken in April 2020. This then had to be rescheduled to October 2020, and it was due to be completed by 6 January 2021. However, due to current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions it has not been possible to complete it.

ITC First may wish to remind its external quality assurers to check that internal verification/moderation of tutors is taking place, when this can be undertaken considering current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

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

3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings

For and on behalf of ITC First:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation: