



Provider Monitoring Report

Royal Academy of Dance (RAD)

21 November 2024

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1 Background

RAD examinations are offered in Approved Examination Centres (AEC), which are studios hired or provided by a teacher for examination; or RAD Approved Venues (RAV), which are studios provided by RAD.

There is also the option to use filmed examinations, which are recorded by the teacher and viewed remotely by the examiner.

One AEC was visited on 21 November 2024.

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

RAD provider monitoring date: 21 November 2024

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 11 December 2024

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by RAD: 3 February 2025

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 findings of this Provider Monitoring Report will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following signed agreement.

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.

As a result of the provider monitoring activity, no Issues have been recorded and three Recommendations have been noted.

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 any Action Plan.

Recommendation	Detail of Recommendation noted
1. Principles 4 and 12	RAD may wish to advise AECs about conducting a risk assessment when there is a change in normal circumstances, so that there is a documented record of the situation, any perceived risks and related decision making.
2. Principle 6	RAD may wish to include a description of techniques in examination reports.
3. Principle 14	RAD may wish to review the wording of the <i>Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy and procedure in relation to examinations, March 2023</i> , to clarify under which circumstances an applicant at an AEC would be able to submit a special consideration request related to a change in the environment beyond their control.

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 RAD'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

Both the teacher and the examiner spoke extremely highly of RAD as an organisation.

The following areas of good practice were noted.

The teacher commented on the:

- ◆ RADius system, which is user-friendly and intuitive, especially with candidate details
- ◆ continued option to use filmed examinations when necessary
- ◆ timetabling of examinations where dates requested are well accommodated
- ◆ extremely helpful and supportive nature of RAD staff, especially regional contacts
- ◆ listening and receptive nature of the organisation generally
- ◆ quick notification of examination results

The teacher further commented that she considered RAD to be the industry leader, widely recognised as the best dance organisation in the world and she was proud to be a RAD approved teacher.

The teacher also commented that she valued the fact that many of the RAD qualifications were recognised through SQA Accreditation.

The examiner commented on the:

- ◆ intensive nature of the examiner training
- ◆ quality of the standardisation activities undertaken by examiners
- ◆ efficiency of RAD as an organisation
- ◆ supportive and accommodating manner of all RAD staff
- ◆ quick resolution of queries

2.2 Issues

No Issues have been recorded.

2.3 Recommendations

Regulatory Principle 4. The awarding body must demonstrate an effective approach to the identification and management of risk.

Regulatory Principle 12. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that they have the necessary arrangements and resources required to manage and administer qualification delivery and assessment.

Page 28 of the *RAD exams – specifications, rules and regulations, November 2023* states that, ‘applicants must ensure that they have appropriate risk assessment documentation in place.’

Staff at the AEC conduct a full risk assessment annually which the Accreditation Auditor was able to review.

On the day of examinations at the AEC, the weather was very cold with minus temperatures outside and the boiler in the venue had been deemed unsafe to use in the days immediately before the examinations. The teacher decided to continue with the planned examinations, as additional heating had been obtained and the teacher judged that the learners were able to warm up sufficiently before their examination set. The examinations seemed to proceed without issue.

However, given the change to normal circumstances, it may be advisable to have an ad hoc risk assessment conducted when there are extraordinary circumstances, so that there is a documented record of the situation, any perceived risks and related decision making.

RAD may wish to advise AECs about conducting a risk assessment when there is a change in normal circumstances.

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.

The examiner explained that learners’ parents receive examination reports containing information about techniques but thought that it would be beneficial to have a description of the techniques involved. The examiner commented that this information is available on the RAD website but that having it on the report may be helpful to parents.

RAD may wish to include a description of techniques in examination reports.

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

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.

Section 2.5 of the *RAD Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy and procedure in relation to examinations, March 2023*, states that, 'special considerations will not normally be given in the following circumstances ... in relation to facilities, environment and/or pianist provided at an AEC as these are not the responsibility of RAD.'

On the day of examinations at the AEC, the weather was very cold as detailed in Recommendation 1. Although the teacher had obtained additional heating, the environment was still very cold, which could have potentially had some impact on performance in examinations.

The wording of the policy above suggests that the teacher may not be able to submit an application for special considerations related to the environmental temperature, as the examinations were held in an AEC; the inclusion of the words, 'not normally' may allow exception, suggesting that a special consideration may be considered but this is not specified.

RAD may wish to review the wording of the *Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration policy and procedure in relation to examinations, March 2023*, to clarify under which circumstances an applicant at an AEC would be able to submit a special consideration request related to a change in the environment beyond their control.

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

3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings