



Provider Monitoring Report

Smart Awards Ltd

26 June 2024

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1 Background

One provider was remotely monitored on 26 June 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

Smart Awards provider monitoring date: 26 June 2024

Provider Monitoring Report approved by
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 10 July 2024

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by Smart Awards: 22 August 2024

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 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

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 the Action Plan.

Recommendation	Detail of Recommendation noted
1. Principles 9 and 12	When the <i>Smart Awards Telecoms Assessment Strategy</i> is next revised, it may be useful for Smart Awards to clarify what constitutes <i>valid</i> assessor and internal quality assurer qualifications, perhaps giving some examples of these qualifications, while not making any list exhaustive.
2. Principle 11	Smart Awards may wish to give consideration to the accreditation of other qualifications within its portfolio, especially the refresher qualifications for SA001 Overhead Safety R638 04 and SA002 Underground Safety R639 04.
3. Principle 12	Smart Awards may wish to review the content of their PowerPoint presentations relative to the theory assessments, ensuring the delivery material covers everything which is assessed.

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 the awarding body'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 customer service from the awarding body in terms of quick resolution of queries
- ◆ the knowledge of the external quality assurer and their firm, fair, friendly manner

2.2 Issues

No Issues have been recorded.

2.3 Recommendations

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

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.

In relation to the requirements of assessors and verifiers, page 3 of the *Smart Awards Telecoms Assessment Strategy, March 2023*, states that assessors 'must hold, or be working towards, valid assessor qualifications'. For internal quality assurers, it is stated that they must, 'hold a valid internal quality assurer qualification.'

When this document is next revised, it may be useful for Smart Awards to clarify what constitutes *valid* assessor and internal quality assurer qualifications, perhaps giving some examples of these qualifications, while not making any list exhaustive.

The Accreditation Auditor acknowledges that staff at provider 1 had contacted Smart Awards to ascertain which assessor qualifications were needed, prior to assessors undertaking qualifications, and had been given clear information in this regard. It is recommended that this information is documented for clarity.

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

Regulatory Principle 11. The awarding body must ensure that its qualifications portfolio is effectively managed, maintained and reviewed.

The awarding body has two SQA accredited qualifications: SA001 Overhead Safety R638 04 and SA002 Underground Safety R639 04. Learners must refresh these qualifications every three years as a mandatory industry requirement. The refresher qualifications have the same content as the original ones. However, the refresher qualifications are not accredited, meaning that learners receive a regulated qualification initially but a non-regulated qualification for subsequent courses.

Staff at provider 1 commented that they could not understand why the refresher qualifications were not SQA accredited, as this would make sense following on from the initial qualification. It would also ensure the badge of quality, associated with SQA accredited qualifications, was retained. Staff also commented that they had a significant uptake of the qualification, SA006 Safe Working In Civils, offered by Smart Awards but that this was not regulated either.

Accordingly, Smart Awards may wish to give consideration to the accreditation of other qualifications within its portfolio, especially the refresher qualifications for SA001 Overhead Safety R638 04 and SA002 Underground Safety R639 04.

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

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.

Staff at provider 1 felt that the PowerPoint presentations supplied by Smart Awards did not always cover all the questions which were asked in the online theory assessment of the qualifications. On occasion, some questions were not covered in the delivery material. The provider stated that they could not always expand on the presentations to ensure full coverage of the content of the assessments, as this content is randomly generated by the awarding body from a large question bank.

Smart Awards may wish to review the content of their PowerPoint presentations relative to the theory assessments, ensuring the delivery material covers everything which is assessed.

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

3 Acceptance of Provider Monitoring Findings