



# **Centre Monitoring Report**

**Engineering Construction Industry Training Board  
(ECITB)**

**20 December 2013 to 24 February 2014**

## Note

Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during SQA Accreditation's quality assurance activities is treated in the strictest confidence. However, please note the following:

- ◆ The findings of this report and the associated Action Plan will be presented to SQA's Accreditation Committee.
- ◆ The report and Action Plan will be published on SQA Accreditation's website following receipt of the signed acceptance of audit findings.
- ◆ The contents will contribute towards the Quality Enhancement Rating which will, in turn, contribute towards the quality assurance activity and timescales.

Please note that SQA Accreditation's quality assurance activities are conducted on a sampling basis. Consequently, not all aspects of an awarding body's performance in quality assurance, contract compliance, implementation, awarding of certificates and fee arrangements (not an exhaustive list) may have been considered in this report to the same depth.

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Scope and approach of centre monitoring

SQA Accreditation conducts quality assurance activities of all awarding bodies offering SQA accredited qualifications or Units. This involves monitoring a sample of the awarding body's approved centres/providers or assessment sites. All centre monitoring will be conducted in a consistent manner within and between centres. The aim of monitoring is to:

- ◆ Ensure compliance under **SQA Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles (2011)*, *Regulatory Principles Directives*, the requirements of the clauses within and any conditions attached to the approved awarding body agreement and the Criteria for Accredited Qualifications.**
- ◆ 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 centres.
- ◆ Inform future audit and monitoring activity for the awarding body.

All Principles were included within the scope of the monitoring activity.

A Requirement has been raised where SQA Accreditation found evidence that the awarding body has not met SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements.

The following timescales apply:

- ◆ SQA Accreditation will issue this report within 30 working days of the final centre monitoring date.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign and return the report and associated Action Plan within 30 working days of the centre monitoring report being issued.
- ◆ Within a further 20 working days of receiving the proposed action plan, SQA Accreditation will confirm whether the Action Plan is appropriate to address the Requirements. This will be subject to the actions proving appropriate to the Requirements raised.
- ◆ SQA Accreditation will monitor progress towards completion of the actions identified in the Action Plan.

A Recommendation may be recorded in instances where SQA Accreditation considers there to be scope for improvement. Where these are agreed during centre monitoring, they are recorded on the report for future reference. As Recommendations are recorded for awarding body consideration only, it is not necessary to agree either actions or timescales to resolve these in the awarding body Action Plan.

## 1.2 Centre monitoring report timeline

SQA Accreditation centre monitoring report date 26 March 2014

Date centre monitoring report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by ECITB 12 May 2014

## 1.3 Centre monitoring dates

Two centres were monitored between 20 December 2013 and 24 February 2014.

## 1.4 Overview

As a result of the centre monitoring activities, one Requirement has been raised and four Recommendations have been recorded.

The one Requirement forms the basis of the ECITB Action Plan. This must be completed and submitted to SQA Accreditation for agreement within 30 working days of the centre monitoring report being issued. The Action Plan must be submitted by 12 May 2014.

Outcome(s)	Area(s) of concern	Risk rating
Requirement 1	Principle 18 Regulatory Principles Directive 5	Medium
Recommendation 1	Principles 4 and 14	n/a
Recommendation 2	Principle 5	n/a
Recommendation 3	Principle 6	n/a
Recommendation 4	Principle 6	n/a

## 2 Centre monitoring findings

The following sections detail Requirements raised and Recommendations recorded against SQA Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles (2011)*, Regulatory Principles Directives, the requirements of the clauses within and any conditions attached to the Approved Awarding Body agreement and the Criteria for Accredited Qualifications.

### 2.1 Areas of good practice

The following areas of good practice were noted by centres:

The Co-ordinator at Centre 1 highlighted that:

- ◆ ECITB are normally very quick to respond to any queries.

The Co-ordinator at Centre 2 highlighted that:

- ◆ Information flows highlighting impending changes (forced or otherwise, ie. Through qualification, legislation, etc)
- ◆ Standardisation meetings held where all Approved Centres are expected to attend
- ◆ Close monitoring of all Approved Centres with no regard to personal affiliations or size of the centre delivering the qualification (based on merit)
- ◆ Regular regional forums held where employers can come together and the inclusion of training providers within such forums
- ◆ Publicity at events such as World Skills, awards ceremonies highlighting the importance of the industry
- ◆ Inclusion in discussion of National Occupational Standards (NOS)
- ◆ Recognition for achievements as both an employer and approved centre

### 2.2 Requirements

**Principle 18: The awarding body and their centres must deal with complaints on a fair and equitable basis, in line with their published procedures and timescales, and without unreasonable delay. The awarding body, their centres and learners must be made aware of how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation. Where a complaint is upheld, the awarding body and/or centre must take appropriate, corrective and/or preventative action.**

The centre-devised *Quality Assurance Procedures Manual for the delivery of ECITB Scottish Vocational Qualifications, 5.2 Appeals Procedure* provided by Centre 1 does not inform its learners of how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation.

The Accreditation Auditor also noted while reviewing *ECITB Awards & Qualifications SCQF Quality Assurance Procedures Manual, Section 8 Complaints Policy* currently uploaded on Quickr by ECITB does not inform its learners or their centres of how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation.

However, the Accreditation Auditor did note that *ECITB's Complaint Policy* did inform its learners and centres of how it deals with complaints notified by the regulators to ECITB of failures that have been discovered in the assessment process or other activities of another Awarding Body.

The evidence available indicates that ECITB does not meet the requirements of Principle 18. **This has been raised as Requirement 1.**

### **Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR 5 – Complaints Handling**

*ECITB Awards & Qualifications SCQF Quality Assurance Procedures Manual*, Section 8 Complaints Policy, currently uploaded on Quickr by ECITB does not meet the requirements of *Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR – 5 Complaints handling*. This regulatory directive states that any awarding body devised complaints handling process must reflect the role of the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO) in investigating complaints from users of public bodies in Scotland.

The evidence available indicates that ECITB does not meet the requirements of *Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR 5 – Complaints Handling*. **This has been raised as Requirement 1.**

## **2.3 Recommendations**

**Principle 4: The awarding body must ensure that they conduct their operations ethically, taking account of any legislation, including but not limited to equalities, competition and data protection laws.**

and

**Principle 14: The awarding body must consult with stakeholders, taking into account relevant equality and diversity groups, to ensure that there are no unnecessary barriers to entry to the assessment of the qualifications they design and/or offer for different groups of learners.**

ECITB may wish to review its Equal Opportunities Policy given in *ECITB Awards & Qualifications SCQF Quality Assurance Procedures Manual*, Section 5, and remind its External Verifiers to check that centre-devised Equal Opportunities Policies make relevant and appropriate reference to the Equality Act 2010, revising the current list of areas of focus to fully and accurately reflect the protected characteristics defined by the Act. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 1.**

This will assist SQA Accreditation as a public sector body to fulfil its general equality duty in eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation as prohibited by the Act, as well as ensuring that there is an equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

**Principle 5: The awarding body must promote a culture of continuous improvement within the organisation and throughout their approved centres, and have in place a system which allows them to manage risk.**

Centre 1 commented in its Remote Monitoring Questionnaire that ECITB's e- documentation could be improved to be more user-friendly.

The Centre Co-ordinator from Centre 2 identified in the Questionnaire that ECITB could make improvements to its systems and procedures for some qualifications which are aligned with an exclusive learning environment favoured (ie colleges) which is difficult to undertake in a work based vocational setting. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 2.**

ECITB may wish to consider the areas for continuous improvement highlighted by its approved centres.

**Principle 6: The awarding body and their approved centres must have relevant expertise, quality assurance procedures, technological, financial, human resources and other physical resources, to carry out their regulated functions, during the life of the qualifications and Units they offer.**

The Centre Co-ordinator from Centre 2 provided the Accreditation Auditor with its centre-devised *Assessors Procedure ACP/003* and centre-devised *Internal Verifier Procedure ACP/004* documentation. However, in reviewing both these documents, the Accreditation Audit noted that these only referenced National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs).

Given that Centre 2 holds approval to deliver SQA accredited qualifications, these should contain equivalent reference to SQA approved qualifications. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 3.**

ECITB should ensure that its centre-devised documentation contains relevant references to SQA accredited qualifications, where appropriate.

The Accreditation Auditor also noted while reviewing the past three VQ022 Candidate Portfolio Checklist documents from September 2013 to October 2013 provided by Centre 2 that no candidate portfolios had been sampled for candidates completing an SQA accredited qualification, despite the fact that there were active candidates. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 4.**

ECITB should remind its External Verifiers to include candidates completing an SQA accredited qualifications within their ECITB Approved Centre – Post Approval Monitoring Visit Letter and Plan for those centres who hold approval to deliver both Ofqual and SQA accredited qualifications to ensure that all SQA accredited qualifications are sampled appropriately.

### 3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
<b>Centre 1</b>		
Completed Centre/Provider Aide Memoire		
Completed Centre/Provider Visit Questionnaire		
ECITB Approved Centre Monitoring Form	Date of Visit: November 2013	
Health & Safety Management System Manual Section No: _1___hspolicy	04/11/11	Issue: 1 Revision 4
Health and Safety Management System Manual Document No:_9___hsauditschedule Audit schedule	07/01/13	Revision: 0
Quality Assurance Procedures Manual for the delivery of ECITB Scottish Vocational Qualifications A Document Index B Executive Statement C Acronyms Listing 1.0 Purpose of Quality Assurance Procedures Manual 2.0 Scope of Quality Assurance Procedures Manual 3.0 Roles & Responsibilities - Approved Centre 4.0 Roles & Responsibilities - Centre Staff 5.0 Approved Centre Policies & Procedures 6.0 Candidate Support 7.0 Assessor & Internal Verifier Training 8.0 Internal Verifier Strategy 9.0 Standardisation 10.0 Record Keeping Appendix I Various Forms Appendix II Various Forms	March 2010	Revision 2 23-10- 2012
Ascent Database Screenshot		
Letter from ECITB confirming candidate registrations	18 February 2013	

<b>Centre 2</b>		
Completed Centre/Provider Aide Memoire		
Completed Centre/Provider Visit Questionnaire		
Centre-devised List of SVQ Assessment Team		
Assessment Team Training Qualification Certificates		
Occupational Competence for Assessment Team		
List of Candidate Registrations		
Lead Assessor Meeting Minutes	15/01/2013 27/03/2013 04/06/2013 11/09/2013 11/12/2013	
Training Co-ordinators Meeting Minutes	25/03/2013 17/07/2013 19/09/2013 10/12/2013	
VQ022 Candidate Portfolio Checklist	October 2013 June 2013 September 2012	
ECITB Approved Centre – Post Approval Monitoring Visit Letter and Plan	June 2013	
VQ026 External Quality Assurer Audit Sampling Plan	June 2013	
ECITB NVQ/QCF Approved Centre Monitoring Form	June 2013 September 2012	
Centre-devised Assessors Procedure ACP/003	11/08/2011	Revision 4
Centre-devised Internal Verifier Procedure ACP/004	11/08/2011	Revision 4
Centre-devised Accreditation and Recognition of Prior Learning for the Apprentice Programme	11/08/2011	Revision 4

## 4 Risk rating of Requirements

SQA Accreditation assigns a risk rating to each Requirement recorded as a result of awarding body quality assurance activity. The table below illustrates how the rating for a Requirement is assigned. A weighting is applied that depends on the risk identified and the possible impact on qualifications and/or the learner of failure to implement that Requirement.

The assignment of a risk rating allows an awarding body to assign their resources to areas which have been identified as having a major impact on the qualifications and/or the learner. The risk rating also allows SQA Accreditation to assign its resources to support awarding bodies in improving their performance.

Risk	Impact of Requirements identified through quality assurance activity
Very Low	The Requirement has been identified as likely to cause minimal concern and would not threaten the integrity of the qualification or impact adversely on the learner. Any overall effect is likely to be small scale and/or localised, rather than widespread. The identified Requirement is unlikely to recur once resolved and no long lasting damage would be anticipated.
Low	The Requirement has been identified as low impact but is of sufficient importance to merit intervention, with a low threat to the systems or procedures associated with the qualification and/or impact on the learner. Disruption may not just be localised but more widespread and would possibly cause residual damage; however, this could be easily corrected without further consequence.
Medium	The Requirement has been identified as having the potential to damage the credibility of the qualification and/or be detrimental to the learner. There may be some impact to the systems or procedures that support the qualification or the operational effectiveness of the awarding body.
High	The Requirement has been identified as having a potentially high impact on the integrity and reliability of the qualification, or the effective operation of the awarding body as a whole, if corrective action is not quickly taken. There is a high probability that the qualification and/or learner will be negatively affected.
Very High	The Requirement has been identified as having a serious impact on the integrity and reliability of the qualification or the effective operation of the awarding body if corrective action is not immediately taken. There is a very high probability that the qualification and/or learner will be negatively affected.

In assigning a risk rating, each Requirement is considered on its own merit, taking account of the context in which it was identified.



## 5 Action Plan

A separate document in Microsoft Word has been forwarded with this centre report.

Areas of concern	Requirement	Risk rating	Proposed action (Please include a description of your intended methodology and details of the evidence that will be provided.)	Target date for completion
Principle 18 and Regulatory Principles Directive 5 – Complaints Handling	<p>ECITB complaints policy must inform its centres and learners how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation. While ensuring that its centres approved to deliver SQA accredited qualifications centre-devised complaints policies must inform learners how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation.</p> <p>ECITB must also ensure that its complaints policy meets the requirements of the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO), as specified within RPDIR 5.</p>	Medium		

**Signatures of agreement of action plan**

For and on behalf of ECITB:

**Signature**

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**Date**

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For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Signature**

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**Date**

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## 6 Acceptance of centre monitoring findings

For and on behalf of ECITB:

**Signature**

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**Designation**

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**Date**

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For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Signature**

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**Designation**

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**Date**

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