



# **Centre Monitoring Report**

**First Aid Awards Ltd**

**12 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 9 April 2014

Date centre monitoring report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by First Aid Awards Limited 26 May 2014

## 1.3 Centre monitoring dates

One centre was monitored on 12 February. One further centre was scheduled to be monitored but due to continual centre access problems, it was decided on 20 March 2014, that this centre would no longer be visited during this round of centre visits and was escalated to the awarding body.

## 1.4 Overview

As a result of the centre monitoring activities, two Requirements have been raised and three Recommendations have been recorded.

The two Requirements form the basis of the First Aid Awards Limited 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 26 May 2014.

Outcome(s)	Area(s) of concern	Risk rating
Requirement 1	Principle 7	High
Requirement 2	Principles 18 and 23	Low
Requirement 3	Principle 6	High
Recommendation 1	Principle 3 and 5	N/A
Recommendation 2	Principle 6	N/A
Recommendation 2	Principle 22	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 centre 1:

- ◆ The paperwork provided by First Aid Awards is clear and easy to complete.

### 2.2 Requirements

**Principle 7: The awarding body must ensure that SQA Accreditation is granted access to the awarding body, their approved centres, assessment locations, staff, learners, premises, meetings, documents, data, analysis and evaluations on request.**

The Accreditation Auditor had identified a second centre that was to be monitored during February 2014. From January through to March numerous attempts were made to arrange a date, time and location convenient to the Centre Co-ordinator. Furthermore, in view of the Centre Co-ordinator's unique situation, and to facilitate the process and ease the burden on the centre, the Accreditation Auditor provided additional information regarding all documents, records, files, etc that would be needed. Despite this, the Centre Co-ordinator was unable to commit to an arrangement to meet.

The evidence available indicates that First Aid Awards Ltd does not meet the requirements of Principles 7. This has been raised as **Requirement 1**.

**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.**

**Principle 23: The awarding body and their centres must publish clear, fair and equitable procedures and timelines for dealing with enquiries about results and appeals. They must take appropriate, corrective and/or preventative action for all learners and centres affected.**

At Centre 1, the Accreditation Auditor reviewed the centre-devised complaints and appeals policy and noted that this failed to reference SQA Accreditation as the Qualifications Regulator for SQA accredited qualifications and the circumstances under which it would be appropriate to progress a complaint or an appeal to SQA Accreditation.

The evidence available indicates that First Aid Awards Ltd does not meet the requirements of Principles 18 and 23. This has been raised as **Requirement 2**.

**Principle 6: The awarding body and their approved centres must have the 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 Accreditation Auditor was concerned with the possible security implications of current practice at Centre 1. Currently, after printing, examination papers are sent directly to the instructors, who are at external sites. The centre has no knowledge of whether these papers are kept securely and this is not something that they check.

The evidence available indicates that First Aid Awards Ltd does not meet the requirements of Principle 6. This has been raised as **Requirement 3**.

## 2.3 Recommendations

**Principle 3: The awarding body must ensure that they employ robust processes to protect their own business interests as well as the interests of their approved centres and learners.**

**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.**

At Centre 1 the Accreditation Auditor identified, through talking with the centre representative and reviewing the awarding body's external verification material, that the centre received a pre-approval visit when the business applied to become a registered First Aid Award centre but had since received no further external verification visits. This does not reflect the written policy of the awarding body, in which within their *Operations Manual* at point 11.3.1 states: 'Initial visits will be made to centres within three months of their approval and, for SQA qualifications, before the centre commences certification'. The information obtained at this centre, was subsequently discussed at the awarding body audit and was noted as a Requirement in the Audit report. Therefore, this is only being recorded as a Recommendation within this report.

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

**Principle 6: The awarding body and their approved centres must have the 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.**

During the visit to Centre 1, the centre representative assured the Accreditation Auditor that meetings took place which included instructors, assessors and internal verifiers. However, it was noted by the Auditor that there was no focused discussion generally around SQA accredited qualifications and specifically regarding standardisation. The awarding body may wish to consider reinforcing with centres that standardisation meetings are advisable and good practice.

Furthermore, it was noted by Centre 1 that, when making enquiries, communication from the awarding body is fairly slow. It was noted by the centre representative that communication timescales would not currently meet those stated within the *Customer Charter* of the awarding body. The centre felt this was a particularly important point as they are a new centre and would have expected quicker responses. They also noted that there was a general lack of support for them as a new centre, in particular with regard to the awarding body's online system FAAPlus. Initially, the centre had found the system difficult to use and no user guide was provided until requested by the centre.

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

**Principle 22: The awarding body must ensure that qualification and Unit certificates meet SQA Accreditation's minimum requirements, reflect learner achievement, are only issued on the basis of a valid claim, and are supplied within a reasonable and clearly communicated timescale.**

At Centre 1, the Accreditation Auditor reviewed a certificate recently issued to a candidate who had passed the First Aid at Work qualification. It was identified that the certificate included the centre name, contrary to SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principle's Directive 3. The certificate also failed to include the validity period of the qualification as required by the Health and Safety Executive. This issue was escalated to the awarding body audit on the 20 February 2014 and so has been noted here as a recommendation to reinforce the issue identified during the audit.

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

### 3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
Equality and Diversity Policy	01/05/13	4.0
New Start Form		
Equality and Diversity Action Plan		1.0
Complaints Policy	1/11/11	4
Complaint Form		1
Candidate Appeals Procedure		
Training Administrator Handbook		
Adverse Effect Reporting		
Investigation Procedure		
Certification of Liability Insurance	26/6/12	
Health and Safety Policy	14/6/13	
EFAW Method Statement		
Data Protection Policy	23/01/13	
Introduction to Staff Training and Development		
Employee Training and Development Policy	01/05/13	4
Training Process Policy	1/11/12	1
Instructor Performance Review		
FAA Instructor Registration Data		
Medical Working Group Meeting	December 2012	
Training Development	28/03/13	
Registration Form	19/04/12	
Training Attendance Sheet		
Certificate Validation Form		

Quality Management Proposal		
Quality Assurance Policy		
FAW – Core Skill Instructor Handbook		
FAW – Course Programme Lesson Plan		
EFAW – Instructor Handbook		
EFAW – Course Programme Lesson Plan		
Invigilation of Written Examination Assessor Checklist		
Internal Verification Matrix		

## 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 7	The awarding body must ensure that centres are aware of the fundamental importance of SQA Accreditation gaining access to centres in order to carry out its role as Qualifications Regulator of SQA-accredited qualifications.	High		
Principles 18 and 23	The awarding body must ensure centre-devised complaints policies include reference to SQA Accreditation as the Qualifications Regulator and note how and when a complaint can be made to SQA Accreditation.	Low		

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 6	The awarding body must ensure the security of all exam materials issued by centres to their instructors.	High		

**Signatures of agreement of Action Plan**

For and on behalf of First Aid Awards Limited:

**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 First Aid Awards Limited:

**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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