



# **Centre Monitoring Report**

**Alcohol Focus Scotland (AFS)**

**1 October 2013**

## 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 30 October 2013

Date centre monitoring report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by AFS 11 December 2013

## 1.3 Centre monitoring dates

One centre was monitored on 1 October 2013.

## 1.4 Overview

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

The four Requirements form the basis of the AFS 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 11 December 2013.

Outcome(s)	Area(s) of concern	Risk rating
Requirement 1	Principle 3	Medium
Requirement 2	Principle 6	Medium
Requirement 3	Principle 6	High
Requirement 4	Principle 23	Medium
Recommendation 1	Principle 1	N/A
Recommendation 2	Principle 6	N/A
Recommendation 3	Principle 22	N/A
Recommendation 4	Regulatory Principles Directive 5	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/or conditions attached to the Approved Awarding Body agreement and the Criteria for Accredited Qualifications.

### 2.1 Areas of good practice

The following area of good practice was noted by Centre 1 that:

- ◆ AFS was the only awarding body approved to offer these specific qualifications.

### 2.2 Requirements

**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.**

The *Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations* document states that:

*'The multiple-choice assessment papers are produced by Alcohol Focus Scotland from question banks. Each paper will only be in existence for a finite period of time. Following this, the questions will be rearranged in order to produce new assessment papers.'*

However, the Centre Co-ordinator for Centre 1 stated to the Accreditation Auditor that AFS had not devised any re-sit papers for the Servewise Licensing Standard Officers' and Servewise Trainers' Qualifications at the time of the centre monitoring visit because no candidates had ever failed either of these qualifications.

The evidence available indicates that AFS does not meet the requirements of Principle 3. This has been raised as **Requirement 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.**

The Centre Co-ordinator from Centre 1 provided the Accreditation Auditor with five trainers' files. Though, four out the five trainers' files did not contain any recognised trainer qualifications. With only one out of the five trainers' files containing a curriculum vitae which included details of occupational competence.

The evidence available indicates that AFS does not meet the requirements of Principle 6. This has been raised as **Requirement 2**.

The *Centre Guidance – AFS AB – ServeWise Trainers’ Qualification dated (June 2010)* states the following:

‘The assessment is in two parts:

1. Assessment Part 1 Multiple-choice Exam
2. Assessment Part 2 Observation of training delivery

The candidate must pass both parts of the assessment to be certificated.

Part 1 (multiple-choice exam)

Verification:

- ◆ 10% of papers, or 10 – whichever is the greatest - to be double-checked for accuracy
- ◆ Checking will be done by a person, not involved in the original marking, from within the Alcohol Focus Scotland admin team

Part 2 (observation of the delivery of training)

Verification

- ◆ The verifier will check the assessment paperwork for 10% of candidates
- ◆ The verifier will check the observation of the training delivery for 5% of candidates. Where possible this will be done by a second observation of a video recording in preference to having both the assessor and verifier attend a course to observe it.

The verification must be carried out by another member of Alcohol Focus Scotland staff, not involved in the original delivery of training or assessment decision, or by an external person contracted for this purpose.’

The Centre Co-ordinator informed the Accreditation Auditor that the centre’s internal verifier left the centre on 30 June 2012. However, at the time of the centre monitoring visit in October 2013, Centre 1 still did not have an internal verifier and had not contracted an external person for this purpose.

At the time of monitoring visit, one candidate had been certificated for the ServeWise Trainers’ Qualification. Verification checks had been completed for part 1 the multiple choice examination. Part 2 the observation of the delivery of training for this candidate was observed on video by the centre’s trainer on the 10 August 2013. However, no verification checks had been completed for the one certificated candidate for part 2 the observation of the delivery of training. Therefore, Centre 1 is not complying with the documented Centre Guidance provided from AFS.

The centre still has a further five candidates registered for this qualification.

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

**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.**

The *Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations* document contains both the appeals and complaints procedures which meet SQA Accreditation's requirements.

However, the Centre Co-ordinator stated to the Accreditation Auditor that Centre 1 only formally informs its candidates of its appeals process when a candidate has failed. The Centre Co-ordinator provided the Accreditation Auditor with a sample letter sent to a candidate who had failed the multiple choice examination for the Servewise Licensing Board Members' qualification.

The Accreditation Auditor noted that the appeals procedure detailed within the letter differs from that contained within the *Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations* document. The letter was not consistent in detailing AFS's appeals procedure to its candidates as it failed to appropriately reference the circumstances under which it would be appropriate to progress an appeal to AFS and to SQA Accreditation as the Qualifications Regulator for SQA-accredited qualifications.

The evidence available indicates that AFS does not meet the requirements of Principle 23. This has been raised as **Requirement 4**.

## 2.2 Recommendations

**Principle 1. The awarding body must deal with SQA Accreditation in an open and co-operative way, and disclose anything which SQA Accreditation would reasonably expect to be made aware.**

The *Centre Guidance – AFS AB – ServeWise Trainers' Qualification dated (June 2010)* states the following:

### ***'Overview of assessment***

*The assessment for the Servewise Trainers' Qualification is in two parts:*

- 1. Assessment Part 1 Multiple-choice Exam*
- 2. Assessment Part 2 Observation of training delivery*

*The candidate must pass both parts of the assessment to be certificated.*

### **Entrance requirements for assessment:**

- 1. The candidate must attend the full ServeWise Trainers' Course in order to be allowed to sit Part 1 of the assessment, the multiple-choice exam.*
- 2. The candidate must pass Part 1 of the assessment, the multiple-choice exam, before being allowed to work towards the second part, the observation of training delivery. This must be undertaken within 2 years of passing the multiple-choice exam.*

*Note: Part 2 of the assessment, the observation of training delivery, assesses two areas and the candidate must meet the standards in both of these in order to pass Part 2.'*

Centre 1 had originally seven candidates registered for the Servewise Trainers' Qualification, one candidate has been certificated, one candidate left, leaving a remaining five current candidate registrations.

Two of these candidates had completed the Part 1 Multiple-choice Exam on 25 August 2011. Both of these candidates should have completed Part 2 of the assessment, the observation of training delivery, by 25 August 2013. Consequently, both candidates requested an extension to this date from AFS on 13 September 2013, due to the lack of demand of training courses. The three other candidates completed the Part 1 Multiple-choice Exam on 3 August 2012.

However, at the time of the centre monitoring visit to Centre 1 in October 2013, all five candidates had still not completed Part 2 of the assessment, the observation of training delivery. This qualification is due to lapse on 31 December 2013 and finish on 31 March 2014.

AFS also had a meeting with SQA Accreditation's Regulation and Accreditation Managers on 8 May 2013 where various options were recommended for AFS to consider. AFS stated that they 'will aim to get as many of the candidates to the point of completion and certification as possible'.

The Accreditation Auditor is concerned that AFS has had candidates registered since 23 August 2011 and yet they have not managed to complete Part 2 of the assessment, the observation of training delivery due to lack of demand for courses. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 1.**

AFS should communicate to SQA Accreditation how it is going to ensure its five candidates complete Part 2 of the assessment, the observation of training delivery, allowing for certification by 31 March 2014.

**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 Centre Co-ordinator provided the Accreditation Auditor with *AFS External Verifier Reports*, dated 2012, 2009 and 2008.

The Auditor reviewed the completed reports as part of the current centre monitoring activity and noted that there was no evidence that the appointed External Verifier had undertaken a visit to an assessment/examination location, taking the opportunity to observe assessment, internal verification and invigilation practices. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 2.**

AFS may wish to consider including this particular activity as part of the external verification process.

**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.**

The *Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations* document states that

*'Alcohol Focus Scotland will send certificates to the successful candidates at the address as shown on the assessment paper and advise by letter any candidates who have been unsuccessful, normally within 14 working days of receipt of the assessment papers.'*

However, the Administrator for Centre 1 stated to the Accreditation Auditor that if an employer paid for the training course, a candidate's certificate would be sent directly to the employer and not the candidate. Therefore, the centre cannot ensure that in these instances the candidate would receive their qualification certificate. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 3.**

AFS should consider how it can ensure that all its candidates receive a qualification certificate within a reasonable and clearly communicated timescale.

#### **RPDIR 5 – Complaints handling**

AFS is compliant with *Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR 5 – Complaints Handling* as it's not a public body and at the time of the centre monitoring visit had not approved any centres that were a public body.

However, AFS may wish to consider making reference to *Regulatory Principles Directive RPDIR 5 – Complaints Handling* into its complaints procedure contained within *the Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations* document to ensure compliance in the future should AFS approve a public body centre. **This has been recorded as Recommendation 4.**

### 3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
Alcohol Focus Scotland Awarding Body Regulations	November 2012	
Centre-devised Candidate Joining Instructions Letter for Servewise Licensing Standards Officers' Qualification.		
Centre-devised Candidate Failure Letter for Servewise Licensing Board Members' Qualification		
Letter from two Trainers requesting an extension for observation of assessment for Servewise Trainers' Qualification	13 September 2013	
Recognised Training Qualification for one Trainer		
Five Trainers Files reviewed		
Five Trainers CPD Records reviewed		
Centre Guidance – AFS AB – Servewise Trainers' Qualification	June 2010	
Centre Guidance – AFS AB – ServeWise Licensing Standards Officers' Qualification	May 2010	
Centre Guidance – AFS AB – ServeWise Licensing Board Members' Qualification	May 2012	
AFS External Verifier Reports	2012 2009 2008	

## 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 3	AFS must ensure that they devise re-sit papers for these qualifications prior to the stage of a candidate failing the examination	Medium		
Principle 6	AFS must ensure its approved centres retain evidence of trainers, assessor and internal verifier's occupational competence and relevant qualifications (including any peripatetic trainers, assessors and internal verifiers).	Medium		

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	AFS must ensure that its approved centres have access to appropriately qualified personnel for the range of qualifications they are approved to deliver.	High		
Principle 23	AFS must ensure that where its centres are using a centre-devised appeals letter that this must detail the circumstances under which it would be appropriate to progress an appeal to AFS and to SQA Accreditation as the Qualifications Regulator for SQA accredited qualifications.	Medium		

**Signatures of agreement of action plan**

For and on behalf of AFS:

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Signature**

**Signature**

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**Date**

**Date**

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## 6 Acceptance of centre monitoring findings

For and on behalf of AFS:

**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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