



Centre Monitoring Report

City & Guilds

3 October to 27 November 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.

Contents

1 Introduction	1
1.1 Scope and approach of centre monitoring	1
1.2 Centre monitoring report timeline	2
1.3 Centre monitoring dates	2
1.4 Overview	2
2 Centre monitoring findings	3
2.1 Areas of good practice	3
2.2 Requirements	3
2.2 Recommendations	7
3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring	8
4 Risk rating of Requirements	11
5 Action Plan	12
6 Acceptance of centre monitoring findings	16

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 8 January 2014

Date centre monitoring report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by City & Guilds 19 February 2014

1.3 Centre monitoring dates

Seven centres were monitored between 3 October and 27 November 2013.

1.4 Overview

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

The three Requirements form the basis of the City & Guilds 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 19 February 2014.

Outcome(s)	Area(s) of concern	Risk rating
Requirement 1	Principle 2	Very Low
Requirement 2	Principles 2 and 6	Medium
Requirement 3	Principles 18 and 23 Regulatory Principles Directive 5	Medium
Recommendation 1	Principle 2	N/A
Recommendation 2	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.

Centre 2 highlighted the prompt response to enquiries and the quality of materials.

Centre 3 highlighted the quick approval process and the efficiency of the online system which generates instant results.

Centre 4 highlighted the excellent customer service received from City & Guilds.

Centre 5 highlighted the good standards promoted by the awarding body.

Centre 6 highlighted the level of support from the regional office and from the External Verifier.

Centre 7 highlighted the productive meetings with awarding body staff.

2.2 Requirements

Principle 2. The awarding body must publish clear information on their products, services and associated charges and fees.

The document *Our Quality Assurance Requirements*, December 2013, Version 3, Page 22 refers to *SQA Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*. This document has been superseded by the SQA Accreditation's *Regulatory Principles (2011)*. City and Guilds must ensure that documentation is maintained in line with the current regulatory requirements.

The evidence available indicates that City & Guilds does not meet the requirements of Principle 2. This has been raised as **Requirement 1**.

Principle 2. The awarding body must publish clear information on their products, services and associated charges and fees.

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.

Centre 2 started delivering SVQs in August 2012 but the only external verification visit to date in April 2013 did not include SVQs within the sample, despite the fact that there were active candidates and this was a new qualification being offered by the centre. The Centre Co-ordinator did not know when SVQs would be sampled. The Co-ordinator also commented that little information had been disseminated from City & Guilds, with regard to the introduction of the new risk-based quality assurance system and the effect on current and future verification activity. Staff at centre 5 expressed similar concerns about communication concerning changes to quality assurance activity.

Information given to centres about quality assurance in the City & Guilds' *Supporting Customer Excellence Centre Manual*, December 2012, Page 15 states that the, 'Customer Support Team will decide upon a twelve month plan of activities and will discuss the plan with you and take your views into account'. Aside from this information, the Auditor could not find any awarding body document made available to centres which gives further information about the quality assurance system, and the evidence available suggests that some centres are unaware of a plan for their quality assurance activity.

The Auditor acknowledges that centres in general were receiving what seemed like an appropriate number of external verification visits for qualification provision, although systems visits had not taken place for some time at centres 1, 3, 4 and 5.

SQA Accreditation has received information from City & Guilds during the course of centre monitoring and in the context of meetings with the awarding body, with regard to the *Supporting Customer Excellence Quality Assurance Model*. It is understood that this model will be rolled out to centres in stages and that centres based in Scotland are not included in the initial stage. However, the concern remains about the information made available to the centres concerning current and future quality assurance activities.

City & Guilds must augment its published information to ensure centres have sufficient information regarding the awarding body's current and future quality assurance system. City & Guilds must also ensure quality assurance arrangements are devised to ensure that all SQA accredited qualifications are sampled appropriately.

The evidence available indicates that City & Guilds does not meet the requirements of Principles 2 and 6. This has been raised as **Requirement 2**.

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.

Regulatory Principles Directive 5 – Complaints Handling. Further education colleges are required to implement a documented complaints process which makes it plain that students can complain, in turn, and once the previous stage has been exhausted, to the centre, to the awarding body, to SQA Accreditation, and to the Scottish Public Service Ombudsman (SPSO). It must explain the circumstances in which each of these can be contacted. Awarding bodies' complaints processes for regulated qualifications must make this escalation route clear.

The City & Guilds' *Complaints procedure for candidates*; the *Complaints procedures for centres*; the information on complaints in the *Supporting Customer Excellence Centre Manual*, December 2012, Page 44; and the *Customer Service Statement* on the website — do not reference escalation to SQA Accreditation or the SPSO.

It has been a long-standing requirement of SQA Accreditation, that awarding bodies refer to the right of complaint escalation to the regulator in its procedures. In addition, awarding bodies were sent information on 6 July 2013 by SQA Accreditation regarding Regulatory Principles Directive 5 on complaints handling. The Directive explains that further education colleges are required to implement a documented complaints process which makes it plain that students can complain, in turn, and once the previous stage has been exhausted, to the centre, to the awarding body, to SQA Accreditation, and to the SPSO. Awarding bodies' complaints processes for regulated qualifications must make this escalation route clear. In addition to the initial information on the Directive, City & Guilds was then sent a reminder e-mail on 7 October 2013 by the awarding body's Regulation Manager. Despite this, the City & Guilds' information on complaints has not been updated.

City & Guilds must ensure that its complaints procedures include escalation to SQA Accreditation for all centres and additionally to the SPSO where the centre is a public body.

Across the centres sampled, centre-devised appeals and complaints procedures did not consistently make reference to the fact that a candidate can escalate an appeal or complaint to the awarding body or SQA Accreditation. Centre 7 did not have any complaints procedure in place.

Previously, centres did not refer to the escalation of an appeal or complaint to the awarding body and SQA Accreditation, and hence this issue was raised as a non-compliance in the centre monitoring report of 2011–12.

City & Guilds must ensure that centre-devised appeals and complaints procedures include escalation to the awarding body and SQA Accreditation for all centres and additionally to the SPSO where the centre is a public body.

The evidence available indicates that City & Guilds does not meet the requirements of Principles 18 and 23 and Regulatory Principles Directive 5. This has been raised as **Requirement 3**.

2.2 Recommendations

Principle 2. The awarding body must publish clear information on their products, services and associated charges and fees.

The document, *Our Quality Assurance Requirements*, December 2013, Version 3, Page 13 details centre approval information for centres that are approved to offer qualifications through other awarding bodies. It may be useful to include this information in the *Supporting Customer Excellence Centre Manual*, as the latter contains all other relevant information on centre approval.

In centre 5, the cover of one candidate logbook featured an erroneous title, namely, Level 5 SVQ Hairdressing instead of SVQ 2 Hairdressing at SCQF Level 5. Centre 6 had received communication from City & Guilds with similar incorrect titles and this had been replicated in the paperwork produced by the centre. The Auditor was able to view certificates for candidates at both these centres and the titles were correct. Nonetheless, City & Guilds may wish to check that qualification titles are published correctly on all candidate logbooks and correspondence relevant to its SQA accredited qualifications.

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.

In centre 1, the Equal Opportunities policy had not been updated since 2003. The Centre Co-ordinator did state that the policy had been reviewed but acknowledged that it not been updated. City & Guilds may wish to remind centres that their Equal Opportunitites policy should be current and reflect the Equality Act (2010).

Centre 4 had minutes for communication meetings but did not have any minutes for standardisation meetings, despite this being a recommendation in the *Centre Activity Report* of 2012. City & Guilds may wish to remind centres to record minutes of standardisation meetings.

Centre 4 did not routinely produce an internal verification report, although verbal feedback to assessors did occur after each verification sampling activity. Centre 5 had some internal verification reports missing from the relevant files. City & Guilds' *Guidance on Internal Verification of Qualifications*, April 2012, Page 10 states that, 'The Internal Quality Assurance report must be completed for every Internal Quality Assurance activity. A copy of the report should be given to each tutor or assessor and the appropriate Internal Quality Assurer Co-ordinator/Quality Assurer Co-ordinator'. City & Guilds may wish to remind centres of this instruction.

This has been recorded as Recommendation 2.

3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
Supporting Customer Excellence Centre Manual	December 2012	Version 3.0
Supporting Customer Excellence Powerpoint Presentation	3 December 2013	
Our Quality Assurance Requirements	December 2012	Version 3
Guidance on Internal Quality Assurance of Qualifications	April 2012	Version 1.0
Guidance on Internal Quality Assurance of Qualifications – Forms and Documents	May 2012	Version 1.0
Complaints procedure for candidates		
Complaints procedure for centres		
Review and Appeals – the process and how to apply	April 2012	Version 1.1
Habia Assessment Strategy for Barbering NVQs and SVQs	September 2008	
Habia Assessment Strategy for Hairdressing NVQs and SVQs	September 2008	
IMI Assessment Strategy for SVQs	September 2010	
IMI Assessment Strategy for Vocational Competency Qualifications	November 2012	
Centre Activity Reports	2011; 2012; 2013	
City & Guilds approved centre annual certificates		
Centre approval letter/approval confirmation		
Centre update form for new staff	2013	
Application for qualification approval	2011	

Qualification approval report	2011	
Application for fast track qualification approval	2008	
Candidate lists		
Centres' Health and Safety risk assessments		
Centres' Health and Safety policies	2010; 2013	
Centre's Site monthly Health and Safety checklist		
Centre's Health and Safety Manual	2013	
Centre's Healthy and Safety Induction		
Centre's Health and Safety for Hairdressers booklet		
Risk assessment procedure and guidance	2013	
Training supply agreement		
Assessment site lists		
Invigilation instruction		
Minutes of standardisation meetings		
Minutes of staff communication meetings		
Training programme information	2013	
Centres' Equal Opportunities policies	2003; 2010; 2012	
Centre's Equality and Diversity policy	2012	
Assessment and verification policy	2013	
Assessor/IV lists		
IV sample plans		
IV schedules		
IV records		
IV reports		
IV of unit evidence form		
IV observation feedback		
IV candidate interview record		

Assessor performance report		
Assessment and verification procedures		
Centre's complaints handling procedure	2013	
Centres' complaints procedures	2012; 2013	
Centre's complaints/grievance procedure	2010	
Centres' appeals procedures	2012; 2013	
Certificates for occupational competence and training qualifications		
CPD record of activity logs		
Induction presentations		
Records of trainee progress		
Candidate logbooks		

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 2	The document <i>Our Quality Assurance Requirements</i> , December 2012, Version 3, Page 22 refers to <i>SQA Awarding Body Criteria (2007)</i> . This document has been superseded by the SQA Accreditation's <i>Regulatory Principles (2011)</i> . City and Guilds must ensure that documentation is maintained in line with the current regulatory requirements.	Very 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 2 Principle 6	<p>Centre 2 started delivering SVQs in August 2012 but the only external verification visit to date did not include SVQs within the sample.</p> <p>Centres 2 and 5 indicated that little information had been disseminated from City & Guilds, with regard to the introduction of the new risk-based quality assurance system and the resultant effect on verification activity.</p> <p>City & Guilds must augment its published information to ensure centres have sufficient information regarding the awarding body's current and future quality assurance system. City & Guilds must also ensure quality assurance arrangements are devised to ensure that all SQA accredited qualifications are sampled appropriately.</p>	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 18 Principle 23 Regulatory Principles Directive 5	<p>City & Guilds' complaints procedures do not reference escalation to SQA Accreditation or the SPSO.</p> <p>City & Guilds must ensure that its complaints procedures include escalation to SQA Accreditation for all centres and additionally to the SPSO where the centre is a public body.</p> <p>Across the centres sampled, centre-devised appeals and complaints procedures did not consistently make reference to the fact that a candidate can escalate an appeal or complaint to the awarding body or SQA Accreditation .</p> <p>City & Guilds must ensure that centre-devised appeals and complaints procedures include escalation to the awarding body and SQA Accreditation for all centres and additionally to the SPSO where the centre is a public body.</p>	Medium		

Signatures of agreement of Action Plan

For and on behalf of City & Guilds:

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 City & Guilds:

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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