Centre Monitoring Report

Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd (FAQ)

31 January 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.

Contents

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 February 2014

Date centre monitoring report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd (FAQ) 9 April 2014

1.3 Centre monitoring dates

One centre was monitored on 31 January 2014.

1.4 Overview

As a result of the centre monitoring activities, no Requirements have been raised and two Recommendations have been recorded.

Outcome(s)	Area(s) of concern	Risk rating
Recommendation 1	Principle 2	N/A
Recommendation 2	Principles 18	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 the centre:

- professional nature of the awarding body promoting high industry standards
- thorough external quality assurance
- helpful customer contact staff
- client centred approach
- appreciation of the culture of the organisation and its niche market
- quick certification

The centre staff commented that their Scottish candidates were extremely pleased at gaining an SQA accredited qualification from the awarding body.

2.2 Recommendations

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

The *FAQ External Quality Assurance Handbook* (2013) contains appendices which include detailed process maps and documentation. Appendix B refers to the 'Desktop EQA Visit Process'. To ensure clarity and to assist new external quality assurers, FAQ may wish to remove the word 'visit' from this title as the process is pertinent to remote activity only. FAQ might also consider labelling each appendix clearly with its relevant letter.

This has been recorded as Recommendation 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.

The complaints policy at centre 1 did not include the fact that candidates may escalate a complaint to the awarding body or the regulator. The centre corrected this policy.

Given that the awarding body has only one approved and active centre currently, this issue is being raised as a recommendation and not a requirement. FAQ should, however, ensure that new centres include appropriate references to the awarding body and regulator in centre-devised complaints policies.

This has been recorded as Recommendation 2.

3 List of documents reviewed during centre monitoring

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
FAQ First Aid at Work at SCQF Level 6 SQA Qualification Specification	2013	
FAQ Qualification product sheet		
FAQ Centre Guidance Pack	2013	
FAQ External Quality Assurer Handbook	2013	
FAQ Appeals Policy	2013	
FAQ Published Customer Service Statement	2013	
Skills for Health Assessment Principles for First Aid Qualifications	October 2013	4
Centre approval information		
Candidate registration and certification information		
External Quality Asurance Centre reports	2013 2014	
External Quality Assurere Sampling Forms		
Staff occupational competence and assessing/verifying qualification certificates		
CPD records		
Evidence logbooks		
Centre devised worksheets		
Course timetables and schemes of work		
Standardisation minutes		

IV records		
Candidate certificates		
Centre devised appeals/complaints policy		

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.

5 Acceptance of centre monitoring findings

For and on behalf of Future (Awards and Qualifications) Ltd (FAQ):

Signature

.....

Designation

.....

Date

.....

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

Signature

.....

Designation

.....

Date

.....