

Audit Report

Awarding body: Rockscool Ltd

Date of audit: 8 November 2011



Note

Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during SQA Accreditation monitoring activities is treated in the strictest confidence. However:

- ◆ The findings of this report will be presented to SQA's Accreditation Committee and made available to colleagues from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), with a view to the contents informing future accreditation and re-accreditation submissions by the awarding body.
- ◆ The report will be published on SQA Accreditation's website.

Please note that SQA Accreditation monitoring activity is conducted on a sampling basis. As a consequence, not all aspects of an awarding body's performance in quality assurance, contract compliance, implementation, awarding of certificates, and fee arrangements have been considered in this report to the same depth.

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Executive summary

Purpose and scope of audit

This was the first audit of Rockscool Ltd since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation. The audit was designed to review, evaluate and document Rockscool Ltd's strategies, policies and procedures and ensure compliance with SQA Accreditation's *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*.

As this was a full audit of Rockscool Ltd all criteria were included within the scope of the audit.

Background

Rockscool Ltd was approved by SQA Accreditation as an awarding body during 2011. Rockscool Ltd is a nationally recognised awarding body dealing with qualifications in graded music examinations.

Audit outcome

As a result of the audit and post audit activities, one non-compliance has been recorded and two observations noted.

The one non-compliance and two observations form the Rockscool Ltd action plan: November 2011.

Awarding body feedback

None.

Statement of Excellence 3: Administration and Support

'The awarding body's administrative and support arrangements have been designed to reduce bureaucracy, are responsive to stakeholders' needs and are cost effective. The awarding body continually reviews its qualification provision to ensure it has, and deploys, sufficient resources for the administration and support of its qualification provision.'

Key Goal 5: The awarding body has robust systems in place for the management of the service it offers

Findings

Prior to the audit the Lead Auditor noted that the Rockscool Ltd website did not seem to contain up to date references to state that its qualifications are now accredited by SQA Accreditation. The website still states that they are in the process of finalising accreditation. A pre-audit review of some Rockscool Ltd material also showed that the awarding body needs to review its documentation to refer to SQA Accreditation where the other regulatory authorities are mentioned.

Observation 1 refers.

The awarding body was also reminded that it is required to upload banked documents to Quickr and ensure the ongoing maintenance and accuracy of these.

Conclusion

The evidence available confirms that Rockscool Ltd continues to meet the requirements of the criteria under Key Goal 5. One observation has been noted.

Observation 1: The awarding body's documentation and website should reference SQA Accreditation where appropriate.

Key Goal 9: The awarding body has open and transparent procedures for complaints and appeals

Findings

As part of Rockscool Ltd's conditions of approval it was required to develop and publish a complaints procedure. This has been carried out however the Lead Auditor was unable to find this on the website. It was also noted that some of the awarding body's policies are located in the 'Regulations' section of the website for instance the Customer Service Policy rather than the actual 'Policies' section.

The Lead Auditor also noted that the awarding body had several versions of appeals policies. Versions within the syllabus documents seemed to be different to the one

on the website which was in turn different to the one supplied as a banked document. **Observation 2 refers.**

Conclusion

The evidence available confirms that Rockscool Ltd continues to meet the requirements of the criteria under Key Goal 9. One observation has been noted.

Observation 2: The awarding body has more than one version of policies and has several sections on its websites where these are located.

Key Goal 10: The awarding body has an effective system for the registration and certification of candidates

Findings

It became apparent during discussion with Rockscool Ltd staff that the awarding body had issued a significant number of certificates to candidates for SQA Accredited qualifications which contained another regulator's logo.

This issue was discussed and the awarding body has acknowledged that these need to be recalled. Rockscool Ltd will write to the candidates involved explaining the error and only issue new certificates when they have the certificates returned. **Non-compliance 1 refers.**

Conclusion

The evidence available confirms that Rockscool Ltd does not meet the requirements of the criteria under Key Goal 10. One non-compliance has been recorded.

Non-compliance 1: Candidates have received certificates which do not meet the regulatory requirements.

Conclusion

This was the 1st audit of Rockscool Ltd and the Lead Auditor was provided with full access to the awarding body premises, staff and documentation.

The Lead Auditor was satisfied that the awarding body has robust systems and procedures in place for the delivery of its qualifications in Scotland. The quality assurance systems that Rockscool Ltd employs are also robust and ensure that the standards and those involved in delivery are regularly monitored.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Current year non-compliances, observations and action plan

Non-compliances

A non-compliance will be recorded where the Lead Accreditation Auditor finds evidence that the awarding body fails to meet any of *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)* or any of the conditions attached to qualification accredited by SQA Accreditation at the time of accreditation. When recording any non-compliance, the Lead Accreditation Auditor will agree the action to be taken by the awarding body and a timetable for resolving the issue.

Non-compliance recorded	Agreed action and date	Key Goal/criterion	Risk rating
1. Candidates have received certificates which do not meet the regulatory requirements.	Rockschool Ltd must identify, write to and recall all certificates for candidates who have undertaken SQA Accredited qualifications. SQA Accreditation must receive a copy of the correspondence and a status report detailing the number of certificates returned and re-issued by 29 February 2012. Extended to 13 June 2012. Closed out 13 June 2012	Key Goal 10.3	4

Observations

An observation will be noted to ensure that any recommendations agreed during the audit are recorded for future reference. As observations are recorded for awarding body consideration only, it is not necessary to agree a timescale to resolve the observation in the awarding body action plan.

Once agreed, the action plan is signed by representatives from both SQA Accreditation and the awarding body and will inform the agenda for the next annual audit meeting.

Observations noted	Action recommended	Key Goal/criterion
1. The awarding body's documentation and website should reference SQA Accreditation where appropriate.	Rockschool Ltd should ensure that its documentation refers to SQA Accreditation where appropriate and update references on its website to the current status of its awarding body approval as approval has now been granted.	Key Goal 5.1
2. The awarding body has more than one version of policies and has several sections on its websites where these are located.	Rockschool Ltd should ensure that the correct versions of policies are published on its website. The awarding body may also wish to address the issue of policies on its website appearing the section entitled 'Regulations' rather than 'Policies'.	Key Goal 9.1.4

Appendix 2: Risk-rating of non-compliances

SQA Accreditation assigns a risk rating to each non-compliance recorded as a result of an awarding body audit or through our centre monitoring activity. The table below illustrates how the rating for a non-compliance is assigned, and identifies the possible impact of the non-compliance on qualifications and/or the learner.

The assignment of a risk rating allows an awarding body to target their resources to areas that have been identified as having a major impact. The risk rating also allows SQA Accreditation to target its resources to support awarding bodies in improving their performance.

Rating	Risk	Impact of non-compliance
1	Very Low	The non-compliance is 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 issue identified is unlikely to recur once resolved and no long lasting damage would be anticipated.
2	Low	The non-compliance is of low impact but 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.
3	Medium	The non-compliance could potentially 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.
4	High	The non-compliance could have a high impact on the integrity and reliability of the qualification or the effective operation of 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.
5	Very High	The non-compliance will have 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 non-compliance is considered on its own merit, taking account of the context in which it was identified.

Appendix 3: Table of awards

Accredited qualifications currently offered

Award title	Level	Code	Accreditation date	Re-accreditation date
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 1	04	R115	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 2	04	R116	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 3	04	R117	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 4	04	R118	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 5	04	R119	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 6	04	R120	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 7	04	R121	12/01/2011	31/12/2012
Graded Examination in Popular Music Performance - Grade 8	04	R122	12/01/2011	31/12/2012

Appendix 4: Outstanding approval and accreditation conditions

A condition will be recorded at the time of approval of the awarding body or at the time of accreditation for an SQA accredited qualification. A condition is recorded when SQA's Accreditation Co-ordination Group finds evidence that the awarding body does not fully meet SQA's *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*.

Condition	Agreed action and date	Status
1 Marketing Manager for Rockscool Ltd must review their website and ensure that the content accurately portrays their current and planned activities in Scotland by 12 June 2011.	12 June 2011.	Completed
2 Develop a formal complaints procedure	6mths from date of approval	Completed
3 Review and update its complaints and appeals procedure to:	6mths from date of approval	Completed
4 State under which circumstances a centre and a candidate may progress an appeal to SQA Accreditation.	6mths from date of approval	Completed
5 Inform centres and candidates that Rockscool Ltd will allow SQA Accreditation access to its complaints and appeals register.	6mths from date of approval	Completed
6 Review its documentation, guidance materials and website to ensure they refer to SQA Accreditation and Ofqual equally.	6mths from date of approval	Completed, however, minor amendments in documents have been raised with the awarding body.
7 Develop and implement a document control process for documentation.	6mths from date of approval	Completed

Appendix 5: List of documents reviewed pre-audit and post-audit

Document title	Date of issue	Version number	Comments
Rockschool: Master Plan 2009-2014			
Organisational Chart			
Qualification Strategy Meeting minutes October and May 2010			
Executive Committee minutes October 2011			
Senior Management Group minutes September and August 2011			
Quality Committee June 2011 and July 2010			
Terms of Reference for Rockscool Committees			
Rockscool UK Marketing Strategy 2011-2013			
Risk Log			
Procedure for Self Evaluation			
Self Assessment Report 2008			
Conflict of Interest Policy			
SQA Audit Notes			
Rockscool Action Plan			
Communications Policy Mar 2011			
Appeals Policy			
Complaints Policy			
Appeals Procedure			
Awarding and Certification procedures			
Blank Certificate			
Replacement Certificate form			
Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations			

Document title	Date of issue	Version number	Comments
Equal Opportunities Policy			
Malpractice Policy			
Examiners Handbook Graded Examinations in Music	October 2011		
Syllabus Documents			
Uptake and completion statistics			
Examiner Moderation Forms			
Re-standardisation forms			
Quality Assurance Handbook	September 2009		
Candidate feedback postcard			
Examiner Report			
Examiners Exam Centre Assessment Form			

Appendix 6: Signatures of agreement to action plan

For and on behalf of Rockschool Ltd

For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation

Signature

Signature

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Designation

Designation

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Date

Date

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