

# **Provider Monitoring Report Safety Training Awards**

**21 January 2026 to 2 February 2026**

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# 1 Background

Two providers were monitored remotely for Safety Training Awards (STA) on 21 January 2026 and 2 February 2026.

## 1.1 Scope

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation carries out quality assurance activity in line with its *Quality Assurance of Approved Awarding Bodies Policy*. This involves monitoring a sample of the awarding body's approved providers or assessment sites. Provider monitoring visits will be conducted in a consistent manner within and between providers.

The aim of monitoring is to:

- ensure the awarding body's compliance with Qualifications Scotland Accreditation's regulatory requirements
- 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 providers
- ensure that providers are receiving the appropriate guidance, support and documentation from the awarding body in order to facilitate a high standard of qualification delivery
- inform future audit and monitoring activity for the awarding body

All Principles may be included within the scope of the provider monitoring activity.

Awarding body documentation considered for review includes all documents banked on the awarding body's SharePoint Place at the time of provider monitoring and information supplied by providers to support provider monitoring activity. Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during Qualifications Scotland Accreditation's quality assurance activities is treated in the strictest confidence.

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation provider monitoring reports are written by exception focusing only on those areas where corrective action is required or recommended.

## 1.2 Provider Monitoring Report Timescales

STA provider monitoring dates: 21 January 2026 to 2 February 2026

Provider Monitoring Report approved by  
Accreditation Co-ordination Group on: 24 February 2026

Provider Monitoring Report to be signed by STA: 9 April 2026

Action Plan to be emailed to  
[regulation@qualifications.gov.scot](mailto:regulation@qualifications.gov.scot) by STA: 9 April 2026

The process will apply in relation to the timescales specified above:

The awarding body will be sent a copy of the Provider Monitoring Report by email.

- The awarding body must sign the copy of the Provider Monitoring Report and return by email to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified above.
- The awarding body will also be emailed a copy of the Action Plan.
- The awarding body must complete and return the Action Plan in accordance with the timescale specified above and email this in Microsoft Word format to [regulation@qualifications.gov.scot](mailto:regulation@qualifications.gov.scot).
- Qualifications Scotland Accreditation will confirm when the Action Plan is appropriate to address the Issues and present it to Accreditation Co-ordination Group (ACG) for approval.
- Following approval by ACG, the awarding body will be sent a signed copy of the approved Action Plan by email.
- The awarding body must sign the Action Plan and return by email to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation.

The findings of this Provider Monitoring Report and the associated Action Plan will be published on Qualifications Scotland Accreditation's website following signed agreement.

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation will continually monitor progress towards completion of the proposed actions identified in the Action Plan and update the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating as appropriate.

### 1.3 Summary of Provider Monitoring Issues and Recommendations

An Issue has been recorded where evidence shows that the awarding body is not compliant with Qualifications Scotland Accreditation's regulatory requirements. The awarding body must address the Issues and specify corrective and preventative measures to address them through its Action Plan.

The Action Plan is emailed to STA as a separate document to the Provider Monitoring Report and must be submitted to Qualifications Scotland Accreditation in accordance with the timescale specified in 1.2.

As a result of the provider monitoring activity, one Issue has been recorded and two Recommendations have been noted.

Issue	Detail of Issue recorded	Risk rating
1. Principle 18	The policies at providers 1 and 2 did not make it clear that all cases of actual and suspected malpractice and maladministration would be reported to the awarding body without delay.	Low

A Recommendation has been noted where Qualifications Scotland Accreditation considers there is potential for enhancement. The awarding body is advised to address any Recommendations in order to reinforce ongoing continuous improvement. However, measures to correct or prevent these are not mandatory and therefore do not form part of the Action Plan.

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Detail of Recommendation noted</b>
1. Principle 6	STA may wish to consider hosting the STA annual conference in Scotland.
2. Principles 13 and 7	<p>Provider 2 was unsure of the status of external quality assurance actions or how to close them out on the STA Online system.</p> <p>The STA external quality assurance system was then examined during the STA audit which took place two days after the provider monitoring activity, on 4 February 2026. As a result, a separate Issue has been raised in the STA Audit Report regarding the monitoring and recording of actions arising from external quality assurance activities.</p> <p>Therefore, the recommendation in this report is for reference only.</p>

## 1.4 Risk Rating of Issues

Qualifications Scotland Accreditation assigns a rating to each Issue recorded depending on the impact on or risk to the awarding body's operations, its Qualifications Scotland accredited qualifications and/or the learner.

Issues recorded during provider monitoring will count towards the awarding body's Quality Enhancement Rating which will, in turn, contribute towards future quality assurance activity. Further detail on how the Quality Enhancement Rating is calculated can be found on the [Qualifications Scotland Accreditation website](#).

## 2 Good Practice, Issues and Recommendations

The following sections detail:

- good practice noted by providers
- Issues recorded and Recommendations noted against Qualifications Scotland Accreditation's regulatory requirements

### 2.1 Good Practice

Both providers spoke extremely highly of STA as an awarding body.

Specifically, the following areas of good practice were noted by providers:

Provider 1 highlighted the:

- excellent customer service team who are very responsive to queries
- STA Online system which retains all information and is easy to navigate
- qualification manuals that are very colourful and appealing to learners
- good relationship with the external quality assurer
- competitive pricing structure
- expert technical support which is readily available
- qualification review and development process which incorporates provider
- feedback and actions change to question papers when necessary

Provider 2 highlighted the:

- excellent course materials which include QR codes that take learners to YouTube videos demonstrating practical skills for pool lifeguarding and first aid
- responsive customer service
- positive relationship with the external quality assurer
- status of being industry leaders
- straight forward question papers
- easy process for learner assessment

## 2.2 Issues

**Regulatory Principle 18. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that it has safeguards to prevent and manage cases of malpractice and maladministration.**

The malpractice and maladministration policies at both providers did not make it clear that all cases of malpractice and maladministration would be reported immediately to the awarding body, referring to investigation by provider staff in the first instance.

The Accreditation Auditor noted that neither provider had any cases of malpractice or maladministration.

Nonetheless, provider policies need to make it clear that all cases of actual and suspected malpractice and maladministration will be reported to the awarding body without delay.

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

## 2.3 Recommendations

**Regulatory Principle 6. The awarding body must continually review the effectiveness of its services, systems, policies and processes.**

Staff at provider 2 commented to the Accreditation Auditor that it would be beneficial to have the STA annual conference convened in Scotland on occasion.

STA may wish to consider hosting the STA annual conference in Scotland.

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

**Regulatory Principle 13. The awarding body and its providers must ensure that they have systems and processes which ensure the effective quality assurance of accredited qualifications.**

**Regulatory Principle 7. The awarding body must have an effective approach for communicating with its staff, stakeholders and Qualifications Scotland Accreditation.**

During the provider monitoring activity with provider 2, the Accreditation Auditor spent considerable time navigating the STA Online system with the staff member. The provider had several outstanding external quality assurance actions from the last two STA reports but was unsure of the status of these actions or how to close them out on the STA Online system. Some of this uncertainty was resolved by navigating the system with the Accreditation Auditor and uploading provider documents concerning their internal quality assurance process.

The STA external quality assurance system was then examined during the STA audit which took place two days after the provider monitoring activity, on 4 February 2026. As a result, a separate Issue has been raised in the STA Audit Report regarding the monitoring and recording of actions arising from external quality assurance activities.

From discussions with awarding body staff during the audit, it was clear that STA has undertaken repeated webinars and communications with providers in respect of its STA Online system and how to navigate it generally. Therefore, no recommendation has been raised in this regard. The Issue raised in the STA Audit Report will address the concern that this provider and perhaps other providers, have difficulty in closing out

actions raised as part of external quality assurance activities. Therefore, the recommendation in this report is for reference only.

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