



merlin standard

2018

**THE SHAW TRUST LTD**

**COMPACT REPORT**

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## 1. KEY INFORMATION

Assessment Type	REVIEW
Assessor's Decision	STANDARD MET
Anniversary Date	25/05/2020
Assessment Dates	22/05/2018 – 25/05/2018
Lead Assessor's Name	SUSAN SMITH
Customer ID	C16241
Assessment Reference	PN103516

## 2. ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

<b>OVERALL OUTCOME</b>	<b>86% Excellent</b>
1. Design	93% Excellent
2. Procure	95% Excellent
3. Contract	87% Excellent
4. Fund	80% Good
5. Develop	80% Good
6. Performance Manage	91% Excellent
7. Quality Assurance and Compliance	80% Good
8. Review and Close	84% Good

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The Shaw Trust Ltd (hereafter known as Shaw Trust) continues to be mandated by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to be accredited against the Merlin Standard due to being a Prime delivery partner for the Work Programme, Work Choice, Specialist Employability Support and more recently the new Work and Health Programme. Shaw Trust also has a number of other supply chains as a result of contracts with various other commissioners and these are also included in the scope of the Merlin assessment. Organisations that hold the Merlin Standard are required to be re-accredited every two-years, and consequently, Shaw Trust came forward for re- accreditation in line with their anniversary date.

The assessment team comprised of Susan Smith (Lead Assessor) and Lorna Bainbridge (Team Assessor) supported by a coordinator from within Shaw Trust. The Lead Assessor started to work with the coordinator in January 2018 to establish the scope and discuss the logistics of the assessment. The dates for the on-site were identified, and a plan of action agreed.

A booking form was submitted to Assessment Services Limited along with a spread-sheet indicating a full list of Supply Chain Partners; past, present and potential delivering an end-to-end service or specialist intervention activity.

In advance of the Assessment a survey was carried out of the Supply Chain Partners, with all 163 being invited to participate. Responses were received from past, present and potential Partners, which represented 46% of the total. The results of the survey informed the focus of interviews for the assessment team and contributed to the overall scoring.

The Lead Assessor was in regular contact with the coordinator before the on-site activity to review the schedule and logistics. All documentation required for the assessment; Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ), Pre-Assessment Notes (PAN) and interview schedule were shared in line with the agreed timescales to enable the assessment to take place as planned.

The assessment team spent a total of 3 days each reviewing documentary evidence and undertaking interviews with Shaw Trust staff involved in the strategic and day-to-day management of the supply chains. Some 20% of the Supply Chain Partners were interviewed in line with published Merlin scoping framework. Interviews were conducted with a wide range of Partners; end-to-end, specialist intervention, as well as past, present and potential across all contracts.

The following report provides an indication of the findings against key criteria within the Merlin Standard, which was evidenced across all the supply chains referenced below, as well as areas of strength and areas to consider for development over the forthcoming two-years.

## 4. ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

The Shaw Trust charity was formed in 1982 in the village of Shaw in Wiltshire to support local disabled people to find employment. It now helps around 50,000 people a year to live independent and inclusive lives. It has over 1100 staff and a network of over 1000 volunteers. As a charity, services are delivered and investment is made back into community projects, social enterprises, volunteering schemes and in establishing Community Hubs. The organisational vision is for *"a society in which everyone has the opportunity for employment, inclusion and independence."* The mission of Shaw Trust is to *"deliver services for people at disadvantage so they can gain life and employability skills in order to live more independently, secure sustainable employment and actively contribute to family and community life."*

Shaw Trust operates a delivery model containing a range of Supply Chain Partners across a variety of sectors, commissioners and contracts. Shaw Trust has three directorates; Employment, Health and Wellbeing and Justice. Since the Merlin assessment in 2016, there has been growth in the Employment contracts and a significant increase in Supply Chain Partners in the Health and Wellbeing and Justice directorates, which reflects a move to the ongoing commissioning of specialist services.

Shaw Trust has experienced vast change in the last two years, following the acquisition of Prospects Services and Ixion Holdings and the forming of Shaw Trust Group in 2017. The ongoing integration of these organisations means there are a number of areas of the business that are in a state of transition. The scope for this Merlin assessment is the Shaw Trust, however, the current ambition is for the Shaw Trust Group to be assessed against the Merlin Standard in late 2019.

The split of delivery between Shaw Trust and Supply Chain Partners varies across contracts and commissioners. The present supply chain breaks down by sector as follows; 16% Private, 13% Local Authority, 45% Charity, and 26% Third Sector.

### **Work Choice**

Commissioner: DWP

Length of delivery: 7.5 years, (last referrals Dec 17)

Geography: 18 contracts across the UK

Direct Delivery 48% Supply Chain Partners 52%

### **Work Programme**

Commissioner: DWP

Length of delivery: 7 years, (last referrals April 17)

Geography: East London

Direct Delivery 60% Supply Chain Partners 40%

### **Specialist Employability Services**

Commissioner: DWP

Length of delivery: 4 years, (referrals end Oct 18)

Geography: UK wide

Direct Delivery 58% Supply Chain Partners 42%

### **HMPPS CFO3**

Commissioner: DWP

Length of delivery: 3 years, (referrals end December 2020)

Geography: 3 contracts – East of England, London and South West.

Direct Delivery 44% Supply Chain Partners 56%

### **Kent Mental Health**

Commissioner: Kent County Council

Length of delivery: 2 years, (end of contract 2022)

Geography: Kent

Direct Delivery 38% Supply Chain Partners 62%

### **Work & Health Programme**

Commissioner: DWP/West London Alliance

Length of delivery: 2 years, (end of contract 2022)

Geography: 3 Contact Package Areas – Central, Home Counties and West London

Direct Delivery 46% Supply Chain Partners 54%

### **Aim4Work**

Commissioner: Big Lottery

Length of delivery: 2 years, (end of contract 2022)

Geography: Kent

Direct Delivery 35% Supply Chain Partners 65%

## 5. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT STRENGTH

A number of significant strengths were identified during the Assessment and these are described below. The numbers in brackets refer to the criteria of the Standard:

There is a wide range of organisations that Shaw Trust works with as Supply Chain Partners at all levels. Business development functions seek new partnerships both at times of responding to commissioners' needs and also during times of no bidding activity so that the framework of Supply Chain Partners remains in a ready state to respond to opportunities. Support services are in place and the recent change of approach with regards to Tier 3 Specialist Supply Chain Partners in the Work and Health Programme is notable due to the way Shaw Trust recognises that engagement can only truly work with some minimum volumes guaranteed for Supply Chain Partners. This demonstrates how Shaw Trust is a learning organisation based on feedback from previous Tier 3 Specialists. (1.1 / 1.2)

Not only is there significant consultation with new and potential Supply Chain Partners to inform the initial design of the supply chain and the activities it will deliver, but there is robust research and customer focus groups that inform this also. Consideration of wider stakeholder feedback is also taken into account such as that of Local Enterprise Partnerships and local authorities. Ongoing design of the supply chain and activities also routinely takes place to ensure that customers can access the best services possible; for example, how to support care leavers as a particular cohort. The result is that most Supply Chain Partners feel they are part of healthy and high performing supply chains. (1.3)

Supply Chain Partners were able to describe in detail how performance expectations are negotiated, agreed and monitored both at the start and throughout the life of the various contracts. The framework for performance review was found to be robust and consistently delivered by Supply Chain Managers. Supply Chain Partners spoke highly of the quality of the support provided by Supply Chain Managers and that this not only considered any performance issues but also recognised innovation. For example, in the HMPSS CFO3 contract measures of how to improve employment prospects for women in prisons was shared across the supply chain. For Supply Chain Partners who had been supported through a Performance Improvement Plan, the experience was positive and supportive. (3.2 / 6.3)

Business relationships are clear for Supply Chain Partners with Supply Chain Managers consistently offering support as the first point of contact. Other specialists are readily on hand to ensure matters such as information security, quality and compliance and claims are dealt with promptly and effectively. As a result, all Supply Chain Partners confirmed that there is a positive, open and honest culture of communications. There was strong testimony to the supportive nature of Shaw Trust's approach and that a strategy of "working equally with" Supply Chain Partners was in place. (6.1 / 6.2)

There has been significant investment in the Management Information systems since the last Merlin assessment. This has resulted in systems that Supply Chain Partners now find are robust and stable. Reports are used to good effect and inform performance improvements. The new system for the Work and Health Programme is well received by Supply Chain Partners, and their feedback is contributing to ongoing improvements. (6.4)

There is a robust quality assurance and compliance framework in place. Supply Chain Partners spoke of the detailed nature of the approach that helps them minimise their risk and maximise the opportunities in the contract. Audits and observations give supportive feedback to Supply Chain Partners and enables them to improve their services and performance as a result. (7.2)

Assessment of how Shaw Trust and the activities of the various supply chains impact on the customers, stakeholders and wider society is comprehensive. The impact of the Supply Chain Partners combined approaches have resulted in people gaining life and employability skills that helps them live more independently, secure sustainable employment and actively contribute to family and community life. Measures such as lower unemployment, reduced re-offending rates and reduced use of social and healthcare services all demonstrate the impact of the combined supply chains performance. (8.3)

## 6. AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

A number of areas where further development would be beneficial were identified during the Assessment. These are for the Organisation to consider as a contribution to continuous improvement. The numbers in brackets refer to the criteria of the Standard:

Training and development for Supply Chain Partners is good with regards to systems and processes related to the various contracts. Shaw Trust is asked to consider whether more could be done to more consistently and proactively encourage Supply Chain Partners to not only identify learning and development needs, but also to share the evaluation of the impact this has had on their business performance. (5.3)

Whilst it is clear that recent communications about the Modern Slavery Act 2015 have been shared with Supply Chain Partners, Shaw Trust is encouraged in its plans to check adherence with the principles of the legislation as part of its assurance activities. This has not yet occurred and is a matter of timing. (7.5)

There is a good strategy to seek and share feedback from stakeholders and from external assessment activities. Shaw Trust is encouraged to take more overt action in sharing with Supply Chain Partners what will be done as a result and what actions either have been or will be taken. By explaining what has been done, this could help Supply Chain Partners to put action into context and feel their feedback is continually valued. (8.1)

## 7. FINDINGS

The feedback below is reported against key criteria of the Merlin Standard, aligned with the “Plan-Do-Review” business cycle.

PLAN
<p><b>Through planning an effective supply chain, the range of Partners and how they are engaged ensures there is a group of organisations that cover a diverse range of providers that all understand the requirements of the contract and their contributions to achieving the desired outcomes.</b></p>
<p>In terms of supply chain design, the aim of Shaw Trust is to ensure the delivery of solutions which meet the customer and commissioner needs. As a result, there is cross-sectoral representation delivering sufficient capacity to meet the volume requirements provided by the commissioner. Shaw Trust promotes open, supportive and constructive dialogue with existing and potential Supply Chain Partners alongside stakeholders and commissioner target customer groups. Recent examples include the Live Well Kent, Aim4Work and more recently the Work and Health Programme, where specific customer groups supported research to identify the services that would best suit their needs and which could be supported by specialist partners, which influenced the commissioning process. Furthermore, due to the diverse range of commissioners, Shaw Trust uses a range of methods to ensure it captures diversity in the organisations it works with. Research is undertaken using local NOMIS data (provided by the Office for National Statistics), Local Employer and Authority priorities are reviewed and the Business Development Team carries out research on regional demographics, unemployment and Employment Support Allowance rates as well as the availability of existing local services. Supply Chain Partner comments included <i>"A good mix of partners, we all have strengths that are recognised and we can play to"</i> and <i>"Its fit for purpose, good mix, and we can spot purchase if we have a specific need."</i></p> <p>There are strategies in place to review supply chain design to meet the changing needs of customers and commissioners. An example of this is where Living Well Kent was initially designed based on the commissioner understanding of current demand. A better understanding of the demand from a customer perspective was gained through Management Information and so working with commissioners and Supply Chain Partners via monthly meetings and interface meetings, enabled Shaw Trust to re-design the supply chain to meet the demand. A further example is the Intervention Fund strategy whereby working in collaboration with Supply Chain Partners via the Intervention Fund Procurement group, decisions have been made about how this fund is used to continue to achieve the commissioner’s objectives. On the HMPPS contract, the end-to-end Supply Chain Partners have been re-profiled around changing demand and shifting logistical challenges. On the Living Well Kent contract, over a three year period moved from seven partners to 12 to 27 to accommodate the needs of the customers.</p>

During the previous Merlin assessment, the Shaw Trust strategy to support TUPE activity was identified as a strength and this has remained the case in the 2018 assessment. All legal requirements regarding TUPE continue to be followed which include facilitating communications between Supply Chain Partners, ensuring all time-phased commitments are met and signposting to the relevant external legal experts where needed. All legal requirements are met from an employee point of view. TUPE is also accounted for in commissioning and implementation planning. Through the commissioning of the Work and Health Programme, Shaw Trust transparently shared information with potential Partners around TUPE risk and how this was mitigated in the financial model. Recently transferred staff confirmed a supportive and smooth transfer. Comments from Supply Chain Partners included "*We've transferred people in and out and Shaw Trust have always played the game*" and "*TUPE implications were submitted as part of the additional information requested throughout Work and Health.*"

Supply Chain Partners have clearly defined performance expectations set out in their contract which is in place when contract delivery starts. Performance expectations are firstly shared as part of Supply Chain Partner Packs ahead of bid submission to ensure understanding and confirm all parties feel these are reasonably achievable. As per the Bid Process, Supply Chain Partner Packs are issued as part of Supply Chain Partner dialogue and partner declarations are signed to confirm the agreement. There is a contract specific Performance Management Framework (PMF) discussed with Supply Chain Partners to agree how performance will be monitored. Should the commissioner's requirements change, Shaw Trust ensures that all Supply Chain Partners understand the variation and have an opportunity to discuss any concerns using the interface meetings. Where performance expectations shift there is consultation with Supply Chain Partners to ensure they are achievable, for example, on the Work Choice year seven extensions/variation. Supply Chain Partners comments included "*Expectations have always been clear, even as we wind down Work Choice there are specific performance requirements*" and "*Still very clear expectations.*"

Shaw Trust strives to ensure that its funding and payment arrangements are fair and proportionate. Supply Chain Partners confirmed that throughout the Bid Process negotiation is carried out in an open and transparent manner and contracts are only secured with organisations that are clear about the level and method of payment offered. There are examples of where, if required, financial support has been offered to one or more Supply Chain Partners. For example, on the Work and Health Programme, Shaw Trust commits to approving a higher payment of a specific contractual outcome for individual Supply Chain Partners without any assurance of receiving payment at this level from the commissioner. Another example of flexibility and financial assistance was in the re-negotiation of the monthly service fee schedule to support a Supply Chain Partner affected by contract closures. Shaw Trust ensures that the funding provided to Supply Chain Partners is equal to the level of funding it would use to deliver the same contract. This was demonstrated through cash-flow models used as part of the bid process for Work and Health Programme and Aim4Work, which provide a breakdown of the contract spends, allowing alterations to be made. This also shows the cash deficit, breakeven point and proposed surplus, ensuring Supply Chain Partners can manage cash-flow through the life of the programme, whilst providing the level of service required.

There has been action taken to reduce payment term timescales to ensure cash flow for Supply Chain Partners is maintained, for example, Aim4Work Supply Chain Partners are paid monthly payments even though Shaw Trust receives payments quarterly via the commissioner and for the Work and Health Programme Supply Chain Partners there has been an improvement in payment terms from 30 days to 10 days on service fees. Most notably Shaw Trust has ensured that Supply Chain Partners are offered a meaningful allocation of work, providing specialist partners with a minimum and maximum volume of referrals and income. This has been well received by Tier 3 Specialist Supply Chain Partners. A comment from a Supply Chain Partner illustrates the Shaw Trust position "*The change to the outcome payments was a big piece of work, and technical; Shaw Trust were open and transparent and provided opportunities for discussion.*"

## DO

### **Supply Chain Partners are supported to develop their services to meet or exceed expected performance and quality assurance requirements.**

Shaw Trust aims to support all Supply Chain Partners to fulfil their contractual obligations throughout the life of the contract. It has recently supported Work Programme and Work Choice Supply Chain Partners with their run-down processes, enabling them to understand what is available in the pipeline (stream of customers remaining on the programme). There have been co-produced action plans to encourage on-going improvement and investment in additional resource via the Shaw Trust Call Centre to support the challenging environment as a direct result of contract close and exit. Following an audit intervention from the Commercial Assurance Team, a Work Programme Supply Chain Partner used their audit findings to improve other aspects of their business areas and won additional contracts as a result. The Shaw Trust Community Navigators (broker of services using the Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale to signpost the customers to the most appropriate intervention) promote their service effectively and generate new referrals for Supply Chain Partners. Shaw Trust also provides support by providing its central volunteering service to Supply Chain Partners, supporting the recruitment of volunteers to work with customers to enhance their service and meet contractual obligations. Supply Chain Partners corroborated the position and commented *"Extensive training at the on-boarding stage... and that (support) has continued"*; *"Their IT department worked really closely with ours to get things set up correctly"*; and *"Full training for delivery staff was given for the Work and Health Programme, and support from the IT department with the digital scanner."*

Shaw Trust continues to develop its supply chain management approach so that there is a greater level of collaboration with Supply Chain Partners. The culture of open communication without unreasonable constraint is started as part of contract implementation. Contact details for each department or work-stream lead are circulated to Supply Chain Partners ensuring they can contact specific areas for relevant advice. At Implementation events, contacts within all Supply Chain Partners are shared to ensure communication is encouraged. Supply Chain Partners confirmed that they are offered many forms of support to embed the values of Open, Honest and Transparent Partnership Working. The positivity of Supply Chain Partner comments indicates why this is an area of significant strength, as follows:

*"The one thing about Shaw Trust is the openness, communication is transparent, one team approach – it's not us and them ..... and the participant is at the heart."*

*"Open, collaborative relationship, they want you to succeed."*

*"It's like been part of a family, we have the same goals and objectives."*

*"We've had four supply chain managers over the life of the contract, but all were approachable and had a good understanding of the operational delivery."*

*"Over time the approach has changed from instructive and demanding to a partnership where partners are valued."*

*"They are professional, transparent, open and honest – the partnership is evolving."*

*"They're a good provider, we'd work with them again."*

*"Honest, open relationship with the opportunity to grow with them."*

*"Can't speak highly enough of X, its like the joining of minds, he's open to innovation, ideas and things."*

There is a robust Performance Management Framework and Management Assurance Framework that offers Supply Chain Partners every opportunity to discuss their performance and raise any issues or concerns. This activity is followed up with regular access to contract Interface Meetings that take place throughout the year. Supply Chain Partner comments included:

*"Monthly and quarterly performance reviews, which are really useful."*

*"You can talk to them about anything, the conversation on extrapolation could be difficult, but it isn't with them."*

*"Performance management continues at this stage, they are really supportive and work with you, like tracking of customers."*

*"We gained input from a partner with the expertise to revise the approach to risk assessments, which has then been shared with Aim4Work."*

*"The performance management and quality assurance is robust, but fit for purpose."*

Since the last Merlin assessment, there has been an investment in ICONI customer engagement and progression software which is in use across many of the current contracts. Most Supply Chain Partners confirm that they can run reports independently and on demand. Supply Chain Partners are now able to download their own suite of performance reports, and on the Work and Health Programme, there are plans to expand the visibility to whole contract performance. Supply Chain Partner comments included:

*"Still getting reports for Work Choice, and a flight path for each customer."*

*"Reporting is good and helps us manage performance."*

*"The reports are good, comprehensive use of compliance and performance data."*

*"We get reports for compliance, forecasting, referrals, and can see others' performance, so we can see who is doing well and learn from them."*

*"MI reporting system is excellent."*

Management Information is used to conduct trend analysis and cross contract performance levels to provide a more strategic level of assurance to the Senior Management Team and commissioners. Using this information, comparisons can be made about the number of weeks on the programme to job entry variants considering impairments, such as visual or mental health by customer category.

To monitor the quality of delivery, the Management Assurance Framework has been improved to provide more contract specific support for Supply Chain Partners to conduct their own self-assessment of their quality assurance processes. These completed responses are used by the Shaw Trust Commercial Assurance Team to allocate their resources based on a proportionality and identified risk. Using this approach Supply Chain Partners can monitor their own quality standards and identify areas for improvement which are captured during contract review meetings. For example, one Supply Chain Partner had a high outcome claim rejection rate, so they were supported to develop a checklist to directly improve the quality of their submissions reducing the number being rejected.

Regional Supply Chain Managers receive Management Assurance Framework checks from Supply Chain Partners on a monthly basis and make trends available to the Commercial Assurance Team and Quality Improvement Forum. Supply Chain Partner comments included:

*"Monthly and quarterly performance reviews, which are really useful."*

*"You can talk to them about anything, the conversation on extrapolation could be difficult, but it isn't with them."*

*"Performance management continues at this stage, they are really supportive and work with you, like tracking of customers."*

*"We gained input from a partner with the expertise to revise the approach to risk assessments, which has then been shared with Aims for Work."*

*"The performance management and quality assurance is robust, but fit for purpose."*

Customer experience is captured through the completion of short customer surveys as individuals finish their programme. The Commercial Assurance Team provides Supply Chain Partners with Health Checks and Audits to support them to improve the quality of service to customers. Health Checks take place during the first six-months of a contract and are followed up with a feedback session supporting the Supply Chain Partner to develop an action plan. Once the action plan has been developed, it is followed up by the Regional Supply Chain Manager and if necessary the Commercial Assurance Team auditor to monitor the progress being made.

## REVIEW

**Review and evaluation is used to demonstrate the impact of the services delivered and continuously improve service delivery.**

The Shaw Trust approach to measuring the social impact of contract delivery is through policy development and the research undertaken into wider social issues. This research documents how the combined delivery of Shaw Trust and Supply Chain Partners demonstrates social impact in the communities. Two social impact reports have recently been published, looking at Disability and Employment, following the delivery of Work Choice and Work Programme and Mental Health in Employment, reflecting the Live Well Kent and Aim4Work contract delivery. These reports are published and shared with commissioners and stakeholders, to influence future decision making and policy in all society activity. On the HMPSS CFO3 work there is impact in relation to ensuring an inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. Many Supply Chain Partners are encouraged to complete an annual self-assessment and continuous improvement plan which capture some social impact measures such as the number of people moving into paid employment, the use of wellbeing scales such as, Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, Wider Well-being Assessments throughout the contracts which monitor changes in the customer's wellbeing. Supply Chain Partner reflections included:

*"Its about taking the learning and giving back, contributing to the environment."*

*"Supported 1000 customers, 65% gone into work and about 50% sustained."*

*"Individuals go into work and become less reliant on public services."*

*"It has helped people with mild to moderate mental illness to move into employment,"*

*"Out performed and achieved a number of people into a job outcome and sustained employment."*

*"For every person we get into sustainable employment we save the government £9000."*

Joint activities with Supply Chain Partners mean that many of customers suffer from long-term diseases attributable to tobacco, hypertension, alcohol, being overweight or being physically inactive. MECC is an approach to behaviour change that utilises the millions of day-to-day interactions that organisations and people have with other people to encourage changes in behaviour that have a positive effect on the health and well-being of individuals, communities and populations.

A new activity introduced to support the development of the Work and Health Programme design and delivery has been to engage with subject experts to ensure the best offer to commissioners. By consulting with external strategic and delivery Supply Chain Partners to support service design, this has ensured delivery models are in alignment with current practice. Supply Chain Partner comments included:

*"Staff have gained additional knowledge and skills, one worked with under 25 and now working with over 25."*

*"Staff transitioned from programme to programme and gained additional knowledge along the way."*

*"People have gained access to sustainable, paid employment, whilst others have genuinely improved their health and wellbeing."*

*"It gives them transferable skills; communication skills, teamwork, as well as builds self-confidence, self-worth, etc."*

*"Its changed people's lives, helped them to help themselves."*

## 8. CONCLUSION AND CONDITIONS OF ACCREDITATION

In conclusion, this assessment provided the opportunity to review the practices of Shaw Trust for the current contracts against the Merlin Standard. The senior leadership team should be mindful that any significant organisational or senior staff changes, and/or being awarded additional contracts using a significantly different supply chains may require a strategic review. Similarly, any decisions reached by the Independent Complaints Examiner may also result in a strategic review being required to ensure the Organisation continues to operate in line with the Merlin principles.

### Holders of the Merlin Standard Accreditation must:

- Maintain and continually improve upon their approach to Supply Chain Management.
- Cooperate with annual Reviews as required by Assessment Services Ltd
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd ([merlin@assessmentsservices.com](mailto:merlin@assessmentsservices.com)) or their Lead Assessor if the key contact name or contact details change.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any significant changes made to the organisational structure, senior management or systems that may impact on their accreditation; email:
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd immediately if they gain additional contracts.
- Inform Assessment Services Ltd of any serious complaint or rise in numbers of complaints received from Supply Chain Partners.
- Not undertake or omit to undertake any activity that may be misleading and/or may cause Assessment Services Ltd and/or the Merlin Standard to be brought into disrepute.
- Only use the Merlin Standard Quality Mark for the areas within the scope of the accreditation and in accordance with the guidelines.
- Ensure in cases where accreditation is withdrawn or where they do not come forward for Accreditation Review, remove from display any certificates or plaques issued by Assessment Services Ltd and do not display the Merlin Standard Quality Mark, nor refer to being a former holder of the Merlin Standard.
- Be aware that Assessment Services Ltd reserves the right to remove any accreditation and/or certification previously applied if payment is not received for services provided.
- Submit their Booking Form for re-accreditation to the Merlin Standard at least 4 months prior to the accreditation anniversary date ensuring all pre on-site activity is completed in a timely way including planning, payment, completion of the Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ), Pre-Assessment Notes (PAN) and interview scheduling. Accreditation Reviews are due 2 years from the anniversary accreditation date; it is expected that organisations will be assessed by this date or will risk being de-accredited.

	
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