



## **Accreditation and Certification Assessment Policy and Procedure**

### **1 Scope**

The Society of Forensic Interviewers (SoFI) provides an accreditation service by which individuals can gain formal recognition of their achievements through successful completion of our Accredited Learning Programme (ALP) in the Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing. This ALP is accredited by SFJ Awards, an OfQual regulated Awarding Body, and has been mapped and found to be equivalent to a level 4/5 vocational qualification. By gaining certification which is subject to a rigorous quality assurance process, employers will have confidence that their employees have reached an agreed level of skills and knowledge.

This involves the development, delivery and awarding of accreditation and certification based on accredited training and an assessment process which will, itself, be regularly checked for quality. This will ensure that every element is fair, valid and carried out in line with the defined processes.

Additionally, Learners who have successfully completed this Award can enrol on the Practical Course, which covers the practical application of the Theory Award in interview situations. This course is not a part of the ALP, and is not accredited by SFJ Awards. However, it will lead to the Learner achieving Accredited Interviewer status endorsed by SoFI.

This policy covers how SoFI will conduct the assessment process for accreditation and certification in a fair and consistent manner.

### **2 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to recognise the need for a fair and consistent approach regarding the assessment of SoFI certification and accreditation to ensure that the process does not have an Adverse Effect on the assessment outcomes.

### **3 Definition**

Learner - a member of SoFI who has enrolled on a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards) or by SoFI.

Accredited Trainer - a member of SoFI who has met the Accredited Trainer Approval Criteria to provide online and/or practical tuition for a SoFI course accredited by the OfQual Awarding Body (SFJ Awards) or by SoFI.

Director - A registered Director of SoFI or a member of staff employed by SoFI who is not an Accredited Trainer.

## **4 Assessment Methods**

The assessment process and assessment materials will be overseen by the Accreditation and Certification Committee who will in turn report on the process to the Members Council.

### **4.1 Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing Award**

The SoFI Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing Award is only available to SoFI members on the SoFI website ([www.so-fi.org](http://www.so-fi.org)). Learners will be supported in their learning by an online tutor selected from the Accredited Trainers list. Learners will then notify SoFI when they are ready to take the examination and they will be supplied with a Unique Learner Number. This will be no later than six months after enrolment.

The online examination will comprise of short answer questions and multi-choice questions. It will cover each of the five modules and require a pass mark of 75% for each module, and be made available to the Learner, at an agreed date and time, for a period of 70 minutes, after which, the Learner will be locked out. This period may be adjusted, if required, to comply with the SoFI Equal Opportunities policy.

On completion, the examination paper will be submitted to a SoFI Director and will only be identified by the Unique Learner Number. This will then be individually allocated to two Accredited Trainers, neither of whom will be the Learner's online tutor, who will independently assess the examination responses against the assessment materials and allocate a pass or fail, based on a percentage mark of 75%, for each module, as appropriate.

In the event of a conflict of opinion between the two assessments, the examination paper will be allocated to a third Accredited Trainer in the same way as an ordinary examination paper. This assessment will be final.

Learners and/or Accredited Trainers may appeal against the final decision through the SoFI Appeals Policy and Procedure.

The Learner will be notified of their result within 15 working days from the date of the examination. If unsuccessful, the Learner will be notified of their scores for each module and which modules(s) they failed.

On successful completion of the course, the Learner will receive a certificate endorsed by SFJ Awards and SoFI, and will be entitled to Accredited Member status, and to enrol on the SoFI Accredited Interviewer course.

#### 4.2 Re-Takes for the Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing Award

If they have been unsuccessful the Learner may re-take the failed modules, up to a maximum of 2 times, at no less than 6 week intervals, within a period of 12 months since the date of enrolment. The time allowed for the re-take will be adjusted appropriately.

If they are unsuccessful on their re-take(s), the Learner will be required to recommence the whole process again, after the expiry of the initial 12 month period.

The re-taken examination(s) will follow the same procedures as at 4.1.

#### 4.3 SoFI Accredited Interviewer

The SoFI Accredited Interviewer course will only be available to those Learners who have successfully passed the relevant Theory course. They will need to enrol on the SoFI Accredited Interviewer course within 6 months of successfully completing the Theory Award, or taking the re-assessment examination for Accredited Member.

Courses will be provided by Accredited Trainers and listed on the SoFI website. Learners will be able to select from this list to suit their requirements and ensure the practical scenarios are relevant to their work,

The SoFI Accredited Interviewer course will be classroom based, culminating in a digitally recorded final practical Interview. This will be assessed, either live or from the recording, against the Assessment Materials by the Learner's Accredited Trainer as either Competent or Not Yet Competent. A copy of the recording will be passed to the SoFI Director together with the result and reasoning behind the assessment. The recording will be allocated a Unique Learner Number and submitted to a second independent Accredited Trainer who will repeat the process.

In the event of a conflict of opinion between the two assessments, the recording will be allocated to a third Accredited Trainer in the same way as an ordinary recording. This assessment will be final.

Learners and/or Accredited Trainers may appeal against the assessment process through the SoFI Appeals Policy and Procedure.

On successful completion of the course, the Learner will receive an Accredited Interviewer certificate endorsed by SoFI, and will be entitled to Accredited Interviewer status.

#### 4.4 Re-takes for the SoFI Accredited Interviewer Course

If they have been unsuccessful the Learner may re-take the final practical interview, no later than three months after the original final practical interview. There is no limit on how many times the Learner re-takes the final interview within this period.

If they are unsuccessful on the re-take(s), within the three month period, the Learner will be required to successfully complete the re-assessment examination for the Theory Award and re-take the SoFI Accredited Interviewer course within six months of that examination.

The re-taken final practical interview(s) will follow the same procedure as at 4.3.

## 5 Recording Results

The SoFI Directors will be responsible for maintaining an electronic record of Learners, Accredited Trainers and achievements. This will be kept on the Members database within the SoFI website, and will be retained for a minimum period of three years.

They will also be responsible for fulfilling the obligations placed upon SoFI by the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards) as an Approved Centre.

## 6 Periodic Re-Assessment

The Learner will have access to the learning materials, including updates, for the period of their membership.

Accredited Members will be required to re-take the Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing examination on a periodic basis (period to be confirmed - proposed to be every two years). The examination process will be as per the procedure at 4.1.

Accredited Interviewers will be required to re-take the Theory of Ethical Investigative Interviewing examination and then re-take the final practical interview within three months, on a

periodic basis (period to be confirmed - proposed to be every two years). The examination process will be as per the procedure at 4.1 and 4.3.

## **7 Quality Assurance Process**

### Quality Assurance Process

The method of assessment for the Award final examination and the Accredited Interviewer final interview ensure that quality assurance is an ongoing process. The use of two independent assessors and Unique Learner Numbers ensures that the assessments will be conducted impartially.

Should an Accredited Trainer's assessments give cause for concern the matter will be referred to the Accreditation and Certification Committee to decide on an appropriate course of action.

Additionally, the final examination and final interview assessments will be anonymised and random dip samples will be checked by members of the Accreditation and Certification Committee, the Members Council or designated SoFI staff on an annual basis.

As part of the approval process, Accredited Trainers permit spot checks on their course delivery to be carried out by members of the Accreditation and Certification Committee, the Members Council or designated SoFI staff. These will be conducted as and when it appears necessary following the checks carried out above.

## **8 Review of the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed annually and revised as necessary in response to Learners' and Accredited Trainers' feedback, changes in SoFI provisions and guidance from the Awarding Organisation (SFJ Awards).