

QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY

Pictographic overview of the Educationwise Academy holistic process



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QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY

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Role of the Internal Quality Assurance Team

The Internal Quality Assurer is an important role as it maintains, monitors the quality and assurance of qualification and unit delivery and certification, and is the main contact between the centre and Awarding Organisation (AO hereafter) in relation to monitoring activities.

Within the role, the Internal Quality Assurer is expected to:

- a) Develop and follow internal policies, procedures and documentation for the carrying out and maintenance of quality systems in line with Awarding Organisation requirements.
- b) Ensure all Assessors hold and maintain the required qualifications and occupational expertise to deliver the qualifications and units they have been assigned to.
- c) Provide support to Assessors in relation to procedures and policies for the delivery of the qualifications and units they are assigned to.
- d) Identify training needs and provide ongoing training to Assessors to continually improve the standard of qualification and unit delivery.
- e) Co-ordinate the timely registration and certification claims for learners.
- f) Maintain appropriate records of quality assurance, assessment, registration and certification activities in line with Awarding Organisation requirements.
- g) Ensure sampling plans take into account the ratio of learners per Assessor per qualification to meet the quality assurance requirements to cover all units delivered within a 12-month period.
- h) Facilitate standardisation activities to support the continuous improvement of qualification and unit delivery.
- i) Ensure all assessment documentation, maintained by Assessors, is complete, up-to-date and legible.
- j) Ensure conflicts of interest are identified and addressed, including not allowing the quality assurance of own assessment work or cross quality assurance where two people quality assure each other's work.

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- k) Conduct observations of Assessors conducting the assessment process.
- l) Conduct learner interviews to monitor and analyse the quality of the assessment process and learner journey.
- m) Impart information and feedback resulting from monitoring activities and ensure all actions are addressed by the indicated timescales.

This Internal Verification Strategy defines the activity taking place and to carry out internal monitoring of the quality management systems and procedures in place to meet Institute of Apprenticeships qualifications requirements.

This document will be used in conjunction with each assessment strategy issued by the Awarding Organisation to meet qualification requirements for each of the routes we as the centre are approved to offer, we will also follow Awarding Organisations Quality Strategy.

Internal Quality Assurance will focus on the safety, fairness, validity, authenticity, sufficiency, relevance, reliability and consistency of assessment decisions. This will include monitoring assessors by the means of carrying out observations and sampling of assessment decisions/ assessment documentation which will encompass the range of assessment methods being used within the qualification routes.

Sampling Strategy

Sampling Assessments

Two forms of sampling will be carried out to ensure that quality assurance is maintained. These are:

- Interim sampling: dipping into the assessment process whilst the learner is at different stages. This ensures that the assessment of the learner is proceeding satisfactorily following the principles of plan, judge and feedback.
- Summative sampling: involves the Internal Quality Assurance Team reviewing the quality of the assessment decisions by the Assessor. The IQA team should be able to follow an audit trail, which clearly demonstrates that the Assessor has checked the validity, authenticity, reliability, currency and sufficiency of the evidence presented.

The IQA team must record and report all sampling undertaken in sufficient detail to be able to justify the decision made. IQA reports will be produced for all sampling and must be signed by both the Assessor and IQA.

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The Internal Quality Assurance team achieves this by thorough planning which should include observing Assessor/learners assessments and identifying areas of risk. An acronym has been created to help check that the sampling system addresses all essential factors. This acronym is CAMERA. Many factors need to be considered when sampling. Careful consideration of these can help to produce a plan that ensures assessment within the centre is being carried out to national standards and meets awarding body requirements. The following table outlines these, and it must be noted that all Candidates, Assessors, Methods, Evidence, Records and Assessment locations must be sampled in the sampling plan as a holistic approach to IQA.

Sampling plans must include sampling of all types of:

- a) Candidates (Learners)
- b) Assessors
- c) Methods of assessment
- d) Evidence or Elements
- e) Records
- f) Assessment sites

A sampling plan will be maintained for all samplings planned and conducted showing the following information:

- a) Learner name
- b) Qualification Title
- c) Registration number
- d) Planned interim sampling updated to show actual sampling undertaken including unit number and type of assessment sampled
- e) Planned summative sampling updated to show actual sampling undertaken including unit number and type of assessment sampled.

Sampling assessments should involve reviewing the quality of the Assessor judgements at both Formative and Summative stages. It must also meet the rules of assessment (in accordance with Awarding Organisations requirements) i.e.

Valid, Authentic, Current, Sufficient and Reliable

It is not acceptable that the Internal Quality Assurance team should search extensively to find evidence, which supports the Assessors decision(s).

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Factors	You must consider
Candidates (Learner)	Ethnic origin, age, gender other factors. All Learners should be sampled throughout.
Assessors	Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience.
Methods of assessment	Questioning, observation, testimony, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), use of simulation, product evidence, assignments, projects and tests etc.
Evidence or Elements	Problem areas, special requirements, formal evidence requirements as set by the AO.
Records	Reports from Assessors, IQA records, learner's portfolios and files etc.
Assessment sites	Workplace assessments, on and off-the job, training, other assessment locations.

To help monitor the IQA strategy, each internal quality assurer will maintain an overall sampling plan. The plan will be put in place before the learners start their learning and assessments. It should take all aspects of the learner's programme into account, including the scheme of work, spread of learning activities etc.

Sampling Rates

The Internal Quality Assurer achieves this by thorough planning which should include observing Assessor/learners assessments and identifying areas of risk. Different rates for sampling will be adopted dependent on the risk and experience of the Assessor delivering the qualification or unit they have been assigned.

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Given the above when compiling and following the IQA sampling plan, the internal quality assurer must ensure that:

- All assessors are observed at least twice within a twelve-month period and more often where the assessor is inexperienced or where problems had been identified during previous internal quality assurance.
- 25% of all learners will be sampled for each qualification delivered using a range of methods including work products, learner interviews and assessor observations.
- All the methods of assessment normally carried out by the assessor are sampled over a twelve-month period or the duration of the qualification
- All the qualifications and different components of the qualification (e.g. units) that the learners are working towards are sampled over a twelve-month period or the duration of the qualification.
- Each quarter the lead IQA will assign 2 learners per qualification for each member of the senior leadership team to sample via a learner monitoring template which will be provided by the lead IQA.

Each learners work is sampled at least once as they work towards completing their qualification

The rates above may be subject to change for instance:

- Where a qualification is new to the centre, the first cohort will be sampled at a 100% rate unless otherwise authorised by the Awarding Organisation.
- Where the sampling strategy of the Awarding Organisation overrides that of the centre due to the risk rating or actions resulting from monitoring activities.
- Where a contractual requirement requires additional sampling to take place (N.B. this will not override the requirements of the previous two instances where this sampling rate would require a lesser sampling rate to be adopted).

Risk Management

Assessor risk management – IQA's will carry out risk management assessments of each assessor that they are responsible for, the areas that this will be based on include (but not limited to):

- How new the assessor is to the route/qualification.
- Assessing Learners against recognised standards.
- Understanding the assessment requirements.
- Completion of assessment documentation.
- Judgements being made against recognised standards.
- Competence in feeding back to Learners.
- CPD undertaken (in accordance with the Awarding Organisations Quality Strategy).

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Each internal quality assurer should complete a risk assessment for each assessor he/she is responsible for, using 'risk categories' based upon:

- Assessor's experience
- Assessor's qualifications
- The number of candidates the assessor is responsible for (workload)
- The location/area covered by the assessor.

Risk management levels will be RAG rated:

- High (Red)
- Medium (Amber)
- Low (Green)

Risk indication: Dependant on the risk identified, will depend on the level of support that will be given to the assessor, i.e. if assessors are identified as high risk, greater support and guidance will be given to ensure that the assessors gains the confidence and is able to carry out the role as assessor, this will be reviewed as an ongoing basis as and when the risk level reduces so will the amount of assessor observations and sampling activities be reduced.

Assessors will be required to agree the risk assessment with their allocated Internal Quality Assurer and ensure activity is internally quality assured in line with the internal quality plan.

Assessor Observations

The Internal Quality Assurer will complete observations of delivery and assessment to ensure the management of the quality of the programme to include:

- Direct observation of the Assessor in action and giving feedback on performance.
- Direct observation of an Assessor's planning and review activities with learners.

These observations will be conducted, at a minimum, on the timeframes listed earlier in this document and clear evidence of the conducting of these will be maintained for viewing by the Awarding Organisation during monitoring activities.

Evidence of the enactment of any associated actions will be recorded and kept within the quality assurance folder for viewing by the Awarding Organisation during monitoring activities.

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Standardising Assessment and Quality Assurance Judgments

Standardisation (sometimes referred to as benchmarking or moderating) is an important part of the duties of the Internal Quality Assurer.

Regular meetings will be held to conduct standardisation exercises:

- Meetings to be held on a termly basis (more frequent as required or on release of new standards)
- Meetings to cover feedback from Awarding Organisation, monitoring activities, assessment good practice and interpretation of standards and qualification specifications.
- Meetings to cover feedback from learners as to satisfaction levels of both assessment practice and sessions attended.
- Exercises using real learners' evidence to be used in order to standardise the assessment decision process.
- The Staff Microsoft TEAM's discussion area will also be used for standardisation practice.

Minutes of meetings to be produced and copies kept for viewing during Awarding Organisation monitoring activities

Managing the Quality

The systems and processes described above have been designed to maintain the quality of assessment and to ensure that we adhere to the requirements of the Awarding Organisation.

For external monitoring activities, the Internal Quality Assurer is required to have the following information readily available:

- Centre File containing all documents
- Numbers of current registered learners per qualification/unit
- Internal Quality Assurer and Assessor details – especially CVs, up to date CPD records and current Assessor caseloads
- Copies of relevant staff certificates
- Assessment records and plans
- Internal Quality Assurance sampling strategy
- Internal Quality Assurance records including feedback to Assessors, Assessor observations and learner interviews
- Learner evidence records and documentary evidence
- Records of claims for certification.

The Centre Coordinator has overall accountability & responsibility of QA within the Centre, however the Internal Quality Assurance team will be responsible for ensuring that all action points raised through Awarding Organisation monitoring activities are addressed within the specified timescale(s).

Claims for certification can only be made by an Internal Quality Assurer holding the appropriate qualification or directive from the Awarding Organisation. The Centre Coordinator is the main contact with Awarding Organisations, and the EQA. All communication to Awarding Organisations must go through the Centre Coordinator.

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Managing the Quality Disputes about the quality of assessment

In instances where there are disputes with regard to the quality of assessment. The Centre Co-ordinator must record any agreed outcomes and if necessary, consult with Awarding Organisations External Quality Assurer for advice and guidance. Also follow the centre appeals and complaints procedure which sits alongside Awarding Organisations appeals and complaints procedure.

IQA Records

Assessment and internal quality assurance records should be kept by the centre for a minimum period of five years.

They must be:

- Stored securely so that only those who have a right to see the information may do so.
- Easily accessible to the people who need to use them and keep them up to date.
- Made available to the EQA during monitoring visits and upon request to other members of the Awarding Organisations quality assurance team.

Note: Internal quality assurers must ensure that sufficient records of assessment, internal quality assurance and learner achievement are retained at the centre and not kept with the learner's work (e.g. in their portfolio) only for them to disappear when the learner completes and leaves.

Failure to comply with all aspects of internal quality assurance could result in:

- Learner certificate claims being delayed or rejected.
- Sanctions being placed on the centre.
- Internal quality assurer's approval being withdrawn.