Internal Verification Policy and Procedure

The Internal Verification Policy aims to cover both Vocational Programmes and Academic programmes.

Internal Verification (IV) of Vocational Programmes is split into four main sections – **sampling, standardisation, monitoring and the development and support of assessors.**

IV Sampling Strategy Internal Verifiers will implement the following sampling strategy. Sampling will include:

- All assessors over a 12 month period
- All units for the validity of assessment decisions for each assessor over a 12 month period including Mandatory and Optional units
- The full range of age, gender, new starters, mid-term and well established learners
- The full range of evidence and assessment methods
- The first countersigned decision from each unit
- Interim and summative assessment decisions – Internal Verification will not be an “end” process.

Newly qualified and/or recruited assessors will be more frequently sampled until the Internal Verifier has confirmed effectiveness, reliability and quality of assessment decisions and practice.

For all unqualified assessors, each unit will be countersigned by a qualified assessor and the first judgement from each unit will be sampled by the IV. This will continue until assessor award is achieved and assessment practice deemed sufficient and competent.

Standardisation of Assessment Judgements

The Internal Verifier is responsible for ensuring the standardisation of assessment judgements and will:

- Ensure that written feedback to assessors contributes on an ongoing basis to the standardisation of assessment decisions
- Plan and implement standardisation meetings with all assessors. Internal Verifiers must ensure that standardisation meetings:
    - Focus on any revisions to the standards and how they differ from old standards, areas identified through monitoring where evidence has been difficult to generate, or where monitoring suggests that assessors are taking different approaches.

- Focus on validity, sufficiency, currency, and authenticity of the evidence reviewed at the meetings – use actual learners portfolios/evidence; and
- Develop a supportive, non-threatening environment where assessors are willing to share issues and concerns in order to ensure that each assessor makes valid assessment decisions.

Monitoring Assessment Practice

The Internal Verifier will monitor the assessment process and will:

- Ensure that there is a clear and accurate audit trail of the IV and assessment processes relating to each learner incorporated within the IV and assessors records as well as the portfolio itself
- Observe at least one assessment for each assessor every 6 months as a minimum. The level of observation may increase/decrease depending on changes in assessor experience, learner group, award standards, and internal procedures. All observations will be recorded.
- Interview learners and workplace supervisors to establish understanding of the award and validate portfolio evidence and record the discussion. Record any issues, areas for improvement or good practice highlighted during the interview and provide feedback to the assessor.

Development and support of assessors

To support and develop assessors the Internal Verifier will:

- Provide all assessors with an induction programme and issue them with their own copy of the standards for the relevant programme.
- Monitor all assessment methods used by assessors in order to identify training needs.
- Identify any occupational or professional development needs within the team of assessors.
- Give regular feedback to assessors regarding their assessment practice and the outcome of any monitoring or sampling.
- Ensure all new assessors not holding the necessary qualifications for conducting assessments, work towards achievement of the A1 Award within the first year of their employment and provide all necessary support to enable them to achieve their qualification.

Staff Training

All assessors and IVs are to maintain their own CPD plans and have them available at every EV visit. The IVs are to support the assessors in identifying and meeting their development needs; the IQA will support the IVs in identifying and meeting their own development needs.

Equality and Diversity

All staff will undertake appropriate anti discriminatory approach in all that they do as part of the company's policy.

Health and safety

It is the responsibilities of all the staff to operate appropriate health and safety mechanisms as part of the company's policy stated in staff handbook.

Data Protection

It is the responsibility of all the staff to store and allow access of data in accordance with company policy.

Contributing to the quality assurance process

All assessors must complete all their assessment records in accordance with this strategy and the awarding body specifications within a realistic time frame.
All assessors must attend at least 2 team meetings a year and mandatory standardisation meetings at least 4 a year.

Submissions for Internal verification

- It is the responsibility of learners to submit evidence for assessments.
- It is the responsibility of the assessor to submit assessed qualifications/awards for internal verification and to ensure that all documentation has been completed. Support and development
- All assessors must be proactive in maintaining their CPD in accordance with the above specifications and have annual development plans. These plans will be audited by their respective internal verifier.

- All assessors are to use their internal verifier for advice and guidance on the assessment process and on the interpretations of the occupational standards.

Sampling strategy

The internal verifier sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of assessor judgements at both interim and summative stages. This includes reviewing candidate portfolios perhaps before decisions have been made on any unit or when one or two units are completed. It will include checking the planning, review and feedback given to candidates by assessors and will enable the IV to evaluate the quality of formative guidance on assessment and to pick up any problems at an early stage. It will also highlight individual assessor needs which in turn may be used to develop the assessment team as a whole.

The IV will achieve this by good planning, which must in part include observing assessor performance.

Sampling

Correct sampling should entail reviewing the quality of the assessment judgement by evaluating how assessors have reached those decisions.
The internal verifier must be able to follow an audit trail, which clearly demonstrates that assessors have checked that the evidence presented meets the rules of evidence.
Evidence must be confirmed by assessors as:
Valid – relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
Authentic – Produced by the candidate
Current – Sufficiently recent for assessors to be confident that the same level of skills, understanding
Ethnic origin, age, gender, other factors, particular assessment requirements etc. Every candidate portfolio must be sampled

Assessors
Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience

Methods of assessment
Observation and all other methods used

Elements within the records

Problem areas, particular requirements, Reports from assessors, correct assessment practices, IV and Assessor records, candidate portfolios and files

Sampling Plan

The IV must complete a sampling plan at the beginning of the candidate's assessment programme and must record, on the plan, any variations made to it. Each sampling plan applies to all candidates registered within a one month period.

It is important that the Internal Verifier looks at decisions of the assessment team in any given period (possibly on a calendar basis or by candidate cohort).

The sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as 10%. However, every portfolio must be sampled. During the course of the programme, sampling from Assessors should cover, as a minimum, every Assessor, every unit, work from every assignment.

The internal verifier must sample the full range of assessment methods used for any one programme e.g. observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, products, APL, simulation etc. It is imperative that the internal verifier knows the programme thoroughly and the likely range of assessment methods and evidence sources that could be used.

The internal verifier must sample the full range of the assessment process from the Assessor/ Candidate Agreement, through planning, review, feedback and documentation and must include at least one assessor observation each year. All assessors are to be included in the sample, but a number of other factors must be considered:

- Experience If assessors are qualified and experienced it may not be necessary to look at more than one or two units per candidate.
- If assessors have less than 12 months' experience, are new to the centre or out of practice, the internal verifier will need to sample substantially more of their decisions.
- The internal verifier needs to look at the workload of each assessor so that the total sample fairly reflects the number of decisions being made by individual assessors. Increasing ratios of candidates to assessors may also indicate assessment problems.
- If the internal verifier has a particular concern regarding the assessment decisions of a particular assessor, then the ratio of sampling can be increased. This decision is at the discretion of the IV, who then makes a judgement about when to return to the original sampling plan. The internal verifier should record their concern on the relevant form.

In addition, secure records of all internal verification activity are maintained and the outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

In addition, Internal Verification (IV) of academic programmes follows the following procedures in the case of assignments and examinations.

- In the case of Levels 5 and above, moderation will also be carried out through a system of double marking of summative assignments and examinations.
- The course tutor will mark the assignment/examination to a pre set criteria. Then pass on the same assignment/examination to another tutor, who will also mark to the same criteria. The marks are averaged out and this will be the final mark assigned, subject to awarding body verification. This is overseen by the lead IV.
- It is the responsibility of all academic staff to participate in the moderation process by keeping the necessary records, attending moderation meetings and submitting marked student assessments, as requested.
- Results for internally assessed units are final only after internal and/or external moderation.
- All assessment evidence, which has been internally moderated, will be retained until the end of the session so that it is available, if required, for internal and external audit

Procedure:

The process includes the following:

Student registration •
Standardisation activities •
IV schedules •
Staff briefing / annual updating •
IV of assignments •
IV of assessment decisions •
Maintenance of IV records •
Standards verification (Entry to L3)
External Examination (L4-7) monitoring and review
Staff roles and responsibilities for each process, as appropriate
Key dates & actions for processes & procedures