



Quality Assurance of Assessment Policy

Policy description:

This policy and the following procedures apply to all relevant qualifications and will be implemented throughout Craven College, except where Awarding Organisation's procedures differ. The College will provide guidance regarding the deployment of staff undertaking quality assurance of assessment duties, and provide Staff Development and training to ensure effective quality assurance of assessment. Quality Assurance of Assessment must be identified in the planning of the programme. This policy includes differing methods of quality assurance of assessment - internal verification, second consideration, and moderation/standardisation.

Supporting documentation:

- Responsibilities of Lead Internal Verifiers
- Glossary of Terms
- Risk and Sampling
- Guidelines 2014/2015

Contents

a. Executive Summary

This policy and the following procedures apply to all relevant qualifications and will be implemented throughout Craven College, except where Awarding Organisations' procedures differ. The College will provide guidance regarding the deployment of staff undertaking quality assurance of assessment duties, and provide Staff Development and training to ensure effective quality assurance of assessment. Quality assurance of assessment must be identified in the planning of the programme. This policy includes differing methods of quality assurance of assessment - internal verification, second consideration, and moderation/standardisation.

b. Context

The majority of the qualifications delivered by the College include coursework and/or internally set examinations, which is subject to internal and external scrutiny. This policy sets out the requirements and procedures for internal scrutiny.

c. The policy

Craven College is committed to ensuring quality of provision and recognises that the quality assurance of assessment is essential to maintaining correct standards.

3.1 Staff Development

Where relevant qualifications exist, staff may have the opportunity to gain accreditation. Staff appointed as internal verifiers will be required to gain such qualifications or undertake staff training within twelve months.

3.2 Indicative time

Lecturers have responsibility for quality assurance of assessment as part of their normal duties. The time indicated in this policy forms part of the departmental duties (DD) of teaching staff. Heads of School will allocate departmental duties fairly within the School, using the hours indicated as a guideline. Each School will be allocated Quality Assurance of Assessment hours which will be used towards supporting staff in the carrying out of these duties as directed by the Head of School. See Section 4.4 for current year guidelines.

3.3 Management

To improve the overall management of QA of Assessment, the following are strongly recommended:

- spread good practice by sharing QA of assessment responsibilities across School staff, maximising competency and efficiency
- assessor and QA of assessment performance to be reported to and managed by Head of School/line manager
- QA of Assessment to be identified on Course Proposal Forms, identifying expertise
- QA of Assessment to be specified on A3 timetabling sheets for fulltime and HE courses and to be planned at the beginning of the year for part-time courses

3.4 Internal Verification

Responsibilities of Internal Verifiers:

- Production of a comprehensive QA of Assessment (IV) strategy and plan for the academic year/duration of the course at the start of the course
- verification that assessment briefs are appropriate and cover all assessment criteria
- Verification that all assessments carried out are valid, reliable and accurately assessed, including correction for literacy and numeracy (in the case of written work), developmental written feedback is provided and that the College timescales for the return of worked mark are adhered to.
- advising and supporting assessors
- ensuring accurate records of assessment and internal verification are maintained

3.4.1 Procedures for Internal Verification

a) All Qualifications

All internal verifiers will be expected to carry out the following procedures, and in addition there may be further College or Awarding Organisation requirements. Internal Verification reports for higher education (levels 4 and above) are required to be submitted to the HE Development Manager.

At the start of the programme (in liaison with the Assessor/Course Tutor/Lead Internal Verifier):

- Agree IV timings and record in the IV plan, as per the IV strategy
- Agree IV sampling according to the risk associated with the unit/module assessor and the course (see 4.1); high risk is defined as inexperienced tutor/assessor or new course, and record in the IV plan
- Verify assessment opportunities that are planned and/or assessments written
- Ensure standardisation of assignment briefs and assessment documentation
- Inform Awarding Organisation of assessors and verifiers on the programme as required by each Awarding Organisation

Internal Verifiers or Lead Internal Verifier will ensure that assessors receive:

- an adequate level of induction
- copies of relevant national standards
- QCA guidance on assessing NVQs, where appropriate
- copies or access to relevant policies and procedures
- information about support available

- information about the Awarding Organisation/external verification process
- information about their candidates/students
- contact details for the IV
- regular skills/occupation competence updating

During the programme

- Ensure that policies and procedures of the College and Awarding Organisation are correctly implemented and advise assessors accordingly
- Identify any staff development needs relating to assessment and refer to Subject Sector Leader for action and follow-up with Staff and Professional Development Manager, Awarding Organisation coordinator or Quality Nominee, as relevant
- Verify assessors' decisions by sampling candidate/students' work.

Liaison with External Quality Assurer (EQA)/Moderator

The Subject Sector/ Lead IV (see 4.1 for responsibilities) as appropriate is responsible for the co-ordination of EQA visits, or postal sampling, as requested, and ensuring that relevant people/resources are available for the visit/postal sample. The Quality and Compliance Manager must be informed of the visit dates for FE courses at the time of arrangement, and the HE Development Manager for HE courses.

Security and Confidentiality

All records of candidates must be kept in a secure location for three years.

b) **NVQ programmes**

The relevant Internal Verifier is responsible for the overall quality assurance of NVQ certificate and diploma delivery, including ensuring that adequate assessment resources exist and providing a link with the Awarding Organisation.

At the start of the programme:

The Internal Verifier will produce a clear strategy and sampling plan, to be agreed with the Assessor and where appropriate the External Quality Assurer (EQA) in order to ensure adequate internal verification. All programmes will have a schedule detailing when internal verification is to take place. For full NVQ qualifications and assessor and verifier awards, the Internal Verifier/Assessor will ensure that all candidates are registered promptly, so that claims for certification can be made promptly.

During the programme

For experienced assessors sampling will be conducted on both an interim and summative basis to identify any issues at an early stage and ensure that internal verification is not "end loaded". For assessors new to a qualification or new to the College sampling will be conducted on a higher percentage of the portfolio until the Internal Verifier is satisfied that the Assessor is competent. The Internal Verifier will examine the assessment decisions of the whole team and ensure that the full range of assessment methods used is sampled. Internal Verifier will arrange details of EQA visits and notify in advance the Quality and Compliance Manager to arrange a suitable meeting time. All actions from previous EQA reports will be closely monitored to ensure they have been addressed.

The Internal Verifier will:

- aim to monitor all the assessors over a period of 6-12 months depending on the size and activity of the assessment team

- conduct lesson observations/IV observations
- give assessor confidential, constructive advice on all aspects of performance
- keep a record of this discussion
- maintain current records of all assessors
- hold regular Standardisation Meetings with all assessors
- check that assessment decisions by unqualified assessors are countersigned
- not internally verify evidence which s/he has previously assessed or countersigned
- sample an increased ratio of assessment decisions by unqualified assessors, and monitor the implementation of the countersigning policy

Standardisation ensures that each assessor consistently makes valid decisions, that all assessors would reach the same decision on the same evidence and that all candidates are assessed fairly. The frequency of meetings may vary depending on the size of the programme, and number of assessors, but will normally be one per term.

The assessment decisions of any unqualified assessor or internal verifier on an NVQ programme will be checked and countersigned by an appropriately qualified assessor or internal verifier with relevant occupational expertise.

Unqualified assessors or internal verifiers will be given on-going support and guidance from qualified staff within the College. They will be expected to gain the appropriate qualification within 12 months of commencing assessor or verifier activities.

Security and Confidentiality

Portfolios of candidates for whom certification has been claimed via Direct Claim Status will be kept in a secure location and be available for the next EQA visit.

Archiving

Assessor records and internal verification records will be kept for at least 3 years after certification for the purposes of external quality assurance and resolution of possible appeals.

3.4.2 Requirements and Duties of Internal Verifiers

All Internal Verifiers

Requirements

Internal verifiers will:

- will have sufficient occupational expertise, up to date as defined by the Awarding Organisation
- be able to make valid judgements on assessment decisions made by assessors for awards for which they are responsible
- understand the relevant national standards relating to the awards for NVQs and will hold current relevant IV qualifications where required by the AO
- be an experienced assessor
- undertake relevant staff development
- ensure that regular meetings take place between all those involved in assessing a programme within Craven College (all sites)
- not internally quality assure evidence which they have assessed

New Internal Verifiers will have a clear action plan for either achieving the relevant IV qualification or undertake IV Staff Development within twelve months.

Duties

The IV must be satisfied that the work submitted is valid, sufficient, current and authentic, which may involve observation of assessors at work or examination of students' work. Internal Verification encompasses a range of duties which include:

- verification of assignment briefs (check the assignment brief against the assessment criteria/specification/range)
- checking that assessors' decision are accurate against the stated objectives/assessment criteria
- portfolio sampling of students' assessed work
- checking that the assessment decision is correct, and that appropriate developmental feedback has been given
- verification of grading decisions against grading criteria [where applicable]
- observation of assessment practice, where applicable
- feedback, advice and guidance to assessors and action monitoring (e.g. re-IVing and signing off)
- standardisation meetings
- liaison with EQAs/moderators/examiners/standards verifiers as required
- maintenance of relevant documentation (e.g. records of the verification and the feedback given to the assessor)
- involvement in appeals over assessment decisions
- record the outcome of any appeal

NVQ Internal Verifiers

Duties

The Internal Verifier is responsible for ensuring that national standards are being adhered to, identifying problems or areas where advice or guidance is required and ensuring that candidates are aware of and satisfied with the process. Internal Verification encompasses a range of duties which include:

- observing the assessors in action to examine how an assessment is conducted
- reviewing the quality of assessment plans and records
- giving feedback on assessors' performance
- develop and support assessors, particularly crucial when:
 - the assessor is new
 - standards change
 - there has been external verification or inspection requiring follow-up action
- follow and disseminate the appropriate National Standards guidance documents e.g.; Joint Awarding Body Guidance (JAB) on Internal Verification of NVQs

i) 3.5 Moderation/Standardisation

Moderation or Standardisation provides opportunity for discussion concerning previously assessed or marked work. Responsibilities of moderators/standardisers:

- ensuring that all assessments carried out are accurately assessed
- discussion and agreement regarding the awarding of marks or assessment decision

3.5.1 Procedures for Moderation/Standardisation

Where more than one tutor has delivered a qualification, (usually the whole qualification e.g. GCSE, rather than units) the tutors, in small groups or pairs will ensure that marks have been awarded consistently by all tutors, sampling according to the experience of the tutor and the newness of the courses, i.e. high risk is defined as inexperienced tutor/assessor or new course,4.3.

3.6 Higher Education

ii) 3.6.1 Approval of HE Scheme Assessments

HE assessment briefs for foundation degrees, higher nationals and level 6 (final stage degree) are forwarded to the HE Officer for submission to the Assessment Approvals Committee. The HE Team then forwards the brief to the course External Examiner for their comments prior to issuing to students. Assessment briefs for all other level 4 and above courses may be sent for discussion and recommendation prior to approval by the Awarding Organisation. Courses where the Awarding Organisation requires internal verification e.g. Higher Nationals are required to submit evidence that assessments have been internally verified.

iii) 3.6.2 Second Consideration

Second consideration of assessments enables marked work and feedback to be critically appraised to ensure that the marking criteria have been correctly applied and that feedback to students is constructive. Second Consideration is applied to higher education assessments except where the Awarding Organisation has other requirements.

Responsibilities of second consideration:

- to ensure that assessments carried out are accurately assessed
- to ensure that feedback to students supports their learning and development
- to advise and support assessors

Procedures for Second Consideration

Normally the Course Tutor/HE Sector Tutor or HE Development Manager will second consider the marking of assessments by tutors within the course delivery team, with their own marking being second considered by an appropriate member of staff. Sample size will be according to the experience of the tutor and the newness of the courses, i.e. high risk is defined as inexperienced tutor/assessor or new course also ensuring that the range of marks are considered.

d. Supporting documents

4.1 Responsibilities of Lead Internal Verifiers

- To ensure their sector within their School is following all relevant Awarding Organisation policies and procedures in relation to Quality Assurance requirements
- To plan, in conjunction with the Subject Sector Leader , the IV strategy for the School in terms of allocating internal verifiers to programmes/units
- To ensure that all internal verifiers allocated are fully trained in terms of procedures and competent in terms of judgements in relation to assignment briefs and assessment decisions

- To ensure that Course Tutors and Internal Verifiers have completed their IV plan and are accurately recording IV activity
- To support internal verifiers, Subject Sector Leaders, Course Tutors, unit tutors and assessors in relation to the implementation of internal verification procedures
- To identify tutors/assessors who require further development in order to effectively design assignments and accurately assess learner work
- To identify tutors/assessors for development to become internal verifiers
- To receive and action referrals in relation to issues raised by divisional internal verifiers
- To work closely with the Quality and Compliance Manager or BTEC Quality Nominee, as appropriate to minimise and resolve issues
- To attend, as appropriate, BTEC Forums and the Lead Internal Verifier Forums in order to maintain quality standards and standardisation of procedures and assessment across divisions and cascade information relevant to BTEC QA procedures

4.2 Glossary of Terms

ASSESSOR

The person who matches a student's work or performance against the elements/outcomes of a unit and who is responsible for grading decisions, where applicable.

CONTEXTUALISED ELEMENT/LEARNING OUTCOME/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A statement of the skills, knowledge and understanding a student must acquire and evidence.

EVIDENCE

A document or artefact that may be presented by a student in his or her portfolio as proof of performance.

EVIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

The context and limits within which a student must demonstrate the performance criteria of a unit.

EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURER/MODERATOR

The person appointed by the Awarding Organisation to check standardisation of assessment.

LEAD INTERNAL VERIFIER

To co-ordinate activities of Internal Verifiers and ensure standardisation of assessment.

INTERNAL VERIFIER

The IV samples assessors' decisions and monitors the assessment process in order to ensure that National Standards are being met.

MARKING/ GRADING/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

A statement of the skills, knowledge and understanding a student must acquire and evidence at different levels e.g. Pass; A,C, %,

NATIONAL STANDARDS

The standards set by the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority.

PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

A referenced and indexed collection of work submitted by the student to claim accreditation for the units of the study programme.

UNIT SPECIFICATIONS

The precise requirements of each unit of a qualification.

VERIFICATION

A system for checking that assessment decisions are consistent and fair. For each programme of study the verification process involves an External Verifier, one or more Internal Verifiers and a team of assessors. Not until all the elements/outcomes/assessment criteria of a unit have been achieved can a student claim accreditation for the whole unit. [As part of the Internal Verification process every unit will be sampled and scrutinised. For NVQs, all candidates must also be sampled].

4.3 Risk and Sampling

The standard number of assessments per unit/module to quality assure is 10% with a minimum of 2 pieces of work. However, BTEC requirements are different (see b) below). The tables below summarise two methods of calculating the quantity of assessed work that will need to be quality assured, or alternatively the time that will be spent on quality assurance of assessment.

Risk

Experienced assessors and established courses are both regarded as low risk, with both inexperienced assessors and brand new courses being regarded as high risk. Therefore, if an experienced assessor is assessing on a brand new course the sample size would be 30%. Alternatively, if the assessor is inexperienced managers may choose to use the time allocation method to support their development.

4.3.1 NVQs and courses other than BTEC

Sample size

There must be a minimum of 2 samples from each unit

NB For NVQs every candidate must be sampled

	Assessors		
	%	Low Risk	High Risk
Course	Low Risk	10	30
	High Risk	30	50

4.3.2 BTEC courses

New courses do not carry any risk, therefore risk applies to a new assessor.

- Experienced assessors 2 pieces of work covering at least 3 and no more than 4 assessment criteria, across a range of achievements for all units on the programme
- For inexperienced assessors 4 pieces of work covering at least 3 and no more than 4 assessment criteria, across a range of achievements for all units on the programme

4.3.3 Functional Skills

Where coursework is the assessment method:

Entry Level: Maths, English and ICT 2 samples from each group.

Levels 1 and 2: Maths and ICT, internal verification is not required.

Levels 1 and 2 English: No test to internally verify; Observation of group discussion for the Speaking, Listening and Communication element, sample one per group

4.4 Operational Guidelines 2015/16

The indicative times detailed below refer to experienced assessors, where the assessor is inexperienced the sample size may be increased.

4.4.1 Internal Verification

i) NVQ

Each assessor, candidate and unit must be sampled, the percentage depends on the identified risk and the number of candidates; typically 10% for an experienced assessor and an established course.

Indicative time: 30 mins per sample.

Practical observations: 45 mins per sample

ii) Non-NVQ

Indicative time: 10 minutes per sample plus 30 minutes for the unit/module assessment brief.

iii) BTEC

Indicative time: One hour per unit.

iv) Functional Skills

Entry Level : Maths, English and ICT Functional Skills

Indicative time: 10 minutes per test paper

Levels 1 and 2 Maths and ICT: internal verification is not required

Levels 1 and 2 English: No test to internally verify;

Indicative time: 30 mins observation to IV of group discussion (for the Speaking, Listening and Communication element). Wherever possible the observation would be incorporated into the teaching observation.

4.4.2 Moderation/Standardisation

Indicative time: GCSE: 1 hour per tutor involved in delivery
AS/A2 30 mins per tutor involved in delivery

4.4.3 HE Assessments - Second Consideration

Sample size will be according to the experience of the tutor and the newness of the courses, i.e. high risk is defined as inexperienced tutor/assessor or new course also ensuring that the range of marks are considered. Samples will not normally be more than 30% of the cohort.

Indicative time: 1 hour per 20 credit module; 45 minutes per 15 credit unit