Centre Guide to Best Practice in Internal Assessment

Version 1.1

gateway
qualifications

learning your way

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Introduction

Assessment is the process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment criteria for a unit or part of a unit.

This guide provides general advice and guidance to tutor/assessors and internal quality assurers (IQAs) delivering qualifications offered by Gateway Qualifications where the assessment format in the qualification specification is stated as portfolio of evidence.

Qualification specifications provide detailed information about the requirements for qualifications and should be used as the main reference point for tutor/assessors and Internal quality assurers. Qualification specifications for all qualifications are published on our website.

Which qualifications are covered by this guide?

This guide covers all qualifications from Entry level to L7 which are internally assessed, including those which are externally set and internally marked. This guide does not cover the Access to HE Diploma, guidance is provided separately for this qualification type.

Other useful documents

- Centre Guidance - Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations
- Centre Guidance - Malpractice and Maladministration
- Centre Guidance - Conflicts of Interest

Assessment

Assessment Principles

> **Assessment**
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> Assessment is the process of making judgements about the extent to which a learner's work meets the assessment requirements for a qualification/unit.

In undertaking assessment, the process must be fair, inclusive and adhere to the principles of assessment, denoted as VACSR:

- Valid
- Authentic
- Current
- Sufficient
- Reliable

Principle	Definition
Valid	The extent to which evidence and theory support the interpretation that the assessment outcomes meet their intended uses. The evaluation of Validity involves the development of a clear argument to support the proposed interpretation of the outcomes and as a consequence the intended uses of the assessment. The Validity argument should be built on statements of the proposed interpretation and supporting evidence collected from all stages of the assessment process.
Authentic	A process under which evidence generated by a Learner in an assessment is confirmed as having been generated by that Learner (or identified and confirmed as being that Learner's contribution to group work) and as being generated under the required conditions.
Current	Evidence that the candidate still possesses the skills and knowledge being claimed. Especially important where a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is being used as an alternative assessment method.
Sufficient	Assessment evidence meets the qualification/unit requirements.
Reliable	Reliability is about consistency and so concerns the extent to which the various stages in the assessment process generate outcomes which would be replicated were the assessment repeated. Reliability is a necessary condition of Validity, as it is not possible to demonstrate the Validity of an assessment process which is not Reliable. The reliability of an assessment is affected by a range of factors such as the sampling of assessment tasks and consistency in marking by tutor/assessors.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in the Assessment Process

AI in assessment evidence

The potential use of AI in assessments is relatively new, and so it is important that centres understand its nature and the risks it poses to the authenticity of learner work in assessments.

Any use of AI, which means students have not independently demonstrated their own attainment is likely to be considered malpractice.

- Gateway Qualifications' Malpractice and Maladministration Centre Guidance
- The Department for Educations' departmental statement on Generative artificial intelligence in education
- The Joint Council for Qualifications' published guidance on AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications – JCQ Joint Council for Qualifications

AI in assessment marking

Where a Centre is responsible for marking assessments, either where the assessment is externally set by Gateway Qualifications or where the centre sets the assessment, the use of AI as a sole marker (Assessor) is not permitted.

Centres must ensure that there are effective arrangements in place to ensure that the criteria in which learner's performance can be differentiated and understood, is accurately and consistently applied by assessors. The same applies to internal quality assurance arrangements.

Assessment Planning

In order to ensure robust assessment, it is essential to make time for planning.

Initial assessment

Before a learner starts a qualification, the centre should carry out an initial assessment. The purpose of this is to:

- ensure the learner is choosing the most appropriate units, qualification and level
- identify the opportunities available to develop and demonstrate their competence
- ensure that learners can generate the evidence required for the qualification
- ensure that any particular assessment requirements can be met

The learner should be encouraged to bring forward examples of learning and experiences gained in previous employment, education or unpaid work to consider whether these can be used as evidence towards this qualification.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) provides learners and centres with an alternative assessment method by which a learner's previous achievements can meet the assessment requirements for a unit/qualification through the knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and so, do not need to develop these through a course of

learning. This includes both certificated learning attained through a Gateway Qualifications' regulated qualification and other experiential/certificated learning.

(from Gateway Qualifications' Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process)

Details of whether RPL is permitted for a qualification are contained within the published qualification specification. Please note Gateway Qualifications does not permit RPL for every qualification.

In considering Recognition of Prior Learning, centres should:

- check qualification specifications to ascertain if RPL is permitted
- follow the process for claiming RPL as set out in the Gateway Qualifications Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process

Centres must have a process to assess claims before submitting requests to Gateway Qualifications.

When centres identify learners with potential RPL they must request this by completing an online RPL form. Where a centre does not give prior notification that RPL has been used as an alternative, this will be investigated by the EQA and recorded in the EQA monitoring/sampling report.

For any further questions about recognition of prior learning, please email quality@gatewayqualifications.org.uk

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

Reasonable adjustment is defined as:

an adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification so as to enable a disabled Learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding to the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

(From Ofqual, General Conditions of Recognition)

A reasonable adjustment is an adjustment made to an assessment for a qualification. Where teaching and learning materials are adapted for delivery these do not need to be recorded as reasonable adjustments.

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the programme.

The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

Centres should refer to the Gateway Qualifications Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy,

The Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration – Centre Guidance
provides guidance for centres on how to apply the Gateway Qualifications Reasonable
Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy.

The centre guidance includes the following:

- information and guidance to support understanding and the proper management of
  reasonable adjustments.
- procedures for applying reasonable adjustments in centre.
- information and guidance to support understanding and the proper management of
  special considerations.

Definition of special consideration

A special consideration is consideration to be given to a Learner who has temporarily
experienced an illness or injury, or some other event outside of the Learner's control,
which has had, or is reasonably likely to have materially affected the Learner's ability to:

a) take an assessment, or
b) demonstrate his or her level of attainment in an assessment.

(From Ofqual, General Conditions of Recognition)

Gateway Qualifications reviews the circumstances and evidence surrounding each request
for special consideration to ensure that the decision made maintains the equity, validity and
reliability of the assessment for the learner and does not give the learner an unfair
advantage.

A learner who is fully prepared and present for a scheduled assessment may be eligible for
special consideration if:

- performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of
  the learner e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance
  during the assessment
- alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the
  assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate
- part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of
  the learner.

A learner will not be eligible for special consideration if:

- no evidence is supplied by the centre that the learner has been affected at the time of
  the assessment by a particular condition
- any part of the assessment is missed due to personal arrangements including
  holidays or unauthorised absence
- preparation for an assessment is affected by difficulties during the course, e.g.
  disturbances through building work, lack of proper facilities, changes in or shortages
  of staff, or industrial disputes
- the learner is experiencing long term illness or difficulty
- misreading of any assessment instructions, lateness or failing to attend the
  assessment

- a request is not received within the permissible timescale to apply for special consideration.

The Assessment Plan

Centres should plan ahead for the assessment to take place, to be marked and to schedule internal quality assurance arrangements.

> Assessment Plan
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> An assessment plan is a working document which may need to be updated during the year. Robust assessment plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and should be verified by the centres Quality Lead, the Lead IQA or the programme IQA.

As a minimum requirement, an assessment plan must include:

- names of all tutor/assessors and Internal quality assurers
- scheduling for assessment dates
  - consider assignment deadlines across programmes to ensure a continually balanced workload for learners and tutor/assessors and Internal quality assurers
- assessment dates
- internal quality assurance dates
- resubmission or resit opportunities dates

Some additional areas to consider when planning:

- unit sequencing or integration – including planning of synoptic assessments
- rules of combination for the qualification
- guided learning hours of units selected
- employer engagement, if appropriate
- project work
- resource planning – such as the need for specialist staff or equipment
- timetabling of events, shows and trips
- schemes of work
- feedback from learners and external sources
- ensuring the authenticity of learner work
- access to external resources, if appropriate

Example assessment forms

The following forms may be helpful to you when assessment planning. You can use our forms or create your own.

- Digital Evidence Recording Form – template – Tracking sheet for digital evidence. See also: Digital Evidence Recording Form – example
- Evidence matrix – Excel spreadsheet – Document for tracking and referencing evidence. See also: Evidence matrix – Excel spreadsheet – example
- Group Witness Statement – template – Witness statement for assessment activities for evidence purposes. See also: Group Witness Statement – example

- Individual & Expert Witness Statement – template – Witness statement for assessment activities for evidence purposes. See also: Individual & Expert Witness Statement – example
- Assessment Planning Form and Learner Feedback Form – Progress tracking sheet
- Assignment Brief & Record Sheet – Task outline template and tutor expectations of assignment
- Assignment Brief & Record Sheet – Pass, Merit, Distinction – Task outline template and tutor expectations of assignment (suitable for higher level assignments)
- Project Proposal Form – For learners to use to propose a project idea
- Unit Evidence Tracking Sheet – To track location / type of evidence per unit and per learner

Assessment Evidence

Tutors/assessors are expected to formally record the outcomes of all assessment activities and confirm the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

Portfolio of Evidence

Where an internal assessment approach is used, the method of assessment is through a learner producing a **portfolio of evidence** unless otherwise stated in the qualification specification. Where different methods of assessment are to be used these will be set out within the unit or qualification specification.

> **Portfolio of Evidence**
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> A portfolio of evidence is a formal record of evidence (manual or electronic) produced by learners, towards a unit or qualification.

Tutor/assessors should decide when the learner is suitably prepared to undertake the assessment. Once learners are working on assignments which will be submitted for assessment, it is essential they work independently to produce and prepare evidence for assessment. Before commencing an assessment, tutor/assessors should take care to ensure each learner understands:

- the assessment requirements
- the operative/command verbs, their meaning and what a suitable response would look like
- the nature of the evidence they need to produce
- the importance of time management and meeting deadlines, including the consequences for late submission
- the importance of submitting authentic work

What makes a good portfolio of evidence?

- Systematically/logically presented
- Simple, clear recording/referencing documentation
- Clear record of tutor/assessor interaction and tutor/assessor to learner feedback
- Quantity of evidence appropriate
- A varied range of assessment methods are used
- Evidence types are appropriate – realistic, authentic
- Evidence suggests meaningful activity by learners
- Clearly learners' own work

Unit Based Assessments

The qualifications covered by this guide comprise of units that cover specific topics. A unit-based approach and an integrated approach are valid and appropriate delivery methods. Assessment tasks should plan to allow the opportunity to meet the pass criteria, as well as merit or distinction criteria – depending on the qualification.

It is important to map the assessment of evidence against learning outcomes and assessment criteria across units and maintain accurate records of learner achievement for each unit.

Each learner should submit:

- evidence to meet the required assessment activity
- a signed and dated declaration of authenticity that confirms they have produced the evidence themselves.

The declaration can be on the assessment record, a separate learner authenticity declaration, on an electronic platform, or by incorporating a learner declaration into an Assignment Brief front sheet.

Tutor/assessors should then:

- formally record and confirm the achievement of specific learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- complete a confirmation that the evidence they have assessed is authentic and is the learner's own work to the best of their knowledge

Before learners start an assessment, tutor/assessors should:

- be confident they are sufficiently prepared to undertake assessment
- encourage them to aim at "getting it right" on first submission so they are not relying on a repeat submission or retake where applicable.

> **Good practice tip**
>
> Include draft and final copies in portfolios to evidence of distance travelled.

Authenticating learner work

> Authentication
>
> A process under which evidence generated by a Learner in an assessment is confirmed as having been generated by that Learner (or identified and confirmed as being that Learner's contribution to group work) and as being generated under the required conditions.

Learner work must be authenticated. This can easily be done by the learner signing a confirmation of learning statement that lists their work and includes a declaration that the work belongs to them and is their own, original work.

The tutor/assessor can then countersign the statement confirming this, based upon their knowledge of the learner and what the learner is capable of.

Centres may also allow learners to use electronic signatures to authentic work remotely where learners are aware that they may only do so when the work is their own, and centres are able to identify or detect any copied or plagiarised work. Additional sources of

information used by the learners should be appropriately acknowledged, for example, in text referencing a reference list, or source journal.

During sampling, External Quality Assurers will check that learner work is authenticated.

Electronic Signatures

An electronic signature may be used to replace a wet signature. Where these are used centres must ensure authenticity can be proved and security maintained. To avoid the potential fraudulent use of an electronic signature centres should consider ways in which to guard against this such as:

- using an e-signature provider
- requiring that any document that needs to be signed electronically is password protected and sent directly to/from the individual's personal e-mail account (along with the password). You could then also require that the individual returns the electronically signed document from their personal e-mail account
- virtual/in person witnessing, where it would be possible to do so.

Fonted signatures must not be used.

Remote Learning

For remote learning, measures must be put in place to ensure there is clear communication between the learner, tutor/assessor and IQA. Communication methods (e.g. online meetings, telephone, email) must be discussed and agreed with the learner at the start of the programme, to ensure that they are clear about how they can contact their tutor/assessor to gain advice, support and feedback on their work. The learner will also require details of how to contact their IQA in case their tutor/assessor is unavailable, or they wish to appeal against a decision made by their tutor/assessor.

Centres must ensure that authenticity of any work produced and submitted by remote means is safeguarded. tutor/assessors should regularly question the learner about their reasons for carrying out an activity or producing an assessment in a particular way. This gives the learner the opportunity to demonstrate their performance, knowledge and/or understanding across a wider range of the qualification and will also give the tutor/assessor the confidence that this is the learner's own work. It is recommended that the tutor/assessor has meetings with the learner on a regular basis throughout the programme.

Types of Evidence

Tutors/assessors are encouraged to use a variety of types of assessment/activities within a portfolio of evidence. Evidence may be presented as hard or electronic copy. The portfolio should demonstrate how the learner has met the requirements of the qualification or unit.

If a learner produces work which includes confidential information from an organisation or employer, care must be taken to ensure that this information is not inappropriately shared.

Performance evidence (what the learner is able to do)

- Work produced by the learner, e.g. the actual product or a record or photograph of the product
- A description or summary of the process the learner went through, e.g. a tutor/assessor's observation of a learner;
- A witness testimony; or video

Knowledge evidence (what the learner knows and understands)

- Performance of a task/activity, or from formal written questions/tests, oral tests and informal questions. Knowledge evidence is used to support performance evidence and can provide additional confirmation that the learner has met the requirements of the unit.
- Knowledge evidence may also be used to cover contingencies and aspects of the specification, if applicable, that occur infrequently. For example, the learner could describe how they would handle a specific situation (e.g. dealing with an emergency) for which performance evidence is not readily available.
- The qualification specification should indicate those areas of knowledge and understanding where it is necessary for particular types of knowledge evidence to be provided, or where any areas of knowledge are deemed to be so critical that they must be separately assessed.

Record Keeping

It is essential that tutor/assessors record the outcomes of all assessment activities. This will enable learners' progress to be monitored and form the basis of internal quality assurance activities.

Evidence Examples for Different Learning Levels

Evidence	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Written work	Not essential at this level, however, can be used to stretch and challenge.	Simple short answer questions could be used.	Simple short answer questions could be used.	Short answer questions could be used.	Questions could be used to show clear 'SPAG' skills to move the learner onto the next level. Elements of research to be used for written work and clear referencing to be shown.	Written work – questions to show clear 'SPAG' skills to move the learner onto the next level. Research to be used for written work and clear referencing to be shown.
Photographs	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Posters	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Witness statements	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Group discussions (Evidenced through digital voice recording)	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔
Project work	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔

Evidence	Entry 1	Entry 2	Entry 3	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Case studies			✓	✓	✓	✓
PowerPoint/ media presentations				✓	✓	✓
Mood boards				✓	✓	✓
Peer assessment				✓	✓	✓
Professional discussion (Evidenced through digital voice recording)					✓	✓
Reflective/evaluative statements					✓	✓
Reflective blog					✓	✓

Submission of Evidence

Each learner should submit evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria and a signed and dated declaration of authenticity with each assignment which confirms they have produced the evidence themselves. The declaration can be on the assessment record, a separate learner authenticity declaration, on an electronic platform, or by incorporating a learner declaration into an Assignment Brief front sheet.

The tutor/assessor should then formally record and confirm the achievement of specific unit requirements, complete a confirmation of learning statement that the evidence they have assessed is authentic and is the learner's own work to the best of their knowledge.

Meeting Deadlines

Learners should be assessed fairly and consistently, and learners should not be advantaged by having additional time to complete assessments unless this is formally agreed as a reasonable adjustment. For information on reasonable adjustments please refer to the qualification specification, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy and Centre Guidance.

Centres should have in place a clear assessment procedure for a learner to formally apply for an extension if they have genuine reasons for not meeting a deadline, such as illness. If an alternative deadline is granted, the new deadline should be adhered to and recorded.

This should be covered with learners in their induction at the start of the programme.

Assessment Marking

Once the learner has submitted their work by the required deadline, the tutor/assessor will assess against the qualification and/or assessment requirements.

The tutor/assessor will formally record the learner's achievements and progress against the Centre's tracking mechanism and where applicable, the internal quality assurance procedure followed.

Giving Feedback to Learners

Tutor/assessor feedback and discussion needs to be an interactive process that motivates and encourages the learner to take responsibility for their own development, and evaluate their own progress and performance.

Written feedback is not about simply finding errors learners have made. It is about providing clear, developmental guidance for the learner's next step.

Approaches to Feedback

There are a number of different approaches that can be used when giving feedback. The table below describes three of the most common.

Feedback Approach	Description
WWW (what went well) and EBI (even better if)	State what went well first, and then follow it up with how it could be even better.
Medal and Mission	Let the learner know what they have done well (a medal) and what they need to improve (a mission).
Feedback Sandwich	Begin the learner feedback with positive comments, followed by the main message, and then some final positive comments.

If the qualification is graded - provide learners with grading criteria before they begin writing their assignment. Keep the marking transparent and allow learners to grade themselves against the criteria before handing it in/after feedback.

Learners must show that they can generate evidence for their portfolios of evidence independently using the knowledge, skills and understanding that they have gained through the learning and teaching process.

Assessment feedback from the tutor/assessor to the learner should be:

- ongoing throughout the assessment process
- positive to inform the learner of what has been achieved
- specific to actions or targets so that the learner knows what went well and where further development needs to take place

- clear and constructive, identifying any barriers to progress and suggesting ways to improve performance
- recorded as a written summary with a copy provided to the learner with opportunity for the learner to respond
- clearly from the tutor/assessor e.g. using a different colour pen.

Assessment feedback from the tutor/assessor to the learner should not:

- provide direct input or guidance that could compromise authenticity

Resubmission of assessments

Resubmission

The process of resubmitting evidence against the assessment brief where one or more of the learning outcomes and corresponding assessment criteria have not been met.

Following formal assessment, where learners have not met the required standard for one or more learning outcomes/assessment criteria, they may be given the opportunity to resubmit. A learner may be approved for a resubmission when:

- they have met the centre requirements for internally assessed work
- the tutor/assessor judges that the learner will be able to meet the learning outcomes and their corresponding assessment criteria independently

In addition to this, if possible, we would recommend that the centre has in a place a process where the internal quality assurer is consulted and/or approves the resubmission.

Centres should have a resubmission procedure available to learners that explains:

- the process learners should follow
- what learners can expect
- timescales
- how the learner can appeal

This must be included and explained in the learner handbook and the induction process.

If a resubmission is authorised, the centre must:

- record resubmissions on the learner assessment record
- state a deadline for resubmission that is proportionate to the size of the qualification
    - o we recommend 15 working days of the learner receiving the results of the assessment. This may be adjusted to reflect the size of the units concerned.
- inform the learner which learning outcomes and their corresponding assessment criteria have not been met
- provide information and guidance available to the learner that they could have used.

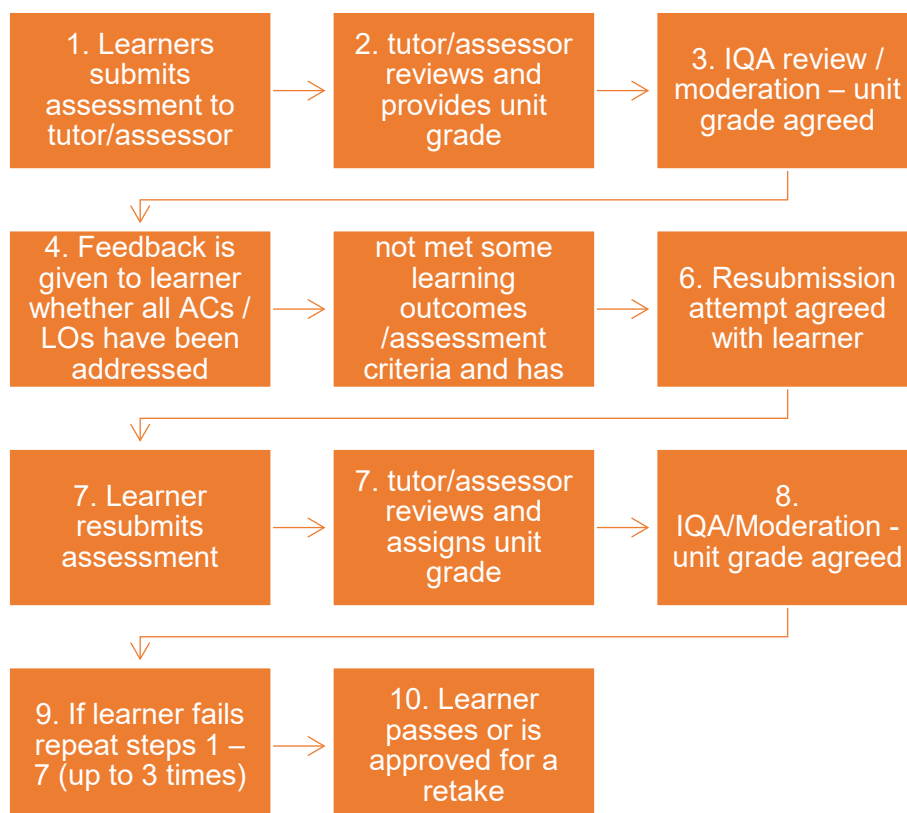A learner should not be allowed to resubmit more than twice.

Where there are specific requirements relating to resubmission approaches, this will be in the qualification specification.

Resubmission of graded assessments

When marking graded assessments, the centre must not:

- penalise learners by capping the grade of the assessment
- use resubmissions to improve grades.

Resubmission process

1. Learners submits assessment to tutor/assessor	2. tutor/assessor reviews and provides unit grade	3. IQA review / moderation – unit grade agreed
4. Feedback is given to learner whether all ACs / LOs have been addressed	not met some learning outcomes /assessment criteria and has	6. Resubmission attempt agreed with learner
7. Learner resubmits assessment	7. tutor/assessor reviews and assigns unit grade	8. IQA/Moderation - unit grade agreed
9. If learner fails repeat steps 1 – 7 (up to 3 times)	10. Learner passes or is approved for a retake	

Direct Claim Status

Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Direct Claim Status is a status given to centres on an individual qualification basis and allows centres to claim certification without waiting for an external quality assurance activity to take place.

Centres who are given direct claims status for certification will have suitable staff and a robust and effective system of internal quality assurance.

The centre's External Quality Assurer lies at the heart of these processes and has the responsibility of proposing direct claims status. This is reviewed on an ongoing basis through the quality review activities with the centre.

For direct claims status, centres need to have established internal quality assurance systems and have suitable staff in place for each qualification. These must be fit for purpose and have been applied effectively for a minimum of one complete cycle of programme delivery, learner registration and certification.

At times more than one cycle may be required to demonstrate that all aspects of internal quality assurance are in place. For example, where delivery is over a very short period or small numbers of staff are involved. The External Quality Assurer needs to be satisfied systems are robust before approving direct claims status, borderline cases may be referred to the Quality Assurance Manager. The EQA would make a recommendation to award (or remove) DCS for a qualification to the Gateway Qualifications' Quality Team. The Quality Assurance Manager will review the recommendation and either agree or decline the EQA request.

Centres are still required to internally quality assurer qualifications where they have direct claim status and show regularly monitoring of the qualification internally. Direct claim status does not mean that EQA activities will cease, and centres are still required to undergo sampling activities.

Direct claim status is reviewed every 12 months. Direct claim status can be removed if centres do not follow terms and conditions or that qualification standards fall.

Internal Quality Assurance

> Internal Quality Assurance
>
> Internal quality assurance is the process by which a centre regularly samples and evaluates its assessment practices and decisions, and acts on the findings to ensure consistency and fairness. It involves two key processes – internal quality assurance and standardisation – and is carried out by one or more internal quality assurers.

The internal quality assurance system developed by centres will depend on the size of the centre and the qualifications delivered. centres will need to set out their internal quality assurance systems within a centre internal quality assurance plan.

The role of the internal quality assurer is to ensure that:

- Assessment is appropriate, consistent, fair and transparent and does not unintentionally discriminate against any learner.
- tutor/assessors receive on-going advice and support, for example in designing assessment activities.
- Learners clearly understand assessment requirements and are given opportunities to achieve against the assessment criteria.
- Learners' work is presented in a manner that enables effective internal quality assurance to take place.
- Evidence of learner achievement is clearly mapped to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- Reports of Achievement or Completion (RACs) are valid, reliable and consistent.

Internal quality assurance arrangements must include as a minimum:

- An identified individual responsible for coordinating the internal quality assurance process.
- A planned structure for internal quality assurance that incorporates all of a centre's Gateway Qualifications provision.
- An agreed and published annual timetable for internal quality assurance, including internal quality assurance meetings.
- Clear and documented roles and responsibilities for all those involved.
- A forum for discussion of borderline cases and good practice in assessment.
- A sampling of assessed work.
- Standardisation of assessed work.
- Full and clear records of the internal quality assurance process, including action plans.
- Regular evaluation of the process and outcomes.
- Checking for evidence of tutor/assessors continuous professional development (CPD)

An internal quality assurer has a central role in the operation of the centre's quality system. A centre may have one or more Internal quality assurers, according to the size and variety of its provision. All must have experience relevant to the area(s) for which they quality assure. They should also have an understanding of quality assurance and improvement, and the centre must ensure that they develop their practice in this field.

To ensure the integrity of the internal quality assurance process, Internal quality assurers must not verify work that they have assessed.

Gateway Qualifications' external quality assurers will review the operation of a centre's internal quality assurance system through centre quality monitoring visits.

Once a course has been internally quality assured, there are two possible paths to learner certification:

- Direct Claim Status.
- An external quality assurer signs off the RAC.

Tutor/assessors must ensure fair assessment and equality of opportunity for the learner within the assessment process. In order to ensure that the tutor/assessor is making judgements that are consistent with the rest of the assessment team, they must meet regularly with other tutor/assessors and internal quality assurers to discuss assessment decisions.

> Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
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> CPD should include formal and informal activities annually.
>
> Examples include:
> - Reading relevant journal articles or reviewing books
> - Taking training courses or formal development or study
> - Peer review, mentoring or shadowing
> - Online learning including engagement in discussion forums and blogs
> - Viewing and reviewing television programmes, documentaries and the internet.
>
> From: https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/professionalism/cpd/

Sampling

Sampling is a key element of the internal quality assurance process whereby the IQA:

- checks the quality and consistency of each tutor/assessors marking
- maintains a common standard of marking within the centre over time.

Record keeping

The IQA must keep records of the sampling undertaken for each tutor/assessor using the centre's own forms or the Gateway Qualifications internal sampling form.

This will aid the identification of marking trends and inform the selection of samples on an on-going basis.

Sampling forms must be stored securely within the centre and be made available to Gateway Qualifications as part of the centre compliance monitoring if requested. These records should be kept for three years.

Selecting the sample

Selecting an appropriate sample is critical to successful internal quality assurance. There are a range of factors which will influence the selection of samples:

- The experience and expertise of the tutor/assessor
- The number of learners in the class
- The method of assessment
- The range of assessments
- The outcomes from standardisation activities

Over a period of time, the sample should cover:

- All tutor/assessors
- All units
- All sites

Feedback to tutor/assessors

The IQA should feedback the results of the sampling to each tutor/assessor.

Example Internal Quality Assurance forms

The following forms may be helpful to you. You can use our forms or create your own.

Internal Quality Assurance Sample Record Form – Recording what unit and learner(s) have been sampled during a single quality assurance activity

Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Sheet – Sampling plan for tracking sampling across the delivery programme over a period of time

Internal Quality Assurance Process – Document detailing IQA process

Summative IQA report – Summative report after sampling exercise

Interim IQA report

Standardisation

> Internal Standardisation
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> Internal standardisation is a collaborative process by which tutor/assessors within a centre consider work that they have marked and, using pre-determined criteria, reach a common agreement on standards as being typical of work at a particular level by comparing samples and providing peer evaluation.

Internal standardisation is a crucial stage in the quality assurance process. Internal standardisation enables all IQAs and tutor/assessors to understand and apply the qualification standards fairly and consistently across the centres. Internal standardisation should not be viewed as a single activity but a series of ongoing activities within a centre to support consistent understanding and application of the standards.

There are different ways of approaching internal standardisation. The frequency and types of internal standardisation activities will depend on the number of learners and the frequency of the assessment sessions in a centre. An approach taken by some centres is to standardise to level rather than to specification or subject. It is the responsibility of the IQA to determine and justify the fitness for purpose of the standardisation approach. Records of the standardisation activities must be kept and made available to Gateway Qualifications as part of the annual monitoring visit.

If a Lead IQA has been appointed within a centre, they must make arrangements for the internal standardisation of all IQAs. This should be carried out in a timely manner ahead of the internal standardisation of tutor/assessors in order to establish a consistent interpretation of the standards and ensure a common standard is applied across the centre.

A commonly used internal standardisation approach is for the IQA to hold a team standardisation event. This is an opportunity to:

- Consolidate tutor/assessors' understanding of the standards
- Identify any challenges tutor/assessors experienced
- Resolve any outstanding questions, contacting Gateway Qualifications directly for advice if required.

Example Internal Standardisation forms

The following forms may be helpful to you. You can use our forms or create your own.

Standardisation Event Register

Standardisation Event Feedback Form

Standardisation Event Process Guidance

Standardisation Event Agenda

Standardisation Event Meeting Minutes

Standardisation Report for Externally Set Assessments

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