

Centre Guidance for the Internal Quality Assurance of Qualifications

General

Thank you for choosing to work with BIIAB Qualifications Limited¹. You are one of over 300 Centres offering qualifications from our portfolio of regulated qualifications across a wide range of industry sectors. All our qualifications have been designed with the support of relevant stakeholders to ensure that they meet the needs of both learners and industries across the UK.

This means that the qualifications are designed to give learners the skills needed to find employment, progress within education, or enhance their skills in their current employment and for life.

We recognise the importance of continuing to offer not only a wide range and breadth of qualifications, but just as significantly, excellent customer support.

Our friendly and responsive approach means that all our Centres have access to Customer Support Officers and Relationship Manager to help manage and expand their portfolios. Our External Quality Assurers are subject specialists, chosen for their experience, knowledge, and passion for further education.

1 Qualifications

1.1 Each qualification will have:

- clear Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria;
- a level from Entry Level to Level 8 indicating the difficulty of the qualification and, where credit is applied, also showing the level of each unit/component;
- Total Qualification Time (TQT): 'the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required, in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.'² The size of a qualification is determined by the TQT.
- We use the terms Award, Certificate and Diploma in the qualification title to offer a general indication of the size of the qualification.

¹ BIIAB Qualifications Limited is a recognised awarding organisation and part of the Skills and Education Group.

² Interpretation and Definitions – Conditions of Recognition

- An Award has a TQT value of 120 or less.
- A Certificate has a TQT value in the range of 121-369.
- A Diploma has a TQT value of 370 or more.

1.2 TQT is made up of two elements:

- The number of Guided Learning hours (GL)
- 'An estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by - but not under immediate guidance or supervision of - a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.'³

1.2.1 Examples of Guided Learning include:

- Classroom based learning supervised by a tutor: e.g., classroom teaching; supervised practical sessions; 'all forms of assessment which take place under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training, including where the assessment is competence-based and may be turned into a learning opportunity.'⁴
- Work-based learning supervised by an Assessor: e.g., safety in the workplace; other supervised work; observation of competence.
- Tutorial with an Assessor in real time: e.g., 1:1 teaching session face to face or otherwise.
- E-learning supervised by an Assessor in real time.

1.2.2 Examples of other time spent include:

- Research project;
- Portfolio assessment;
- E-assessments: e.g., those that are not supervised/invigilated;
- Reflective activities;
- Practical sessions which are unsupervised: e.g., unsupervised work in placement or workplace.

Our regulated qualifications are published on the current registers for regulated qualifications.

³ Interpretation and Definitions – Regulatory Conditions of Recognition

⁴ Ofqual Guidance to the General Conditions of Recognition

2 Quality Assurance Processes

2.1 What is Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)?

The purpose of internal quality assurance is:

- to assure that the assessment decisions made by assessors are accurate and reliable when interpreting the standards set in unit/s by the learning outcomes and assessment criteria;
- to assure the consistency of assessment decisions across assessors;
- to address the key principles of consistency, transparency, validity, and reliability.

2.2 Why is it important for your Centre to have an IQA System?

As an Awarding Organisation recognised by the Regulators⁵, we must ensure consistency of assessment decisions within and across Centres.

Irrespective of the size or type of your Centre, we require you to have your own Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) system in place as an integral part of your overall Quality Assurance process.

You will need to make sure that you have a person(s) in your Centre responsible for implementing your Centre's IQA systems. This person is a vital link between you the Centre, and our External Quality Assurance Process.

2.3 What makes good IQA Practice?

2.3.1 The person(s) responsible for the internal quality assurance process in your Centre will usually be an Internal Quality Assurer. They need to approve and sign off assessment activities and sample assessment decisions made by assessors.

Within your Centre, their role would usually involve:

- supporting programme planning by delivery teams by sampling proposed assessment activities to check that they are meeting the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria they are designed to and that the activities are appropriate for the target learners;
- supporting assessors on a regular basis through sampling, giving feedback on assessment setting and assessment decisions. This is useful in supporting future continuing professional development (CPD);

⁵ Ofqual in England; Qualifications Wales; CCEA in NI, SQA in Scotland.

- ensuring assessments are conducted and assessed both accurately and consistently across units and assessors.
- planning in consultation with assessors, the sampling process to include all assessors and a full range of assessment decisions e.g. assessment of performance, assessment of knowledge and understanding.
- ensuring effective recording of learner achievement – maintaining up to date records.
- ensuring security of assessment materials and evidence during the IQA process.
- sampling of final portfolios prior to external moderation and claiming certification.
- ensuring that any actions required by us are carried out to agreed timescales.

2.3.2 Internal Quality Assurance activity should be an ongoing activity, and not just at the end of a programme of learning and assessment. Assessors need to be provided with support regarding their assessment practice throughout to ensure accuracy and consistency.

2.3.3 Your Internal Quality Assurer must also observe an assessor carrying out assessments from time to time. This is particularly appropriate where learners are required to demonstrate performance of skills to the standard required in the unit. Where there are new or less experienced assessors, it is beneficial to observe them carrying out assessments on several occasions to ensure they are fully supported in their new role.

2.3.4 It is important to bring assessors from a Centre together to confirm that the assessor team has a common understanding of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria, and what is required from learners to achieve them. This is called 'standardisation' and is at the heart of the quality assurance process.

2.5 Risk Assessment of Assessors and Tutors

Each Centre should have a record of the Risk Assessment for all Assessors/Tutors delivering BIIAB Qualifications Limited products which must be made available to the External Quality Assurers upon request.

The Risk Assessment should be based on the following criteria and agreed with the Assessor/Tutor

- Assessor/Tutor experience
- Assessor/Tutor qualification
- Workload I.E., the number of candidates assigned to the Assessor/Tutor

Further guidance on defining and recording the level of risk can be found in the BIIAB Qualifications Limited Assessor/Tutor Risk Assessment form available from us.

2.6 Support for the IQA Process

According to the size and type of Centre, Internal Quality Assurers must be supported by someone who leads on Internal Quality Assurance, for example a Lead Internal Quality Assurer/Senior Manager /Head of Centre /Proprietor.

2.6.1 Their role is to:

- ensure Internal Quality Assurers receive an appropriate induction to the Centre's IQA requirements and all necessary documentation. This is particularly important when new members join the delivery and assessment teams.
- ensure that appropriate resources are available to carry out assessments and internal quality assurance activities in a safe, secure environment. This includes providing time for these activities to be undertaken.
- facilitate structured meetings to ensure quality and consistency of practice within the Centre and across delivery locations, encouraging discussion and contribution to the assessment process.
- advise on the provision of special arrangements for learners with special assessment requirements to ensure that all learners have access to assessment without diminishing the rigor or validity of the assessment process.
- carry out observations, as appropriate, using feedback to inform future continuing professional development (CPD).
- ensure appropriate induction and learner support is available.
- deal with complaints and appeals from learners, assessors, and Internal Quality Assurers.

2.7 Tracking and Recording Documents

It is important that the Internal Quality Assurance process is tracked and recorded, so that the External Quality Assurer (EQA) can see evidence of the process. Your Centre may have its own tracking and recording documents which you use. We have produced templates to support your planning and recording of IQA activities. These are available under Info Hub/Centres/Information for Tutors and Assessors on our website. You can use and adapt these as you wish.

We are here to help ensure that you have quality systems and processes in place, if you have any queries, please don't put your learners' achievement at risk by leaving these until the end of the learning programme. Call our Customer Support Team on 0115 854 1620.

2.8 Do Internal Quality Assurers need specific qualifications?

We require those involved in the Internal Quality Assurance process to be suitably experienced and / or qualified. In general terms, this usually means:

- they are knowledgeable of the subject/occupational area to a level above that which they are internally quality assuring.
- they are vocationally competent, where required, for the specific qualification and any published Assessment Strategy.
- they have experience and expertise in internally assessing different types of evidence.
- they have an understanding of consistency, transparency, validity and reliability.
- they are familiar with their Centre's Internal Quality Assurance Policy and the qualification and assessment requirements as published in the Qualification Guide.

It is best practice for Internal Quality Assurers to have one of the following Internal Quality Assurance Qualifications e.g.

- D34 Internally Verifying the Assessment Process
- V1 Conduct Internal Quality Assurance of the Assessment Process or have/be working towards the current Internal Quality Assurance qualifications.
- Level 4 Award in Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice

For further details about the current qualifications look on the website and/or contact us directly by calling 0115 854 1620 or email enquiries to customersupport@BIIAB.co.uk

2.9 Malpractice and Maladministration

We expect that Internal Quality Assurers take all reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any malpractice by learners, assessors or others involved in the provision and assessment of a qualification, or maladministration on the part of your Centre or any other party involved in the assessment process.

If you, as an Internal Quality Assurer have reasonable grounds for suspicion of either of the above you must report it immediately to the staff responsible for investigating such an allegation and reporting it in your Centre. Where necessary, you and/or your Centre may need to report to complianceandregulation@BIIAB.co.uk using the form MM2 Notification of Suspected Malpractice available on our website.

We will provide, if required, guidance to your Centre on how best to prevent such occurrences from happening in the future.

2.10 Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest can be defined as a situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a tutor, assessor or IQA because of his/her self-interest, professional interest, or public interest in the outcome of the assessment. You must be aware of your Centre's Conflict of Interest Policy and how and when you should declare / report a potential conflict.

Examples of conflict of interest may include but are **not** limited to the following:

- A member of staff works for a Centre and a family member takes a qualification at the same Centre.
- A member of staff at the Centre is completing a qualification delivered and assessed by the Centre.
- A member of staff is working with more than one Centre or private training provider.
- A member of staff is taking part in the appointment, promotion, assessment, supervision, or evaluation of a person with whom they have family connections.
- A member of staff has a family connection with a registered learner or learner's family.

Centres must record all conflicts of interest and document any actions taken to mitigate any potential Adverse Effect.

2.11 Outsourcing IQA activities

2.11.1 We require that you carry out Internal Quality Assurance activities to ensure that the assessment tasks set and the assessment decisions that you make are reliable, consistent, and appropriate. If you are the only person who delivers programmes of learning and assesses learners, you will need to ensure that another appropriate person carries out Internal Quality Assurance activities. This may mean that you externally source the services of colleagues or consultants to carry out the IQA activities in your Centre.

3 External Quality Assurance

3.1 The External Quality Assurance process is managed by us to ensure that Centres have provided learners with access to fair and reliable assessment opportunities, and that our qualifications are delivered in accordance with the standards stated in the Qualification Guide and approval documents.

- 3.2 It is a flexible system which may be applied at any time of the year, usually when learners have finished their learning programmes and have completed all assessment requirements.
- 3.3 We appoint External Quality Assurers who will be allocated to your Centre to undertake External Quality Assurance. They are subject specialists and have detailed knowledge of the sub-sector and our processes and procedures.
- 3.3.1 They liaise with Centres to sample and confirm assessment decisions, review evidence of the Internal Quality Assurance process and confirm the evidence of achievement for the awarding of a qualification/unit. In addition, they offer advice and guidance to Centres to support continuous improvement.
- 3.3.2 Your allocated External Quality Assurer will contact you and be available to provide advice relating to delivery, assessment, and internal quality assurance to support you in providing the most appropriate modes of evidence collection for your learners.
- 3.4 External Quality Assurance visits are included in registration fees. Any additional External Quality Assurance visit, either at our insistence or at a Centre's request, will incur a charge. Please refer to our published fees.
- 3.5 Centres must ensure that the External Quality Assurer has access to all the assessed evidence, records of the assessment process and internal quality assurance process for all learners included in the External Quality Assurance process. Evidence may include digital media such as video, audio and picture files or e-Portfolios.
- 3.6 Standardisation: The External Quality Assurer may ask for copies of evidence to assist with the standardisation activities across Centres. They may also request your permission to use some of the evidence produced by your learners as exemplars to support other Centres. Your External Quality Assurer will discuss this with you.

And finally...

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the assessment process, contact our Customer Support Team on 0115 854 1620, or email customersupport@BIIAB.co.uk or your allocated External Quality Assurer.

If you are a new Centre, you are delivering a new qualification, or have new members of staff, it may be beneficial to ensure that your learners are going to produce the evidence required to meet the standards set in the qualification you are delivering and that your IQA process will provide the checks on consistency within your Centre that we expect. For more information on how we can help and support you please contact us on 0115 854 1620 or email customersupport@BIIAB.co.uk

Please remember to check our website for information and guidance on the full range of qualifications, advice, guidance, products, and services we offer.

We hope we have provided you with the information to support you in the development of your Internal Quality Assurance Processes.