



Assessment & Internal Verification/Quality Assurance Strategy

PRINCIPLES, ENTITLEMENTS AND PROCESSES

ASSESSMENT & VERIFICATION/QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY

RATIONALE

The common principles for the assessment and entitlements of students/learners are that:

- There will be equity and consistency in assessment for all students.
- They will provide a basis for assessment standards and means of monitoring assessment across the College.
- Assessment procedures will be endorsed by College Governors, and any awarding bodies.
- They will indicate the generic assessment process which constitutes good practice on all courses.
- Students/learners will have access to assessment strategy and course details at all stages of their learning.
- The requirements of any awarding bodies will be encompassed within the College assessment strategy.

PRINCIPLES

All students will be assessed using principles which are common to all courses offered by College.

These principles, which relate to the equitable treatment of students/learners and their rights in the assessment process, can be expected as follows:

- The primary purpose of assessment will be enhancement/confirmation of learning and the acquisition of those qualities expressed in the required qualification.
- Assessment will be based on a series of agreed common procedures including those required by any awarding bodies. These will be for:
 - assessment planning
 - assessment procedure
 - assessing candidate performance
 - feedback to the candidate
 - recording of achievement
 - internal & external verification/quality assurance and standardisation
 - accreditation, if applicable
 - monitoring of candidate performance
 - monitoring of assessment planning
- All assessment will be based on explicit criteria or assessment objectives which should be clear and comprehensible.
- There will be support and guidance to enable students/learners to access appropriate resources and services for assessment.
- there will be appropriate staffing to support student/learners assessment
- All quality assurance practitioners will be trained according to the awarding and accrediting body regulations.
- There will be clearly defined roles for those involved in assessment, based on the use of common terminology and systems.
- Procedures will be in place to promote equity and counteract any cultural and linguistic factors in accordance with the College's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- Students/learners with learning difficulties and disabilities will be provided with appropriate assessment and support in accordance with the College's Equality & Diversity Policy.
- There will be appropriate quality assurance procedures in place for quality assuring and monitoring assessment practice.

It will be the responsibility of the Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer to ensure that all assessment including key skills is consistent, valid, and transparent and that evidence is valid, authentic, current, and sufficient.

ENTITLEMENTS

Assessment is a core activity and access to assessment is an entitlement on all courses. All students will be assessed at the level which is appropriate to their level of learning.

The students/learners entitlement will be:

- Access to guidance on assessment at all information points with specialist information provided by specialist staff.
- Access to initial information on the assessment procedures and evidence requirements of courses.
- Where appropriate involvement in the assessment processes through self-assessment and review of assessment activities.
- Where appropriate assessment planned and negotiated with an assessor.
- That all courses, where appropriate, will offer accredited prior learning services in addition to their other assessment activities.
- Both written and oral feedback on activities being assessed.
- That all staff working as assessors will be working towards appropriate nationally recognised accreditation or hold such accreditation when undertaking assessments.
- Access to the College Academic Appeals Policy and also the Complaints and Whistle Blowing Policy which are available on the College website.
- That any costs of providing assessment will be explained to all students and employers of students as appropriate.
- Course material and assessment documents which will provide information on assessment procedures and quality standards.
- An assessment process carried out by staff who will follow the Assessment & Quality Assurance Strategy and work in accordance with the requirements of the accrediting organisation.

VERIFICATION/ QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDISATION

Quality Assurance Practitioner Criteria

All Assessors will be encouraged to train to A1 standard.

All Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will be trained to V1/IQA standard.

The Lead Verifier will be appointed by the Awarding Organisation.

Functions of the Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers

The Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will be responsible for scrutinising the assessment practices and decisions of assessors in their team. It is the Internal Verifier's/Quality Assurer's responsibility to establish mechanisms to monitor the quality of assessment within course teams. The Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will sample evidence to check that decisions have been made:

- against National Standards
- consistently
- using valid evidence
- using sufficient evidence
- using authentic evidence
- using current evidence

The outcomes from the Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer's sampling activities will be:

- Written and/or oral feedback to assessors confirming decisions or suggesting action plans to ensure validity of assessment.
- Documentation of quality assurance activities, decisions and feedback for the team and external quality assurer.
- Collation of the results of the quality assurance activity.
- Plan of future sampling activities.

The Internal Verifiers/Quality Assurers will meet formally at least once per year. These meetings may be part of a scheduled team meeting. At these formal meetings the following areas may be discussed:

- assessment plans
- assessment decisions
- evidence generated for vocational and key skills units
- understanding of the validity, authenticity and sufficiency of evidence
- issues arising from assessment decisions
- understanding and interpretation of specifications
- progress and clarity of the candidates' portfolios of evidence
- External Verifiers/Quality Assurers reports

Minutes will be generated from the formal meeting and circulated to all College Governors. In fulfilling the role, the Lead Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer has a responsibility to support and develop the whole course team and ensure that assessment resources are appropriate and adequate.

QUALITY REVIEW POLICY

The quality of assessment will be maintained against:

- stated assessment standards
- assessment policy and practice statements
- student entitlements to assessment

MONITORING PROCEDURES

Assessment Standards

On Entry

Students/learners will be given clear information on how and when the qualification is assessed; entry requirements; additional support available; if applicable costs associated with assessment.

There will be access to diagnostic assessment where appropriate; this will be equitable and the procedures clearly understood by all staff.

The students/learners/candidates will be given information on accredited prior learning.

If an applicant does not meet the entry requirements of a particular course, further guidance and assessment opportunities will be offered at the earliest opportunity.

Where the need for additional learning support is identified, there will be procedures to analyse and meet them. All staff will be made aware of these procedures.

Induction

Guidance and assessment will continue and be developed.

In-depth assessment of students, especially in key skills, will be used to identify additional support needs.

There will be recognition of existing skills and achievements.

There will be full explanation of the assessment process and the roles and responsibilities of staff and students/learners.

Students/learners will be encouraged to begin tracking and recording their own achievements.

During Courses

Assessments will be:

- where appropriate formative to allow students/learners/candidates to develop and enhance knowledge and skills – assessment for learning.
- summative to provide the students with the opportunity to generate evidence for accreditation – assessment of learning.

Students/learners will be given either written or verbal feedback on assessment decisions so that they may:

- assess their progress towards achievement of the award.
- have an indication of their knowledge and understanding.
- be made aware of level of skills development.
- adjust individual action plans or Learning Agreements.

With Assessors there will be the opportunity for students/learners to suggest opportunities for generating evidence.

There will be the opportunity for students/learners to take some responsibility for their own learning.

At Accreditation/or Certification

When accreditation is dependent upon internally assessed work guidance will be given to the students/learners in assembling a portfolio of evidence. Completed Assessor and Internal Verifier/Quality Assurer records will be available for scrutiny by internal and external quality assurers and other Awarding Organisation agents.

The student's/learner's/ portfolio or coursework folder will be available for External Verifier/Quality Assurer scrutiny.

The students/learners achievements will be notified to the relevant Awarding Body.

IV/IQA SAMPLING FRAMEWORK

- Planned dates of all assessments, both summative and interim assessments, should be notified to the college administrator as soon as the date is agreed using “notification of planned assessment” form with complete full postal address of the venue or by email.
- A Record of Assessment form must be completed for every unit submitted for Internal Verification /Quality Assurance. All sections must be completed including a clear description of the evidence and the date the evidence was assessed.
- Observations must be recorded. This includes observations made during training workshop sessions.
- Witness testimonies must be recorded and the name of the witness given, together with their position and occupational qualifications and/or experience.
- There may be instances where the witness may be outside of the funeral profession. For example a minister of religion or celebrant could give a witness statement regarding the conduct of a candidate at funerals if he/she regularly works with him/her.
- Completed records should be forwarded to the college administrator together with the candidate’s portfolio.
- Portfolios will be retained for two years unless returned to the student at their request.

Sample Size

Portfolios sampled will reflect:

- The range of units covered
- The range of learners/students
- The range of assessors

For qualified and experience Assessors evidence sampled will reflect:

- 30% of the portfolio submitted, of which 30% of the content is internally verified/quality assured

For all new and inexperience Assessors evidence sampled will reflect:

- 100% of the portfolios submitted until the the IV/QA is satisfied that there is consistence of decisions

At least one standardisation meeting will be held in each year.

This strategy was approved by IFD College Governors on 1st December 2018
Review date December 2021