



Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy

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Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure they remain correct and are fit for purpose. However, the policy may be reviewed and updated at any time to reflect any changes made by Safety Training Awards (STA) or the Regulatory authorities.



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Purpose

We are committed to having effective internal quality assurance procedures in place to verify authenticity of the assessment decisions for the qualifications on offer.

Effective internal quality assurance allows everyone involved in qualifications to have confidence in the assessment decisions. All learners who are competent should be assessed as meeting the assessment criteria set out in Safety Training Awards (STA) assessment criteria and qualification specifications, ensuring the validity of assessment decisions is a joint responsibility for all those involved in the internal quality assurance of the qualifications.

Policy

The ATC named above works collaboratively with Safety Training Awards to maintain high standards, however we have full responsibility for the Internal quality assurance within the ATC. The ultimate success of internal quality assurance depends on the individuals who implement the procedures, this means that everyone involved in the internal quality assurance of qualifications must be clear:

- What their role and responsibilities are in relation to internal quality assurance
- Why they should be doing it
- How they should be doing it
- When they should be doing it
- What standards they should be achieving; and
- Who is responsible for different parts of the overall quality assurance system.

As an ATC we have developed an internal quality assurance strategy to ensure that internal quality assurance is maintained not only in the standards of assessment but also the administration procedures and systems in place within the ATC. The monitoring of all aspects of the assessment process through the strategy will allow the ATC to be pro-active and progressive in continually improving standards and performance.

Safety Training Awards must be confident of the standard and reliability of the ATCs management, internal quality assurance and assessment, therefore the strategy will include the following:

- Risk assessments
- Working with Tutors and Assessors
- Guidance and Support to Tutors and Assessors
- Sampling of assessments
- Monitoring of assessment practice
- Tracking of learner progress
- Standardisation
- IQA reporting and documentation
- IQA Meetings.

There are two types of quality assuring of qualifications, external quality assurance is Safety Training Awards responsibility for validating those assessments within the ATC have been carried out consistently and to Safety Training Awards assessment criteria. Internal quality assurance carried out by the IQA is the ATCs responsibility to ensure that assessments are carried out in line with STA assessment criteria and qualification specifications.

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) Role

Verification is one aspect of internal quality assurance which relates to the day-to-day delivery and assessment of STA qualifications. It is the process of monitoring delivery and assessment practice to ensure that assessment decisions are consistently accurate. The purpose of internal quality assurance is

to ensure and demonstrate that assessment is valid and consistent, through monitoring and sampling assessment decisions. Rigorous internal quality assurance ensures sound assessment practice leading to consistent and valid assessment decisions. IQA's contribute to the internal quality assurance of STA qualifications.

Internal quality assurance involves:

- Monitoring the conduct of delivery and assessment
- Sampling learners evidence to verify assessment decisions
- Assuring the quality of the systems and procedures used for assessment and verification
- Supporting and advising Tutors and Assessors
- Keeping quality assurance and assessment records up to date; and
- Providing information and evidence to Safety Training Awards for analysis.

The IQA role can be determined by the criteria within the IQA qualification units. The main functions of an IQA are to:

- Provide advice and support to the assessor and tutor
- Operate, monitor, and evaluate to a consistently high standard of assessment practice
- Meet and maintain external quality assurance requirements set by Safety Training Awards and the regulatory authorities.

Selection and Training of IQAs

The appointed IQA will have appropriate occupational competence and understanding of the standards and their role. The ATC will ensure that all IQA's have appropriate occupational competence and understanding of the standards and their role, and that they maintain professional competence through their Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

This includes:

- IQA CV's are checked and validated to ensure occupational competence at an appropriate level in the specific sector as required by Safety Training Awards and copies to be held in their staff record within the ATCs Synergy record
- A system of professional updating is available for all IQAs
- Newly appointed IQAs are monitored by Safety Training Awards EQA on a regular basis to ensure their understanding is thorough
- Training/development is carried out to address identified training needs
- All IQAs have a clear understanding of their role in the internal quality assurance systems

The ATC must ensure all final assessment decisions are quality assured by a qualified and occupationally competent IQA.

IQA Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

IQA's will be required to maintain their CPD and ensure continuing competence. Competence refers to having the relevant skills, knowledge, understanding and attributes to do a specific job in a particular way to an agreed standard.

CPD can take many forms and a record of activities should be available for the previous 12 months, for example:

- Studying for the level 4 Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice qualification
- Study related to job role/occupational competency
- Collaborative working with Safety Training Awards
- Development work regarding qualifications/occupational Standards
- Other appropriate occupational activity as agreed with the ATC Co-ordinator and/or EQA.

IQA's who already possess D34 or V1 qualification will be expected to update their CPD to reflect the recent IQA requirements through development of their role. This does not imply that they must achieve IQA re-qualification as this is not a current requirement of the regulators.

Risk Assessment

The IQA will be required to carry out a risk assessment on all Tutors and Assessors listed within the ATC. The risk assessment will identify the necessary contact time and support needed from the IQA for each individual Tutor and Assessor. The risks will be recorded on the ATCs IQA strategy and Sampling Plan. The risk assessment must be reviewed on a regular basis and maintained as a live document and all changes to staffing should be reflected within the risk assessment.

It is anticipated that in most instances new Tutors and Assessors risk banding scores will diminish as they gain experience and competence through the achievement of their Tutor and Assessor qualifications. Those Tutors and Assessors who have multiple learners may be in more than one category dependent on the qualifications the assessor and tutor are involved with and/or any special circumstances.

Risk Rating

There are various factors which decide risk ratings and this can depend on qualification to qualification but laid out below is a guide:

High Risk – A high risk Tutor or Assessor could be one or more of the following:

- A probationary Tutor or Assessor
- Newly qualified to deliver Safety Training Awards qualifications
- A Tutor or Assessor who is newly appointed to operate within your ATC
- An experienced Tutor or Assessor who is operating across more than two other ATCs
- A Tutor or Assessor who has been sanctioned by Safety Training Awards or another Awarding Organisation (AO)
- Major action points been given during recent IQA activity
- A qualification has been re-written and therefore it is new to the Tutor or Assessor.

It is recommended a high-risk Tutor or Assessor has a 100% of all course paperwork internally quality assured and face to face observations are increased.

Medium Risk – A medium risk Tutor or Assessor could be one or more of the following:

- A Tutor or Assessor who has delivered less than 10 courses
- They may have moved down from 'high risk' due to recent successful IQA activity
- An experienced Tutor or Assessor who operates for 2 or less other ATCs
- They have no sanctions applied by Safety Training Awards or another AO
- Minor action points given during recent IQA activity.

It is recommended a medium risk Tutor or Assessor has 50% of all course paperwork internally quality assured.

Low Risk – A low risk Tutor or Assessor could be one or more of the following:

- An experienced Tutor or Assessor who has delivered over 10 courses
- They may have moved down from 'medium risk' due to successful recent IQA activity
- A Tutor or Assessor who only operates for your ATC
- They have no sanctions by Safety Training Awards or another AO
- There are no actions points from recent IQA activity.

It is recommended a low-risk Tutor or Assessor has 25% of all course paperwork IQA.

Team members can move up and down risk ratings depending on the outcome of recent IQA reports. It is a dynamic process. The ATC Centre Co-ordinator and IQA should work with the Tutors and Assessors to give feedback on action points or other areas and plan how to support the team members moving down the categories towards 'low'.

Information on risk rating and regular updates on the outcome of risk ratings must be uploaded to Synergy – 'documents' then 'add document' and use the version numbers to keep track of the most current. It should also be made available to STA and EQA upon request.

Please refer to the ATCs IQA Strategy and IQA Sampling plan for more information.

Working with Tutors and Assessors

New Tutors and Assessors

Tutors and Assessors new to the delivery and assessment process will be required to meet with their IQA within the first month from the date of being appointed to the ATC. The IQA and Tutor or Assessor will be required to review their strengths and weaknesses and identify any development needs and agree upon an action plan.

Experienced Tutors and Assessors

Experienced Tutors and Assessors will be risk rated and a review may be carried out on their strengths and weaknesses and identify any development needs and agree upon an action plan on a regular basis. IQAs and the ATC Co-ordinator have a responsibility to ensure all Tutors and Assessors attend regular Standardisation meetings with the ATC, annually as a minimum. This must be reported to Safety Training Awards by uploading copies of the meeting minutes and any agreed action plans to the ATCs Synergy record.

The purpose of standardisation will be to discuss:

- Examples of good practice
- What constitutes valid, reliable, and authentic evidence
- Ideas on different examples of delivery and assessment
- Sharing of best practice ideas
- Different delivery and assessment methods
- What constitutes fair assessment
- How comparability may be achieved.

Monitoring of Delivery and Assessment

Monitoring of delivery and assessment provides an internal quality assurance process which allows the IQA to ensure that assessment strategies are being utilised in accordance with STAs assessment criteria and qualification specifications. This monitoring will vary between Tutors and Assessors dependant on experience. The amount of contact will be determined from the results of the risk rating assessment. It should be noted that extra support may be required for some Tutors and Assessors, IQAs will need to use their own discretion to determine this.

The purpose monitoring delivery and assessment will be to:

- Check the progress of the learner
- Ensure that there is consistent interpretation of the standards and assessment strategy set out by STA
- Directly observe part of the delivery or assessment process
- Identify and resolve any problems/issues
- Provide guidance and support where required, in particular with the completion of STA course paperwork and assessment materials

- Identify any training needs and agree upon an action plan or seek advice from Safety Training Awards
- Review overall performance and risk ratings, update when necessary.

The IQA will be required to provide feedback to the Tutor or Assessor via the electronic IQA report in the ATCs Synergy record for each monitoring activity that is completed. This will summarise the main areas of discussion, feedback or action points agreed, any areas of delivery or assessment checked or observed and the risk rating score. This form must be signed by both the Tutor or Assessor and IQA.

Standardisation Meetings

Regular ATC / IQA standardisation meetings must be held by the ATC, annually as a minimum. IQA's will be expected to have regular attendance to ensure they keep up to date with the ATCs policies and procedures. This will also provide a forum for the reviewing of the internal quality assurance procedures, problem solving and sharing of information and best practice ideas.