SFEDI®AWARDS

Guide to Internal Quality Assurance
Version 1.1

This version of the guide replaces all previous versions. This guide is subject to regular reviews and is maintained electronically by its owners. Electronic copies are version controlled; printed copies are not subject to this control.

Version History

Version	Month/ Year	Section Updated	Description	Reviewed By	Signed off By
1.0	January 2023	All	Guide created	N Preston	R Lowbridge
1.1	September 2025	The role of IQA Documents for EQA checks Standardisation Submissions	Functions list updates Reference to Quality Assurance Policy for sample requirements Requirements updated Initial assessment and mapping added Brake down supplied for different sample periods, including for inactive samples New format layout	Quality Team	R Lowbridge

About this guide

This guide has been created to support all Internal Quality Assurance staff ensure they understand the full requirements of their role.

The Role of the Internal Quality Assurer

Often seen as an extension of the Awarding Organisation's monitoring team, the Internal QualityAssurer (IQA) has a vital role. They maintain and monitor the delivery and certification process and is the main contact between the Centre and Awarding Organisation.

A strong and experienced IQA should lead to a delivery and certification system that maintainsthe integrity of the qualification, provides a quality learning experience to the learner and continually looks at methods to improve delivery and share best practice.

Often when issues are found within the delivery and certification of qualifications within a centre, regardless of whether at learner or Assessor level, it can be traced back to a quality assurance system that does not have sufficient planning, oversight and impartiality to carry outits function.

The Internal Quality Assurance function exists to:

- Ensure no learners are enrolled or commence their qualification prior to Centre Approval being confirmed by SFEDI Awards.
- Develop and follow internal policies, procedures, and documentation for the carrying out and maintenance of quality systems in line with Awarding Organisation requirements
- Ensure all Assessors hold and maintain the required qualifications and occupational expertise to deliver the qualifications and units they have been assigned to
- Provide support to Assessors in relation to procedures and policies for the delivery of the qualifications and units they are assigned to
- Identify training needs and provide ongoing training to Assessors to continually improve thestandard of qualification and unit delivery
- Ensure no assessment is carried out prior to learners being registered for their unit or qualification or prior to Centre Approval being confirmed by SFEDI Awards
- Co-ordinate the timely registration (within 4 weeks of commencing the course) and certification claims for learners
- Maintain appropriate records of quality assurance, assessment, registration, and certification activities in line with Awarding Organisation requirements
- Ensure sampling plans take into account the ratio of learners per Assessor per qualification to meet the quality assurance requirements to cover all units delivered within a 12-month period
- Facilitate standardisation activities to support the continuous improvement of qualification and unit delivery
- Ensure all assessment documentation, maintained by Assessors, is complete, up-to-date and legible

- Review all SFEDI Awards policy updates to ensure the Centre and its staff understand the requirements and can implement the necessary procedures needed if they are not already in place
- Ensure all staff and learners are aware of the content of Centre policies including but not limited to Malpractice and Maladministration, Complaints, and Appeals. Including the route to reporting any suspected cases internally and escalation if unhappy with the outcome
- Ensure conflicts of interest are identified and addressed, including not allowing the quality assurance of own assessment work or cross quality assurance where two people quality assure each others work
- Conduct observations of Assessors conducting the assessment process
- Conduct learner interviews to monitor and analyse the quality of the assessment process andlearner journey
- Provide the required information to the Awarding Organisation to aid and facilitatemonitoring activities as required
- Impart information and feedback resulting from monitoring activities and ensure all actionsare addressed by the indicated timescales

Inducting New Assessors

A detailed and supportive induction is important to ensure that Assessors understand the role they are completing. Although the IQA may not be responsible for the training of Assessors within the centre, part of the IQA role is to ensure that an appropriate induction has taken placeand that training needs are identified and addressed.

The induction programme should ensure the Assessors' understanding of:

- How to conduct competence-based assessment
- The requirements of the qualification(s) the Assessor will be delivering
- The Centre's Quality Assurance Policy and procedures
- The assessment records and documentation to be used
- The requirements of the Awarding Organisation and the Regulator

It is important that during the induction process Assessors are informed of the importance of the assessment process: **plan, judge and feedback**, as this will underpin the activities leading tothe completion of a qualification. They ask Assessors to:

Plan

Prior to carrying out an assessment thorough planning should be completed to identify the assessment methods to be used to provide the learner with the best opportunity to demonstratetheir knowledge, skills and behaviors in order to meet

the requirements of the qualification.

Assessors will plan to collect two types of evidence: performance evidence designed to demonstrate what the learner is able to do and knowledge evidence designed to demonstrate what the leaner knows and understands.

On occasions, as indicated later in this guide, performance evidence can also demonstrate knowledge and understanding, but knowledge evidence does not normally demonstrate performance.

Plans should include:

- The location and time that assessment will take place
- Ensure that the evidence produced will meet the needs of being authentic, valid, reliable, current, and sufficient
- Identify any mandatory assessment methods
- Identify the qualification requirements that will be met by the planned assessments

The learner should be included within the planning process so that they are aware of what is required of them and how it matches to the requirements of the qualification.

Plans should be documented and agreed upon by both the Assessor and learner so that they can be reviewed and updated at a later date.

There are occasions when naturally occurring evidence presents itself and this should not be discounted on the basis that it has not been preplanned. It should be used where appropriate to evidence the requirements of the qualification. This should not form a replacement of well-planned evidence and should be seen as a source of complementary evidence.

Judge

Once evidence has been generated it must be judged against the requirements of the qualification. This should be the agreed opinion of the Assessor and learner of the extent the evidence meets the requirements of the qualification.

It should index the evidence against the requirements of the qualification clearly showing the claims to competence that have been made. The most appropriate method of indexing the evidence against the requirements of the qualification are decided upon during the approval process of the Centre but usually a 'matrix' style indexing is used.

When judging evidence, the Assessor should ensure it is:

- **Authentic** – is it the work of the learner?
- **Valid** – is the evidence relevant to the qualification requirements?
- **Reliable** – if a different Assessor completed the assessment would they reach the same decision?
- **Current** – does the evidence show the learner meets the qualification requirements at the time of the assessment? Especially important when using Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)
- **Sufficient** – does the evidence meet the requirements of the qualification

Feedback

Feedback must be provided to the learner for each assessment carried out and recorded on the assessment documentation and should feed into both assessment planning and the completion of progress reviews. The feedback should provide the learner with information relating to:

- Whether the planned assessment has been completed
- The quality of the assessment completed
- What has been covered within the standards
- What is required to be completed to move the qualification forward

Sampling Strategies

In order to provide SFEDI Awards qualifications, a Centre must have effective quality assurance processes in place stretching from the initial approval of the Centre, through to the approval to deliver qualifications and the certification for completed qualifications.

A sampling strategy is a mandatory part of the quality assurance process which must be in place and implemented by those who are carrying out the IQA role.

It should include:

- A set of internal quality assurance procedures in written form
- Sample planning based on the principles of 'CAMERA'
  Candidates/Learners- e.g.: ethnicity, age, gender, employment status and special arrangement
  Assessors – e.g.: trained, qualified, level of workload, occupational competence, risk rating
  Methods of assessment e.g.: – observations, questions, workbooks, products, assignments
  Evidence types: across the full range

          Records – documentation relating to assessments and feedback to Learners
          Assessment locations – to include all assessment locations

- Interim sampling
- Summative sampling
- Monitoring of assessor practice (including observations)
- Standardisation activities
- Administration procedures supporting the registration and certification process

Two forms of sampling are carried out to ensure that quality assurance is maintained. These are:

Interim Sampling

Dipping into the assessment process whilst the learner is at different stages. It is normally carriedout at three different stages; early in the programme, before any units or substantive work has been signed off or when one or two units or pieces of substantive work have been completed.

This ensures that the assessment of the learner is proceeding satisfactorily following the principles of plan, judge and feedback.

Please note we understand interim sampling is not always possible on short courses.

Summative Sampling

Involves the IQA reviewing the quality of the assessment decisions by the Assessor. The IQA should be able to follow an audit trail, which clearly demonstrates that the Assessor has checked evidence is:

- **Authentic** – is it the work of the learner?
- **Valid** – is the evidence relevant to the qualification requirements?
- **Reliable** – if a different Assessor completed the assessment would they reach the samedecision?
- **Current** – does the evidence show the learner meets the qualification requirements at the time of the assessment? Especially important when using Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)
- **Sufficient** – does the evidence fully meet the requirements of the qualification/unit

The IQA must record and report all sampling undertaken in sufficient detail to be able to justify the decision made and reports should be signed by both the Assessor and IQA.

Sampling plans should ensure that over a period of 12 months the sampling activities cover all:

- Assessors
- Methods of assessment
- Specific qualification requirements
- Evidence or Units
- Records
- Assessment sites

An IQA plan for all learner should be maintained for all samples planned and conducted showing:

- Learner name
- Qualification Title
- Registration number
- Start date
- Planned end date
- Planned interim sampling updated to show actual sampling undertaken including unit number and type of assessments sampled
- Planned summative sampling updated to show actual sampling undertaken including unit number and type of assessments sampled

Different approaches to sampling planning should be adopted dependent on the experience of the Assessor assessing the qualification or unit they have been assigned to.

Decisions as to the size and nature of IQA activity is the responsibility of the Centre and is dependent on a range of factors including the risks associated with newly appointed or newly qualified assessors, newly introduced qualifications and external funding requirements. The Centre's own IQA Strategy must justify their IQA sampling ratio. It is not for SFEDI Awards to decide on the sampling ratio for each Centre although we provide a minimum benchmark within the Quality Assurance Policy, and we reserve the right to request increased sampling where we believe there is an element or risk to the quality of assessment or internal verification.

Our quality team are happy to provide guidance on how this should be approached based on individual circumstances. See example of an IQA planning document here https://sfediawards.co.uk/existing-delivery-centres/supporting-documentation/

Once sampling has been completed it is important that the IQA provides constructive feedback to the Assessor so as to identify and address any issues and to promote continuous development of the assessment process going forward.

The IQA should:

- Produce written feedback
- Aim feedback at Tutors/Assessors – not learners
- Be honest
- Ensure comments are constructive and positive
- Start by asking the tutor/assessor what they thought themselves about their work
- Be factual
- Talk through each point of the feedback
- Give clear details of what was found/seen
- Specify what was done well and what needs to be done differently
- Seek to improve practice over the long term
- Agree next steps and timescales for change
- Record the process in detail

Claims for certification can only be approved by an Internal Quality Assurer holding the appropriate qualification or directive from the Awarding Organisation.

Standardisation

Standardisation (sometimes referred to as benchmarking or moderating) is an important part of the duties of the IQA.

Regular meetings should be held to conduct standardisation exercises, usually on a quarterly basis, such as:

- Update on changes in the requirements as a SFEDI Awards Centre
- Update on changes in the requirements of particular qualifications
- Update on any findings from approval, re-approval, monitoring and/or external quality assurance activities conducted by SFEDI Awards
- Review of SFEDI Awards Malpractice and Maladministration Policy to ensure Centres understand the requirements and can implement the necessary procedures needed to identify reports of malpractice and maladministration
- Ensure all staff and learrners are aware of the content of Centre policies including but not limited to Malpractice and Maladministration, Complaints, and Appeals. Including the route to reporting any suspected cases internally and escalation if unhappy with the outcome
- Review Sanctions Policy to ensure Centres understand the action which SFEDI Awards will implement if the Centre does not follow quality assurance proceses

- Support the reaching or an assessment and/or quality assurance decision as to the quality of a candidate's work and where discussions with one or more persons could support a decision being made
- Review example training materials/practices
- Exercises using real learners' evidence to be used in order to standardise the assessmentdecision process
- Review assessment practices, e.g. induction, planning, judgement of evidence, feedback, ongoing signposting
- Review quality assurance practices, e.g. planning, sampling, feedback

Minutes of meetings should be produced and copies kept for viewing during external monitoring activities.

Assessor Observations

The IQA completes observations of delivery and assessment to ensure the management of the quality of the programme. There are two common types of observation:

- Direct observation of the Assessor/Tutor in action and giving feedback on performance
- Direct observation of an Assessor's planning and reviewing activities with learners

These observations are conducted, following sampling strategy requirements and clear evidence of the conducting of these should be maintained for viewing by the Awarding Organisation during monitoring activities.

Evidence of the enactment of any associated actions should be recorded and kept within the quality assurance folder for viewing by the Awarding Organisation during monitoring activities.

Dealing with External Quality Assurance Arrangement

As the main link between the centre and Awarding Organisation, the IQA manages and maintainsthe provisions of qualifications within the Centre.

For external monitoring activities, the Internal Quality Assurer is required to have the following information readily available:

- Centre file containing all documents
- Numbers of current registered learners per qualification/unit

- IQA and Assessor details – especially details of occupational competency, CVs, up to date CPD records and current caseloads
- Copies of relevant staff certificates
- Assessment records and plans
- IQA sampling strategy
- IQA records including feedback to Assessors, Assessor observations and learner interviews
- Learner evidence records and documentary evidence
- Records of claims for certification

Submissions

The Internal Quality Assurer is required to submit the following documents to SFEDI for the samping periods:

June sample (for Centres actively claiming learners that are not covered in No Direct Claims Checks)

- Sampling plan for all learners claimed on Registr8 between the preceding 1st November and 30th April.
- A copy of the IQA Strategy if it has been updated since last submitted.
- Portfolios for learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- Evidence of initial assessment of the learners
- Mapping for all units
- Assessment and quality assurance reports for each of the learners that have been requested as part of the sample

December sample (for all Centres who are approved to deliver SFEDI Awards Qualifications)

Active Centres

- Sampling plan for all learners claimed on Registr8 between the preceding 1st May and 31st October
- Portfolios for learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- Evidence of initial assessment of the learner
- Mapping for all units
- Assessment and quality assurance reports for each of the learners that have been requested as part of the sample
- CPD records for all Assessment and IQA staff
- Copies of observations of the Assessor giving feedback on performance, and planning and reviewing activities with learners

- Standardisation activities carried out within the last year
- Any policies if they have been updated since they were last submitted. A list of the policies we review can be found on the SFEDI Awards website at https://sfediawards.co.uk/media/SFEDI-Awards-Approval-Meeting-Preparation-Guide-2025.docx
- Policies or documents relating to the thematic review
- Evidence of any instances of the following:
  - Malpractice and Maladministration, Conflicts of Interest, Reasonable   Adjustments, Appeals or Complaints

Inactive Centres

- Policies or documents relating to the thematic review
- Any policies if they have been updated since they were last submitted. A list of the policies we review can be found on the SFEDI Awards website at https://sfediawards.co.uk/media/SFEDI-Awards-Approval-Meeting-Preparation-Guide-2025.docx
- Confirmation that no staff changes have taken place
- CPD records for all Assessment and IQA staff

The IQA will be responsible for ensuring that all action points raised through Awarding Organisation monitoring activities are addressed within the specified timescale(s).

Continuous Professional Development

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a structured learning process that aids in the updating of an individual's knowledge to ensure competence to practice taking on board newknowledge, skills and practical experience.

As to who should undertake CPD activities, the short answer is everyone who is involved in thedelivery and quality assurance of SFEDI Awards qualifications.

The process of CPD is important to support the quality of the learning journey provided to SFEDIAwards learners within our approved network of training providers.

As the name suggests, CPD is an ongoing process with individuals carrying out activities throughout the year.

Records of these activities should be updated at a minimum of once every 6 months but for individuals who carry out multiple activities within the year it may prove beneficial to update therecords more frequently to ensure that all relevant information has been recorded.

CPD covers a multitude of subjects and specialisms and so definitive lists of what should becompleted aren't appropriate.

An individual should consider the subject matters contained within the qualification(s) they have responsibility for as this will provide guidance on the types of subjects and specialisms to includewhen participating in the CPD process.

It is not just about the subjects being delivered within the qualification(s), CPD should take a more holistic approach to include assessment and quality assurance practices so that not only isthe knowledge of the subject being delivered up to date, but the individual is also continually improving their skills and abilities as a delivered and/or quality assurer.

Examples of potential CPD activities could include:

- Shadowing other quality assurance staff
- Observing a visiting expert
- Carrying out action research
- Standardisation meeting activities
- Contributing to or reading professional publications
- Attendance at conference and training days
- Peer to peer mentoring and support
- Undertaking relevant qualifications
- Delivery across a wide range of types of customers

The following information should be recorded for CPD activities that have been undertaken

- Date activity took place
- Number of hours
- Description of the activity
- How the activity has helped to further develop knowledge, skills, and abilities
- How the development will be implemented in supporting the delivery of SFEDI Awards qualifications
- Details of any further activities that are required

CPD records will be viewed as part of the Standard and Additional Monitoring activitiescompleted by SFEDI Awards.

Other relate Polices and Documents

- CPD Policy
- Quality Assurance Overview
- Quality Assurance Policy

Contact Us:

If you have any questions about the content of this policy, please contact our customer service department.

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