

Internal Quality Assurance Guidance

Date: 01/06/2025

Version: 1.0



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1.1 Quality Assurance Monitoring

Approved centres must have robust quality assurance systems in place to ensure high-quality delivery and effective assessment of qualifications.

Centres are responsible for Internal Quality Assurance (IQA), while we (BIIAB/SEG Awards) are responsible for External Quality Assurance (EQA).

Where centres assess and mark learner work, they must ensure that assessment decisions are fair, valid, reliable, and applied consistently, so that no learner is disadvantaged.

We monitor and support centres through our EQA activity to ensure these standards are met.

1.2 Ofqual and Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS)

All awarding organisations must comply with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

As part of this, we operate a **Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS)** strategy. This ensures that assessments designed, delivered, and marked by centres are quality assured effectively.

CASS supports:

- Consistent approaches across centres
- Valid and reliable assessment decisions
- Confidence in certification

CASS requirements are embedded throughout our quality assurance policies and processes, including verification and moderation.

1.3 What is Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is a key process that ensures assessment decisions made within the centre are:

- Valid
- Reliable
- Consistent
- In line with qualification requirements



Effective IQA supports both learners and staff, underpinning the integrity of the Centre's delivery. A centre's IQA system may contain all or some of the following IQA activities:

- Sampling and reviewing assessment evidence
- Monitoring of assessor practice
- CPD and training records of assessors and IQAs
- Conversation with learners
- Standardisation meetings and activities
- Administration and records of the above

1.4 Purpose of Internal Quality Assurance

The Centre's IQA processes should ensure:

- A high-quality learner experience
- Valid and reliable assessment decisions
- Assessment design that meets qualification requirements
- Consistency between assessors
- Clear and accurate interpretation of standards
- A robust audit trail for verification and certification
- Ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement
- Compliance with regulatory requirements
- Secure and compliant exam delivery (where applicable)

Where assessment activities are carried out remotely or through online delivery, centres must ensure that appropriate controls are in place to maintain the validity, authenticity, and security of assessment.

This should include:

- Verification of learner identity
- Secure storage and transfer of assessment evidence
- Appropriate arrangements for remote invigilation where required
- Secure platforms for online assessment activity
- Measures to authenticate learner work and participation
- Clear audit trails for remotely assessed activities

1.5 Centre Requirements

Centres must ensure that assessment and internal quality assurance practices are inclusive, fair, and accessible to all learners. IQAs should monitor assessment and sampling activity to identify any trends or practices that may disadvantage learners and take appropriate action where concerns are identified.



As a centre, you must ensure that:

- there are comprehensive IQA policies and procedures which are documented and maintained.
- a designated IQA is identified and accountable for implementation and the ongoing management of IQA activities.
- there are at least two members of staff involved in assessment and IQA activities, and the roles of assessor and IQA are not undertaken by the same individual.
- centres should also maintain appropriate contingency arrangements to ensure continuity of assessment and IQA activity in the event of staff absence, turnover or conflicts of interest.
- assessors do not quality assure their own decisions
- roles are clearly identified in all records

You must also ensure that IQA activity is properly supported through:

- Senior oversight (e.g. Lead IQA or Head of Centre)
- Staff induction into IQA processes
- Sufficient time and resources
- Regular standardisation and team meetings
- Access to guidance on reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- Ongoing CPD and support

1.6 What the IQA Policy must cover

The centre's IQA policy should clearly set out the following:

Purpose and scope

- What the policy covers
- Who it applies to
- Alignment with awarding organisation and regulatory requirements

Roles and responsibilities

- Who is responsible for IQA
- Expectations for each role within the assessment
- Required competence and qualifications
- Responsibility for standardisation and supporting assessors
- Escalation routes for quality concerns

Sampling strategy

- What will be sampled

- Who will be sampled (covering all assessors as well as a mix of the levels the learners / ensuring that all units completed have been sampled)
- Interim/ Summative Sampling (e.g. when and how often).
- Types of sampling (e.g. interim, summative, risk-based)
- Rationale for the sampling plan (e.g. outlining how decisions have been informed by risk, previous performance, assessor experience)

Risk management

- How risk is identified and reviewed
- How sampling is adjusted (e.g. triggers for increased sampling)
- How malpractice risks are controlled

Standardisation

- How consistency is ensured
- Frequency of meetings
- How outcomes are recorded

Assessor support

- How staff competence is ensured
- Induction and onboarding processes to ensure suitably qualified and competent assessors are in place
- Monitoring and development arrangements (including planned observations of assessors carrying out assessment activities with learners, to support standardisation, quality assurance, and continuous improvement)
- CPD approach

Feedback and action planning

- How feedback is given
- How actions are tracked and completed
- Follow-up/review process

Record keeping

- What records are kept
- How audit trails are maintained
- Retention arrangements

Appeals and Complaints process

- Learner appeals

- Complaints process linked to assessment
- Including stages and timescales

Continuous improvement

- How quality is reviewed
- How IQA and EQA feedback is used

1.7 IQA Competency and Experience

IQAs must be occupationally/sector competent (e.g. and maintain up-to-date knowledge relevant to the qualifications they quality assure. They should:

- Be independent from the assessment decisions they sample
- Have appropriate vocational and teaching expertise
- Understand qualification and assessment requirements
- Be able to influence improvements within the centre
- Have experience of assessment practice
- Hold RQF Level 4/ SCQF Level 7 or above IQA qualification or be working towards with completion within a 12 month period.

1.8 Responsibilities of the IQA

The IQA plays a central role in maintaining quality. Responsibilities include:

- Acting as the key link between the centre and SEG Awards/BIIAB, including preparing for EQA activity and ensuring Centres act on EQA reports, with actions tracked and reviewed.
- Applying relevant policies, procedures, and regulatory requirements.
- Planning and undertaking sampling activities throughout the learner journey and prior to certification.
- Ensuring assessment decisions are valid, reliable, consistent, and fair across all assessors, units, and assessment methods.
- Ensuring assessment decisions are free from bias and that all learners are treated fairly and consistently.
- Planning and facilitating standardisation activities, recording outcomes, and resolving any differences in assessment decisions.
- Supporting assessors through monitoring, feedback, and access to CPD, and taking appropriate action where performance concerns are identified.
- Maintaining accurate and up-to-date records of IQA activity.
- Ensuring learner achievement records are complete and current.

- Implementing controls to prevent malpractice and maladministration, including authentication of learner work (including risks associated with AI) and maintaining secure assessment conditions.
- Reviewing appealed decisions and using outcomes to inform continuous improvement.
- Sampling assessment decisions prior to certification and confirming that decisions are valid before certification claims are made.
- Ensuring effective processes are in place to ensure that the IQA signs off on achievement and that certification is not claimed until the IQA confirms validity and maintaining clear audit trails for achievement sign-off and making arrangements to withhold certification where assessment validity is in question.
- Ensuring that all IQA and EQA actions are addressed within agreed timescales.

1.9 Risk Assessment

Centres should maintain a risk-based approach to IQA, and IQAs must maintain a risk assessment for all assessors and qualifications delivered. This should be made available to the EQA during visits or upon request.

The risk assessment should consider:

- assessor experience and qualifications
- new or high-risk qualifications
- previous sampling outcomes
- data trends (e.g. achievement rates, resubmissions, EQA feedback)

This should inform the Centre sampling strategy to ensure higher-risk areas receive more attention.

1.10 Tracking and Recording

Centres must maintain clear and accurate records of IQA activity. Sampling decisions should be risk-based, proportionate and clearly documented. Centre records should:

- show what has been sampled
- cover all assessors, assessment methods, and units
- include sampling at different stages (early, mid, final)
- illustrate early and more frequent sampling of new assessors
- illustrate increased frequency of sampling for 'high risk' assessors, qualifications, assessments, and units
- evidence actions taken and completed

- illustrate coverage of adjustment arrangements, and borderline decisions

Sampling should be sufficient to give confidence in assessment decisions.

IQA activity must be planned and recorded using appropriate documentation, including a sampling plan and IQA reports. Centres may use their own documentation or SEG Awards/BIIAB templates.

Centres must ensure that all learner, assessor, and IQA records are stored securely and handled in accordance with relevant data protection legislation and organisational policies.

Access to records should be restricted to authorised individuals and records must be retained, archived, and destroyed securely in line with centre retention requirements.

1.11 Malpractice and Maladministration

Centres must take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration. Further information can be found in SEG Awards'/BIIAB Malpractice and Maladministration Policy which is published on our website.

The IQA supports this by:

- ensuring policies are followed
- monitoring authenticity of learner work (including AI use)
- checking assessment conditions
- identifying risks through sampling
- ensuring staff and learners understand expectations
- escalating concerns promptly
- keeping records of cases and outcomes
- reviewing trends and adjusting quality assurance activity
- ensuring certification is withheld where required

Any suspected malpractice must be reported in line with the centre's policy and SEG Awards / BIIAB Malpractice and Maladministration Policy requirements.

Where artificial intelligence (AI) tools are used by learners or staff, centres must ensure that assessment evidence remains authentic, valid, and attributable to the learner.

Centres should:

- provide clear guidance to learners and staff regarding acceptable and unacceptable use of AI

- ensure learners understand requirements relating to authenticity and plagiarism
- implement processes to authenticate learner work
- investigate suspected misuse of AI appropriately
- maintain records of concerns, investigations, and outcomes where applicable

The use of AI must not compromise the integrity or validity of assessment decisions.

1.12 Conflict of Interest

Centres must manage conflicts of interest to protect the integrity of the assessment. Centres must maintain a conflict-of-interest log to identify and manage any potential conflicts of interest that may compromise impartiality. A conflict of interest is any situation that could compromise the objectivity of a tutor, assessor, or IQA due to personal, professional, or financial interests.

IQAs must:

- be aware of the Centre's and SEG Awards / BIIAB Conflict-of-Interest Policy
- declare any potential conflicts promptly
- ensure appropriate mitigation actions are implemented and recorded

Examples may include:

- assessing or quality assuring a family member
- staff undertaking qualifications within their own centre
- working across multiple centres
- involvement in decisions affecting individuals with personal connections

1.13 Escalation and Regulatory Notification

Centres must ensure that significant quality assurance concerns are escalated promptly and managed appropriately.

This may include:

- suspected malpractice or maladministration
- repeated invalid assessment decisions
- significant assessor or IQA performance concerns
- risks affecting the validity of certification
- failure to address IQA or EQA actions within agreed timescales



Where concerns present a risk to the integrity of assessment or certification, centres must take appropriate action, which may include:

- increased or enhanced sampling
- temporary suspension of certification claims
- additional monitoring or staff support
- escalation to senior management
- notification to BIIAB/SEG Awards where required

All actions and outcomes should be documented and retained within centre quality assurance records.

1.14 Review and Continuous Improvement

Centres should review their IQA policy and procedures regularly to ensure they remain current, effective, and aligned to qualification, regulatory and organisational requirements.

Reviews should take account of:

- IQA and EQA feedback
- changes to qualification requirements
- regulatory updates
- identified risks or trends
- feedback from learners and staff

Centres should maintain version control arrangements, including review dates and approval records, and ensure relevant staff are informed of any updates to policies or procedures.