Policy Title: Internal Verification Procedure

Date: September 2016

BACKGROUND

This policy and procedures has been prepared following consultation with the Tutors, Assessors and IQAs and bearing in mind the standard rules/procedures that cut across the various awarding bodies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance on assessment and internal verification to the course team and to ensure that the requirements of the awarding body in relation to all assessment decisions made on the programme are fully met.

SCOPE

This procedure covers NVQ Diplomas, vocational qualifications and other work based learning programme. Although this procedure aims to ensure quality standards across all courses, it is not exhaustive, and should be used in conjunction with other requirements.

AIM

The aim of internal verification is

- To maintain standards, ensure the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between assessors operating within the Centre.
- To offer support and guidance to assessors.
- To ensure learners have the opportunity to achieve their award within the timescale.

Delivery Method

It is the responsibility of the Centre Manager in consultation with the Head of Centre to allocate a reasonable number of assessors to the internal verifier. Each programme is looked at independently and taken into consideration is the number of learners, their geographical location, the delivery method of the award, the assessor capacity and how experienced they are. A decision is made taking these factors into consideration i.e. an internal verifier may support a small number of experienced assessors with considerable number of learners or a large number of inexperienced assessors with a smaller number of learners.

Through the Internal Verifier receives the details of the assessor and learner and then takes on the responsibility of monitoring and supporting the work of the assessor.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

Sampling should be conducted on both an interim and summative basis so that problems are picked up early and IV is not "end loaded". Work should be sampled by following the guidelines set by awarding body, however the Internal Verifier will verify a minimum number of unit, all borderline assessments will be internally verified.

For newly qualified Assessors this should be 100% of the assessments during the first year. For experienced Assessors 20% to 25%. This is not fixed rate, judgement on the number verified should take into account other factors, for example, those that identify level of risk for the unit. All learners enrolled and registered with the awarding body will be included within the sampling strategy.

SAMPLING PLAN

The Lead Verifier (if applicable) gives sampling plan to each internal verifier according to which they work. This sampling plan identifies how experienced the assessor is and the learner's work which is to be verified. This includes regularly sampling evidence of assessment decisions made by the assessors across all aspects of assessment process in order to monitor, and ensure, consistency in the interpretation and application of standards within the Centre. This sampling plan includes direct observation of assessment practise, internally verifying evidence produced by the learner as well as observing the introduction session and checking the validity of the progress revieBS. The original record completed by the internal verifier is sent to the assessor and any action points included are completed prior to the evidence being signed off as sufficient, authentic, valid and reliable. A copy of this is then kept on the assessors file at the centre, with a copy being sent back to the internal verifier for their records.

STANDARDISATION

Standardisation is the mechanism by which the Centre ensures that each Assessor / Internal Verifier consistently make valid decisions, and that is based on the same evidence all Assessors/ Internal Verifier would reach the same conclusion. Standardisation will take place during Course Team meetings when appropriate.

The standardisation process involves copies of submitted units by the Course Team. Records of the meeting must be minuted and feedback given to the Assessor and Internal Verifier.

STANDARDISATION MEETINGS

The internal verifier is also responsible for arranging and attending standardisation meetings, in line with the Centre's policy. To ensure standardisation the agenda is discussed and agreed with the centre manager. The agenda is sent to all assessors prior to the meeting in order that they are aware of issues being discussed and also it gives them all the opportunity to add items into it. These meetings are held in accordance with the awarding body requirements as well as giving assessors the opportunity to meet with other assessors from that region. It also supports establishing a procedure to develop a common interpretation of the national occupational standards between assessors. All meetings include dissemination of information on the following contents – centre issues, neBS from the awarding body, a standardisation exercise as well as looking at any training and development needs of assessors. Minutes of the meeting are taken and distributed to all assessors, internal verifier and centre manager.

INTERNAL VERIFIER MEETINGS

Internal verifier meetings are arranged in accordance with the centre's policy and the centre manager facilitates these meetings. To ensure standardisation the agenda is discussed and agreed with the centre manager. The agenda is sent to all verifiers prior to the meeting in order that they are aware of issues being discussed and also it gives them all the opportunity to add items into it. Minutes of the meetings are taken and distributed to all assessors and centre manager. The centre manager or internal verifier supervises the assessor and monitors the progress of learners.

ONGOING INTERNAL VERIFICATION

BS Security undertakes on-going Internal Verification of the assessment carried out by assessors and the evidence generated by learners and does not end-load the award. This ensures that the assessments are being carried out in accordance with the assessment strategy of the joint awarding body as well as ensuring the learner is progressing well. On the monitoring form it is indicated when evidence may well be ready for internal verification. It has to be noted that this is an indication only and individual learners may well chose to complete their award independently of this. Internal Verifiers are informed if the learner is not choosing the recorded method. Internal Verifiers are also expected to undertake interim internal verification of evidence produced by the learner. This is particularly useful when an assessor is not producing records of assessment at the indicated time. It also helps to support both the assessor and learner throughout the award instead of end loading the programme of learning.

As soon as the internal verifier is satisfied that all the awarding body requirements have been met the completed unit is signed off by the internal verifier on a unit summary sheet. If the unit has not been internally verified, then there would be an inscription at the top right hand corner as NOT SAMPLED (NS). This unit summary sheet is then forwarded to the centre administrator. Upon receipt the centre administrator enters the information on the sampling plan and initials the top right hand corner with the letter SP (Sampling Plan). Two photocopies are then taken and one is returned directly to the learner to add back into their portfolio and the other is given to the centre administrator who files the information into Centre Filling System (CFS).

To ensure that all internal verifier's are meeting the requirements of the awarding body as well as the requirements of the Centre, they receive a copy of the following during their introduction to BS Security:

- Qualifications & Credit Framework Code of Practice.
- Policy & Procedures of the Centre.
- Guidelines on Internal verification
- Portfolio for each award they are verifying
- Copy of Standards for each award they are verifying.
- Copy of course files.
- Copy of Assessor Good Practise Guidelines when observing learners in the workplace.
- Guidelines on Constructive Feedback.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION GUIDELINES FOR NVQ PROGRAMMES

These guidelines are based on the QCF Code of Practice. Every programme has to be assessed by an assessor which is then internally verified before submitting for external verification.

Assessors must meet the qualification criteria set by awarding body, for example – D32, D33 or the A1 and A2 award or the new AVA award. Staffs who are working towards the required qualification can carry out assessments but the assessment decisions in such cases should be countersigned by an experienced assessor.

All internal verifier must meet the qualification criteria set by the awarding body, for example D34 or V1 award or the new IQA award. Staffs who are working towards the required qualification can carry out IV but only under the supervision of an experienced Internal Verifier, and the experienced Internal Verifier must countersign any assessment decisions. The Centre Manager / Programme Coordinator must have copies of all the Assessors and Internal Verifiers occupational competence records as well as specimen signature.

The Internal Verifier must check that learners understand the assessment process, methods and evidence required and be able to verify that the evidence collated by the learner has been confirmed by the Assessor as: - Valid, Authentic, Current, Sufficient.

IV must be completed before the learners is notified of the decision(s) where there is a delay in internal verification and learners receive work back prior to the process taking place, all work will be marked with the work "provisional".

Learners should receive the results of assessment decisions within 4 weeks of submission and IV must take place within this time.

The results of verification must be recorded on the Internal Verification Feedback Form. This form is also used to provide feedback to the Assessors.

Disagreement over assessment should initially be resolved by discussion. If a decision cannot be reached by consensus then the appeals procedure should be implemented. If still a mutually agreeable decision cannot be reached then the matter should be referred to the External verifier.

The results of IV must be an agenda item, at Course Team Meetings and at Programme Review Meetings. Assessors and Internal verifiers will be given sufficient time to complete their tasks. Time allocation, if an issue, will be discussed during team meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsibility of Assessors

- Ensuring that they are aware of, and familiar with, all the assessment requirements of awarding bodies for all the courses on which they teach.
- Identifying and planning appropriate assessment opportunities to enable learners to provide sufficient evidence of competence.

- Assessing evidence of learner competence fairly and objectively against the requirements of the awarding body.
- Ensuring that learners are given timely written feedback.
- Ensuring that accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date records are kept of all assessment decisions.
- Liaising with other Assessors, Internal Verifiers to ensure standardisation and ethical practice in Assessment.
- Liaising with Centre Manager and other staff to ensure that learner achievements are accurately reported.
- Taking part in the appeals procedure and programme review as appropriate.
- Ensuring that their own knowledge and skills are current, and that opportunities for training and development are actively sought and taken up when offered.
- Maintaining an up- to-date staff development records and CV and providing copies to IV's / EV's as required.

Responsibilities of Internal Verifiers

- Ensuring that assessors are appropriately qualified and experienced and facilitating appropriate staff development and training.
- Ensuring that all new assessors have an appropriate induction.
- Identifying assessor's training needs.
- Ensuring that there is accuracy and consistency in assessments of learners.
- Establishing, if appropriate to the course, an annual IV schedule based on the assessor's schedule and the requirements of awarding body.
- Ensuring that assessment decisions are evidence based and satisfies the requirements of awarding body.
- Commenting and providing feedback on decisions made by the assessor.
- Maintaining and checking that appropriate records are kept.
- Informing assessors promptly of any changes in awarding body's requirements.
- Liaising with the External Verifier and participating in the internal standardisation process.

- Monitoring appeals by learners and the outcome of those appeals.
- Ensuring that the certification process for the learner has been completed.

Responsibilities of Centre Manager / Programme Coordinator

- Allocation of assessors and internal verifiers to each course.
- Ensuring that all assessors and internal verifiers have the appropriate qualifications and experience specified by the awarding body.
- Ensuring that internal verification is followed as per procedure.
- Ensuring that the assessment decisions of uncertificated IV's are checked, authenticated and counter signed by an appropriately qualified IV.
- Ensuring that IV issues are discussed and minuted at meetings with staff.
- Liaise with External Verifier, if appropriate, if there is an appeal against an assessment decision.
- Ensuring that any action points raised in EV reports are closed off.
- Ensuring that Internal Verification is followed as per the planned schedule. An IV checklist has been produced as an aide memoir.
- Monitoring the completion of action points raised by External Verifiers.
- Ensure learners are registered with the awarding body as soon as practically possible.

PROCEDURES FOR RETENTION OF RECORDS

Assessment records shall be accessible and available for Assessors, Verifiers and learners as required and as appropriate.

Any form of contact with a member of the awarding body should also be documented and retained for three years.

Students will be given the opportunity to:

- Central Database: Records should be held centrally at one site and be accessible to candidates all the way. From induction to certificate
- Withdrawn candidates, will be tracked

- Records of assessor development, CV, Cert, feedback and progress of candidate
- Assessor will be aware of new regulation and records will be given to students
- Guidelines will be implemented for internal verification

DETAILS OF ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- BS Security will provide staff and student with the assessment tools and portfolio building materials
- Assessment instructions will be provided using a variety of methods for evidence
- Induction programmes will be offered to candidate and support for candidate in portfolio development
- Internal verification strategy to be developed and implemented- Sampling Strategy, team meetings, standardisation, observations of assessors, portfolio records, assessor feedback, quality checks, reviews and evaluations.
- Arrangement will be made for learners to access the training rooms, assessments etc
- Regular standardisation meetings will be in place between Assessors and IV'S

SUBJECT	:	Internal Verifier Sampling Plan
FOR ACTION BY	:	Assessors, IV, and Centre Manager
FOR INFORMATION TO	:	Internal Verifiers, Assessors

INTRODUCTION

According to JAB document (2001) there are three main strands to verifying:

- Sampling assessments.
- Monitoring assessment practice.
- Standardising assessment judgements

Ensure reliability of the evidence by sampling about 50% for each candidate and carry out a full check before certification.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

- IV standardisation meeting will take place, to formulate assessment and agree any grievances during IV process should be brought to the attention of the Programme leader/IV.
- CPD training to be undertaken, as to ensure competence of assessors.
- Ensure all centre records kept as per awarding body requirement.
- Assessment issues. Minutes to be store in IV File. Further standardisation activities will occur during the year. This will be across all program areas. Priority will take place to sampling new IV's and Assessor's reports.
- Sample the assessed units (completed or uncompleted). Interim/Summative feedback to be provided. Sample a range of evidence from each unit provided.
- Where using Expert Witness, Ensure all appropriate documentation kept at centre.
- Check each candidate has an assessor within the first 4 weeks of registration.
- Keep accurate and complete verification records.
- Examine all testimonies provided by expert witnesses, check in line with quality assurance procedure at the centre.
- Provide written and verbal feedback.
- Ensure all new assessors/ Expert witnesses are included and competent to assess/ give testimony to the award

SUPPORT FOR NEW ASSESSORS

- IV sampling will vary depending on the Assessors' confidence, experience and competence. The IV will carry out holistic workplace observation of the assessor and provide verbal and written feedback.
- There should be a minimum of one support visit per academic year to the assess competency and support needs. This can occur in any part of the assessment procedure, planning, Direct Observation or feedback.
- Fully support new and uncertified assessors for the first 12 months.
- Ensure all work presented by new assessors is checked and counter-signed.

TIME ALLOCATION

The time allocated needs to depends on the skills, experience and competency of Assessor.

1st Visit/Focus

In addition to the expected unit/s verification requirements you will also check:

a. Initial Assessment Agreements complete

b. Candidate Portifolio Introduction Section complete

c. Candidate is aware of appeals/complaints process

d. Assessor Record (Planning and Review)

2nd Contact/Focus

In addition to the expected unit/s verification requirements you will also check: -

a. The timely and accurate completion of both formative and summative assessment records

b. The portfolio structure and traceability of evidence

c. Observe some aspect of the assessment process and record on Appendix 6.

3rd and 4th Contact /Focus

In addition to the expected verification requirements you will also check: -

a. Final Portfolio structure

b. Date and signatures are complete on all summative records

c. Full Award Summary Achievement record complete

d. Any need to agree and record arrangements for further internal verification and altered target completion date

e. Assessor understands and has arranged for all assessment records to be removed from the candidate's portfolio for storage by the assessment centre. If the candidate wishes to keep copies of the assessment records they should be allowed to do so.

Process:

Apart from the verifying the units presented at each IV visit/Contact by,

1. Sampling the first assessment judgement and the assessment process used for every unit assessed by an **unqualified** assessor and
2. Sampling a minimum of 50% at different points in the candidate's assessment for **qualified** and competent assessors. [This may include the common unit identified for all IVs to sample]; you will also need to focus on all additional arrears of verification responsibility.

The agreed focus for ensuring all aspects of the assessment process are verified is:

1st Visit/Focus

In addition to the expected unit/s verification requirements you will also check

a. Initial Assessment Agreement complete
b. Candidate Portfolio Introduction Section complete
c. Candidate is aware of appeals/complaints process
d. Assessor Records (Planning and Review)

2nd Contact/Focus

In addition to the expected unit/s verification requirements you will also check

a. The timely and accurate completion of both formative and Summative
b. The portfolio structure and tractability of evidence
c. Observe some aspect of the assessment process and record

3rd and 4th Contact Focus

In addition to the expected verification requirements you will also check:-

a. Final portfolio structure
b. Dates and signature are complete on all unit Summative records
c. Full Award Summary Achievement Record complete
d. Any need to agree and record arrangements for further internal verification and altered target completion date
e. Assessor understanding and has arranged for all assessment records to be removed from the candidate's portfolio for storage by the assessment centre. If the candidate wishes to keep copies of assessment records they should be allowed to do so

The same cycle of IV activities should be applied for candidates whose targets date for completion has been extended.

NB IVs increase the extent of their sampling beyond the above if they have identified concerns about assessment practice. The reason should be recorded.

INTERNAL verification sample Framework (policy and Process)

- In consequence of the above and to confirm with QCDA and the awarding body requirements IVs <u>must</u> complete the Internal Verification Sampling Framework Record for the Award, Level and Candidate intake period/cohort for which they are responsible.
- The Internal Verification Sampling Framework Record ensures that all aspects of the assessment process, evidence gathering methods, observation requirements and a single identified unit and full range of units are sampled for each and all assessors and is evidenced on the record. This will allow the IV and EV to ensure that the agreed process is being applied.

- This record will be kept on the intake period/cohort basis. Should there be more than one IV be involved a single shared record must be used and passed to the IV on completion of the award.

IVs are reminded that when using the minimum sampling process allowable e.g. 25% units from each candidate award, the verification activities must be carried out throughout the period of assessment (beginning/middle/end).

Under **NO** circumstances must internal verification only take place towards or at the end of the candidate's period of assessment.

- The common unit identified from all assessors
- All units used within the award
- All assessors(unaccredited and accredited)
- All candidate in a given cohort/group
- All sites
- All aspects of the assessment process (planning/review, feedback/judgement)
- All used methods of assessment
- These documents allow for the sampling strategy to continue to those assessors whose candidates require additional IV time.

NB IVs are reminded that they must sign the unit and/or award summary sheets and evidence sampled in **red.** This indicates sampling has taken place.

Unit and/or award summary sheets for units verified but not sampled should be signed in **black.**

When working with assessors who have not achieved new AVA or A1 or A2 all units summaries must be counter signed in **black** by the second line assessor and **red** by the Internal Verifier.

Next Review date: Sept 2017.