

# **Quality Assurance Handbook**

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## **Policy Statement**

The Bluestone College strategy for implementing the internal quality assurance procedure and sampling plan within the Centre.

This plan identifies the Centre Strategy for Internal Quality Assurance, (IQA). It is developed and monitored by the Lead IQA and the IQA team to ensure that the quality assurance procedure is standardised throughout the centre; each IQA and assessor is responsible for working towards the sampling plan.

## **Responsibility and implementation**

The IQA and / or assessor must check with the Lead IQA if unclear about the procedures and / or recording requirements. IQAs are reminded that when using the minimum IQA processes allowable, the activities must be carried out throughout the period of assessment, for example via observations.

IQA activities and sampling must ensure that sampling has covered every assessor against every outcome and every method of assessment. Where vertical sampling is utilised, a single unit will be identified by the Lead IQA for all IQAs to sample across all assessors within every award and this will form part of the centre standardisation process. The IQA must ensure this outcome is included in their sample. Each IQA / assessor must ensure this outcome has been sampled.

For assessors who are not qualified (D32/33, A1/A2 or TAQA is being undertaken), or assessors who are qualified but new to the centre, or for new qualifications, 100% sampling is required until IQAs are satisfied with the new / unqualified assessor's performance and the assessor is conversant with the procedures within the centre, thereafter sampling a minimum of 30% of all portfolios assessed will be sampled; as a combination of formative and summative sampling. The IQA may increase the extent of the sampling beyond the above if there are concerns about assessment practice, as; any such concerns should be notified in writing, using the appropriate IQA concerns form, to the Lead IQA at the earliest possible opportunity.

The IQA sampling plan ensures that all aspects of the assessment process, evidence gathering methods, observation requirements, a single identified unit (where necessary), and the full range of units and evidence types are sampled for each and all assessors and that it is evidenced on the appropriate recording forms. This will allow the IQA and the Lead IQA and External Quality Assurer (EQA), to ensure the agreed process is being applied. Each IQA holds an annual plan for each assessor covering all of the evidence the assessors are competent to assess; any issue units that have been brought to the IQA's attention during sampling can be highlighted and planned for 100% IQA across all students for that particular piece of evidence during formative quality assurance on the assessors next cohort. If necessary, an observation can be scheduled for the IQA to observe delivery of that particular evidence/unit (over and above the 3 planned annually for each assessor).

Where it is necessary to vary from the sampling plan, the reasons must be recorded and the variations added to the IQA sampling plan and record. NB: All unqualified IQAs will have their IQA decisions overseen and counter signed by a qualified IQA using the appropriate IQA counter signing form.

Our quality assurance template of teaching, learning and assessment is carried out throughout the year on an ongoing basis as fits our rolling course delivery; The overall aim of the observation process and sampling of assessment portfolios is to improve the learners experience at e-Response and to identify any training needs of our staff that will be integrated into our staff appraisals; learner questionnaires are also carried out with the discretion of the individual IQA.

The observation and quality review process will be monitored annually during Self Assessment and its outcomes will be evaluated. Necessary changes in the procedures will be incorporated as and when required.

## **The Quality Improvement Team**

Lead IQA	James Bryant
Internal Quality Assurance, IQA	Joe Ferguson, Lori Randal

## **Communications**

### **Training Department:**

Coordinators are to report on retention and achievement across completed cohorts to the Lead IQA. Any immediate issues with delivery addressed (A7 IQA Concerns form from IQA team to Lead IQA). IQA workload allocation via lead IQA and reviewed during Monthly Caseload Reviews with assessors

### **Delivery staff reviews:**

IQA feedback and development via group standardisation for contracted delivery staff has been the support and training tool during course implementation and development.

Annual self assessment and appraisal system now in place for all contracted delivery staff running through the academic year carries out by the Delivery Manager and Lead IQA (trainer or assessor dependant); Annual Appraisal carried out in August or 3 months after start date, supported by a 90 day plan where relevant.

### **Assessing:**

- All tutors are responsible for assessing of the candidates portfolios (classroom) and although formative assessing will take place throughout the day, further assessing should also take place daily between 4pm and 5.30pm.
- The tutor should read the students answers fully taking care to incorporate the principles of the 'Personal Learning and Thinking Skills' outcomes and making sure all parts of the question are answered fully and to a high standard.

## **Reflective learners, Independent enquirers, Self managers, Effective Participators, Creative Thinkers, Team working.**

- The tutor should also sign and date the evidence once they are happy with the competence and knowledge displayed.
- If there are any areas the student needs to amend this should be discussed with the candidate on a 1-1 basis giving feedback and support to enable them to further display their understanding of the subject and using assessment records where required to document question and answers, witness testimonies or guided discussions.
- If assessment has occurred without the candidate there, the tutor must sit down and feedback to the candidate on achievement; updating their learning journey the next day.
- The tutor/assessor is responsible for formatively and summatively assessing the candidates work and as soon as they are happy with the candidate's competence each unit should be updated on the learning journey and formal feedback given.
- All folders once complete should be placed into a box ready for transport with a full candidate list where contact with the IQA should be made so portfolios can be handed over for quality assurance.

## **Standardisation / Quality Improvement Meeting:**

Every year all delivery staff are involved in Staff Development week (July/August).

All staff involved in the delivery and Quality Assurance Process are to attend and contribute monthly (where subject is applicable) standardisation meetings.

Subject specific (including new courses, apprenkit and workbooks) to be carried out within smaller delivery groups on an on-going basis. Minutes to be taken.

## **Teaching Observations:**

Teaching delivery observations planned for 3 times a year.

Trainers to provide Awarding Body course specification, Schemes of work , Lesson plans, Class Profiles, Action Plans, Course feedback forms, Teaching and Learning materials where relevant.

Planning based on broad subject areas (eg: Security, Food, Healthcare etc.) and further observations planned for if the IQA team feel required.

## **Assessing Observations:**

Assessing observations and student interviews to be carried out twice a year per full time assessor.

Assessors to provide learning journeys and portfolios showing a range of assessing methods and feedback.

## **Internal Quality Assurance:**

### **Formative IQA planner with assessor Observations and Candidate Interviews (as above)**

*Planning per qualification/assessor/evidence type and unit is to be planned at the start of each year by the allocated IQA. (Looking back on assessor knowledge and past quality assurance).*

*During these sessions the IQA can choose to observe the assessor if required. (A8 Report on Assessor Performance) and the IQA to interview candidates to their discretion (A3 Candidate Interview Record).*

### **Summative IQA Planner**

Looking back at the formative IQA activity, the IQA must ensure that overall 30% of the evidence has been quality assured. Sampling is now planned by evidence although units and qualifications sampled must also be recorded; please see tables below for summative sampling strategy.

Any new assessors, staff, qualifications, workbook or evidence types require 100% sampling until the IQA team is happy with the standard being produced, then dropped down to 30%.

The internal quality assurance sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of assessor judgements at both formative and summative stages. This includes reviewing candidate portfolios during delivery and before decisions have been made on any unit. It will include checking the planning, review and feedback given to candidates by assessors and will enable the IQA to evaluate the quality of formative guidance on assessment and to pick up any problems at an early stage. It will also highlight individual assessor needs which in turn may be used to develop the assessment team as a whole and brought up in future standardisation meetings. The IQA will achieve this by good planning, which must in part include observing assessor performance; IQA activity is to be planned on a weekly basis between IQA's, using the teaching planner and past IQA reports and the IQA plans sampling of evidence dependant on the knowledge and experience of the lecturer/assessor and past quality assurance of their work.

Evidence must be confirmed by assessors and subsequently IQA's as being:

- Valid – relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
- Authentic – Produced by the candidate
- Current – Sufficiently recent for assessors to be confident that the same level of skills, understanding or knowledge exists at the time of claim
- Sufficient – meets in full all the requirements of the standards

The quality review process will be monitored annually and its outcomes will be evaluated via self assessment of all staff and the training centre as a whole. This will take place after the end of the company's financial year starting in the October. Necessary changes in the procedures will be incorporated as and when required. The quality review of teaching and learning is not intended to be fixed but open to revision in the event of changing circumstances such as funding, feedback and customer demands.

## **Self Assessment and Quality Improvement Plan:**

Feedback, achievement rates and grades to be compiled and the training delivery to be analysed to identify areas for improvement every September for the following years delivery based on last year's numbers –Lead IQA.

## **Observation grading and teaching support procedures:**

### **Grade 4 (Unsatisfactory) Procedure**

On receipt of the observation report, the Managing Director will ensure that the person observed is supported by their IQA to devise an action plan to address the areas for improvement identified in the lesson observation feedback.

A follow-up observation will be carried out before the next quarterly review is due following training and support activities

The follow-up observation will normally be carried out by a different member of the Quality Assurance Team i.e. not the observer who gave the initial Grade 4.

If the follow-up observation is also judged to be Grade 4, then the Centre Director will arrange a meeting to discuss.

If the follow-up observation is judged to be a Grade 3, then the 'Grade 3 procedure' (below) will commence.

If the follow-up observation is judged to be a Grade 1 or 2, then the 'Grade 1 and Grade 2 procedure' (below) will commence.

### **Grade 3 (Satisfactory) Procedure**

On receipt of the observation report, the Managing Director will ensure that the person observed is supported by their IQA to devise an action plan to address the areas for improvement identified in the lesson observation report.

The Managing Director will then monitor progress against targets in the action plan and will be responsible for ensuring the actions are completed.

Progress against the plan, as judged by the Managing Director, will determine the timescale for the next observation. Assuming reasonable progress is made, the person observed is not expected to be formally observed again until scheduled in the Annual Quality Assurance Schedule.

### **Grade 1 (Outstanding) and Grade 2 (Good) Procedure**

In the event of a lesson receiving a Grade 1 (Outstanding) or 2 (Good), then the person concerned will not, be formally observed again within the academic year outside of the Annual Quality Assurance Schedule.

Anyone receiving a Grade 1 or Grade 2 is unlikely to be observed until the following year.

## **Internal Quality Assurance Sampling:**

Any repeated Internal Quality Assurance sampling that identifies the assessor has signed off work where the IQA does not feel competence has been displayed by the candidate, will result in a copy of the IQA concerns form to be sent to the Lead IQA and the Managing Director. The Managing Director will ensure that the person observed is supported by their IQA to devise an action plan to address the areas for improvement identified in the lesson observation report. (Stage 3 as per observation process above to be followed).