



Internal quality assurance

Guidance for ASDAN qualifications

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Internal quality assurance

This guidance explains the processes of internal quality assurance sampling and internal standardisation, which are defined as:

- **Internal quality assurance sampling** – the process by which a centre ensures that assessment has taken place in a way which ensures maintenance of standards, consistency of marking, feedback and fairness to learners.
- **Internal standardisation** – the process by which a centre ensures that assessment practice, including the design of assessment activities, the way that assessment judgements are made and the way that feedback is given to learners, is consistent. Standardisation aims to ensure the fairness of assessment for all learners.

A risk-based approach to internal quality assurance

Centres can refer to the CAMERA acronym to make sure they take into consideration as many areas of risk as possible:

C	Candidates (learners)	Learners across all assessment locations and cohorts. Learners at different stages in the assessment process including those complete, almost complete, mid-way and at the beginning of the assessment. Attention should be paid to any increase in learner numbers.
A	Assessors	Assessors across all assessment locations over time. With particular attention to: the decisions of new to centre or inexperienced assessors; new qualifications or units; previous action points; assessor workload and continuing professional development (CPD). IQAs should always check for any conflict of interest among staff, including assessors and IQAs.
M	Methods of assessment	Questioning, observation, witness statements, professional discussion, recognition of prior learning (RPL), use of simulation, product evidence, assignments, projects, centre-devised assessments and tests.
E	Evidence types	All types of candidate evidence, which must be selected throughout the assessment process and not end loaded. Not all units need to be sampled in a single activity, but all units must be sampled over a period of time.
R	Records	Assessor plans and assessment decisions, CPD records, standardisation plans, activities and records. Centres must have a robust IQA strategy, with evidence to support this has been implemented.
A	Assessment locations	Accuracy of centre assessment judgements across a range of assessment locations, across all assessors. Decisions must be scrutinised alongside the IQA records and assessor feedback reports. A range of units should be sampled in every activity and all units must be sampled over time.

Internal quality assurance

The benefits of internal quality assurance

- Increased understanding of qualification and unit requirements.
- Improvement in assessment methodology.
- Supports self-regulation across the centre.
- Supports continued, professional development (CPD) across the team delivering and assessing the qualification.

Centre staff roles and key responsibilities

Teacher

Responsible for delivering the qualification/unit learning outcomes and completing formative assessment.

Assessor

Can be the teacher. Responsible for assessing summative activities and providing feedback to the learner (and to the teacher, if not the teacher).

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

The role of the IQA is different to that of an assessor and the person who assesses a learner's evidence cannot be the same person who internally quality assures the assessor's decisions.

Responsible for:

- Reviewing and approving assessment plans,
- Quality assurance of the assessment process by sampling and quality assuring each unit being delivered by each assessor.
- Providing feedback to the assessor(s) to improve assessment practices and decisions
- Ensuring that the form and content of assessment tasks and methods are: appropriate, fair and valid in terms of standards; fit for purpose and will effectively assess the achievement of learning outcomes; and present an appropriate level of challenge to learners.
- Reviewing the summative assessment decisions by the assessor, agreeing the final results and reports, then communicating the results to ASDAN at the end of the quality assurance review.
- Advising on interpretation of the qualification and unit requirements, including feedback from previous assessment series (where relevant).
- Monitoring and observing assessment practice to ensure that all assessment tasks and judgements are in line with the required qualification and unit requirements.
- Sampling assessments to confirm the validity and consistency of assessors' judgements

Internal quality assurance

- Ensuring that all assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable.
- Ensuring that feedback is given to all centre assessors and is documented.
- Checking that standardisation activities are focused on the most appropriate criteria/units and that all units are standardised over time.
- Ensuring that assessment documentation is completed fully and accurately and that it is stored appropriately.
- Organising regular standardisation meetings/activities/events for the centre assessors.
- Providing feedback to centre assessors and identifying any development needs.
- Acting as arbitrator for any disagreements in outcomes of assessments, including appeals.

IQAs should be able to offer appropriate support and guidance to new assessors and teachers delivering the qualification.

IQAs should be suitably qualified and/or experienced as teachers or assessors, and should have a thorough understanding of the requirements of the qualification(s) they quality assure. They should seek training and guidance if they have limited experience and need to improve their expertise or reinforce their confidence in carrying out the role.

All IQAs should attend relevant ASDAN qualification standardisation every two to three years to maintain the currency of their expertise and to keep up to date with changes to the qualification guidance.

ASDAN's role

All awarding organisations offering qualifications where assessment is carried out by the centre (rather than by the awarding organisation) are required by their regulators (for ASDAN: Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and CCEA) to have a strategy for ensuring that assessment decisions are accurately and consistently applied. This is known as a Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) strategy.

ASDAN carries out checks of assessment decisions made by its centres through EQA sampling (called external moderation when this takes place before a decision is made whether to award/issue a certificate for the qualification). It also monitors its centres' quality assurance systems through a variety of other activities, such as the centre approval procedure and QA reviews. ASDAN shares feedback with its centres after every monitoring activity. If areas for development are identified during a monitoring activity, ASDAN will set actions to improve assessment and/or IQA processes and practices, which the centre must address.

ASDAN offers standardisation sessions for representatives from its centres. These sessions are aimed at IQAs, or assessors who are looking to take on an IQA role. A centre representative should attend an ASDAN qualification standardisation session every two to three years, to maintain the currency of their qualification expertise. These sessions offer opportunities to meet and share best practice with other centres delivering the same qualification(s). Learning from ASDAN standardisation sessions should be disseminated to the centre's other IQAs and assessors through internal standardisation activities.

Internal quality assurance cycle

Evaluation

- Internal standardisation meeting held to discuss feedback from EQA sampling and any issues or actions arising. Meeting minutes and records kept.
- Outcomes from EQA activities reviewed to form part of the pre-course planning for the next course.
- Additional staff training carried out and ASDAN training booked as required.

Summative IQA of completed assessment

- IQA of completed assessment carried out by the IQA once all evidence gathered and all assessment carried out. Records kept, with feedback provided to assessors.
- Actions identified during previous IQA activities addressed and signed off.
- Decision on which learners will be submitted for EQA and certification. This must happen before learners and units are submitted to ASDAN.
- Learner and unit achievement details checked before confirming with ASDAN.
- Standardisation of assessment decisions.

Post-results

After delivery

IQA of assessment planning

- IQA identifies key staff (eg assessors, teachers) and ensures that all have appropriate experience and ASDAN training.
- Choose appropriate qualification(s) for current learners.
- Plan how each unit/ qualification will be assessed/ delivered and select appropriate assessment methods.
- Assessment plans are created to be reviewed and approved by the IQA.

IQA of delivery

- Delivery materials and decisions reviewed in line with the assessment plans, and records kept.
- Internally assess learners to check that the qualification, level and units are appropriate for the intended cohort.
- Confirm IQA strategy for the current cohort(s).
- Plan IQA activities, including creating an IQA sampling plan.

Interim IQA of assessment

- IQA of a new unit or new assessor to be carried out by the IQA after the first unit has been delivered. Records kept, with IQA feedback provided to assessors and learners.
- Summative IQA of first completed unit.
- Formative IQA of completed and assessed units in line with the IQA strategy for this cohort.
- Continuous summative IQA of remaining units (eg after each unit or each term), as dictated by centre IQA policy/strategy.
- Actions identified during first round addressed, progress against them monitored and signed off.
- Standardisation of assessors carried out by multiple IQAs throughout the delivery.
- All IQA activities clearly and accurately recorded.

i Guide to acronyms

- IQA – internal quality assurance/assurer
- EQA – external quality assurance/assurer

Internal quality assurance sampling

Internal quality assurance sampling – the process by which a centre ensures that assessment has taken place in a way which ensures maintenance of standards, consistency of marking, feedback and fairness to learners.

All centres must establish IQA sampling processes relating to the assessment of qualifications. An effective IQA sampling system will help centre staff to make accurate, valid and consistent judgements about the evidence presented by learners to meet qualification assessment criteria. IQA sampling processes and procedures contribute to developing and maintaining good practice in evidence collection and assessment. Appropriately applied systems will help prevent problems occurring at external quality assurance (EQA) (eg misinterpretation of standards).

What does internal quality assurance sampling involve?

Internal quality assurance sampling provides an important mechanism for staff development and for supporting colleagues and, as such, is more than just an administrative process. The purpose of IQA sampling is to ensure that every assessor in the centre is assessing learner portfolio evidence consistently and to the required standard.

IQA processes and procedures should address the following:

- Providing opportunities for staff development (eg internal support meetings, external training opportunities, meetings to discuss feedback from EQA activity)
- Monitoring portfolios to verify that all work is being assessed appropriately by the assessor
- Checking that assessment checklists are fully completed, and signed and dated by the learner and the assessor
- Checking that assessments are aligned to the approved assessment plans and that any adaptations have been noted by the assessor on the assessment plans
- Sampling the evidence for individual units across learners, and across assessors, to monitor accuracy and consistency
- Providing feedback to assessors

Internal quality assurance sampling

Sampling

Sampling of assessed evidence can take place during the delivery of a qualification and when learners have completed the work for all units for the qualification.

Interim sampling

Takes place periodically during delivery. Formal assessments may not have been fully completed or a unit may have been completed, but some assessment must have taken place. This type of sampling ensures any concerns are picked up as early as possible, addressed with the assessor and action taken. It also enables the IQA to identify any possible training needs and enables a flexible approach to supporting assessors. It can also be an ideal opportunity to share any good practice with all assessors.

Summative sampling

To review the assessment decisions taken through an evaluation of the approach the assessor took with learner's work. This sample should be to check that the assessor has clearly identified that the evidence presented meets the standards required for the qualification. It should also take into consideration anything that will be submitted for external moderation.

Internal quality assurance sampling

Sampling strategy

The overarching principle is for sampling to provide confidence that any assessment decisions not sampled would meet the requirements of the unit/qualification. Using a risk-based sampling strategy, that enables centres to target the areas of assessment that are most likely to impact on the validity or comparability of assessment outcomes, at appropriate times during the delivery of the qualification, should enable IQAs to make a reliable decision regarding the validity of all assessment decisions.

Centres can refer to the CAMERA acronym (see page 3) to make sure they take into consideration as many areas of risk as possible.

Centres might use RAG (red-amber-green) rating to determine the frequency and level of sampling required for any given assessor or qualification. For example, implementing sampling of all assessed work as each unit is completed and assessed for someone who is assessing for the first time and is unlikely to be familiar with the qualification requirements (rated red/high risk), whereas someone who has considerable experience of assessing a qualification and who consistently has no actions from IQA or EQA checks (rated green/low risk) might only have 1 or 2 units and learners sampled partway through the qualification and again once all the work is complete.

For qualifications that are marked and graded, sampling should include the full range of possible marks and include marks at the top, middle and bottom of any grades.

Centres should always read the qualification specification and guidance to check whether there is a specific approach to IQA sampling required.

There is an expectation that the internal sampling process will sample from across the entire qualification and will include all assessors who are involved in the delivery of assessments. However, it would be unusual for an IQA to maintain a 100% sample on assessment decisions. This implies that there is not a considered sampling strategy in place and that there is little to no confidence in the assessors' decisions.

Internal quality assurance sampling

Forward planning

Named IQAs should embark on establishing an IQA sampling plan based on the workload and experience of assessors. Centres may find it helpful to have several IQA activities over the year, or to include IQA and/or standardisation as an agenda item to qualification or department meetings. This will ensure that IQA is properly timetabled and that there is sufficient time to take action if a piece of work has been assessed as not meeting the required standard. Such sessions can also be used to train assessors on matters arising from IQA activities and disseminate examples of good practice.

IQA responsibilities:

- Liaising with the awarding organisation and/or EQAs
- Ensuring that assessment activities enable learners to produce evidence that will meet the required standards at the proposed level, and that they are fit for purpose
- Check the quality of delivery of provision
- Supporting and advising staff on the delivery and assessment of the qualification(s)
- Meeting regularly with assessors and other IQAs to standardise assessment across the centre
- Checking assessment at appropriate times during the delivery of a qualification
- Commenting on the accuracy of assessment decisions and the quality of feedback
- Providing effective feedback to the assessor
- Selecting and requesting an appropriate sample of portfolios, using a risk-based CAMERA approach to sampling (see page 3)
- Check assessment standards when portfolios are completed
- Monitoring progress against any actions set during previous IQA or EQA activities and implementation of any action or advice following EQA activities
- Disseminating good practice
- Ensuring that learner and unit details submitted for EQA (and for certification) are accurate

IQA of centre-devised or adapted assessments

Qualification specification and guidance documents include details about whether assessment of a unit/learning outcome would usually be developed by the centre or whether we advise that centres use an ASDAN-devised activity/task.

ASDAN-devised tasks have been developed so that they address the requirements of the referenced criteria in full (as long as the centre implements the task guidance effectively).

Centres may wish to adapt or modify an ASDAN-devised assessment activity/task, so that it better suits their context, environment or learners. Centres must carry out pre-delivery IQA of adapted activities/tasks, as they would with any assessment activities/tasks developed by the centre, to ensure they still fully address the unit requirements.

Internal standardisation

Internal standardisation – the process by which a centre ensures that assessment practice, including the design of assessment activities, the way that assessment judgements are made and the way that feedback is given to learners, is consistent. Standardisation aims to ensure the fairness of assessment for all learners.

Internal standardisation provides a system for checking the quality of assessment to make sure that it is:

- Valid – relevant to the standards for which competence/attainment is claimed.
- Authentic – produced by the learners.
- Reliable - genuinely representative of the learner’s knowledge and skills.
- Current – sufficiently recent for assessors to be confident that the learner still has the same level of skills or knowledge.
- Sufficient – meets all the requirements of the standards in full.

In order to complete internal standardisation, a nominated member of staff at the centre needs to take responsibility for the process. This may be the lead IQA (IQA) or internal quality assurer (IQA).

The internal standardisation process

Internal standardisation should be an ongoing process, however it should include the following formal stages:

- Review of centre-devised or modified assignments
- Standardisation of assessment decisions against the unit requirements
- Review of assessment practices
- Review of standards across time, reflecting on outcomes and feedback from IQA and EQA activities relating to previous cohorts

Internal quality assurance templates

📄 IQA feedback report

This template can be used to record feedback and outcomes from IQA sampling activities, when the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions are checked against the qualification requirements. These checks include reviewing learner work and other evidence.

📄 IQA checklist

This template should be used at the final stage of IQA and before the learner and unit details are confirmed for external quality assurance/certification. It provides a summary of the overall outcomes from IQA activity across the programme/cohort.

📄 EQA sample centre checklist

This checklist and declaration should be completed for samples selected for external quality assurance (EQA) by ASDAN, submitted both digitally and hard copy (eg by post). Only one EQA sample checklist is required for each EQA activity.

ASDAN qualifications
IQA feedback report template with guidance

All highlighted text in this template is provided as guidance for the IQA. Please delete and replace with relevant data.

ASDAN qualification:
Sample type: Formative, Interim, Summative – delete as appropriate

Unit: _____ Level: _____

Cohort name: _____

Course start date: _____ Course completion date: _____

Learner name(s): _____ Assessor name(s): _____

IQA name: _____ Date: _____

	Yes/No	Comments/Feedback
Do all sampled learners have a completed assessment checklist?		
Is evidence/the portfolio clearly and accurately cross-referenced to assessment criteria and easy to locate?		
Does the evidence available reflect the assessment plan?		
Does the evidence match the level of the unit?		
Is all evidence valid? Does it meet all requirements of the unit?		
Has all learner evidence been authenticated as the learner's own work?		

ASDAN qualifications: IQA feedback report template (with guidance)

ASDAN qualifications
Internal quality assurance checklist

Centre name: _____ Centre number: _____

Qualification title and level: _____

Units sampled: _____

Names of learners sampled: _____

Assessor name: _____

IQA name: _____ Date: _____

Have assessment checklists been completed in full for all learners, including location of all evidence in the portfolio, signatures and dates? Yes No

Are assessment decisions valid? Does evidence meet all the assessment criteria and unit requirements at the level of the unit? Yes No

Has the assessor provided constructive feedback to the learners? Yes No

Is all evidence clearly and accurately cross-referenced to assessment criteria? Yes No

Feedback to assessor:

Improvements and action points for follow up:	Date to be done	Completed

IQA signature: _____ Date completed: _____

ASDAN qualifications: IQA checklist
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(with guidance)

All highlighted text in this template is provided as guidance for the IQA. Please delete and replace with relevant data.

Declaration for samples for external quality assurance (EQA) submitted both digitally and hard copy (eg by post) is required for EQA activity.

are well organised and that all digital evidence is clearly and accurately cross-referenced to the sample: centre folder; folder per learner; folder per unit; assessment checklist including links to each learner's evidence files with learner name, unit title and assessment criterion referenced in filename. External Quality Assurance and save all records of IQA activities in this folder, including: EQA sample centre checklist, IQA feedback reports on sampling of assessed work, internal standardisation meeting/activity notes.

Post:
Place the front/top of the submission before securely packaging the sample for EQA.
Use plastic wallets or treasury tags to ensure that all evidence for each learner is properly secured and clearly labelled. Loose leaf pages should not be submitted.
All samples should be tracked and signed for on delivery.

Centre number:	
Cohort name:	
IQA name(s):	

in sample for external quality assurance:

ASDAN qualifications: EQA sample centre checklist (with guidance) | © ASDAN September 2024



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