

Internal Quality Assurance Policy



May 2020

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Internal Quality Assurance Policy

Introduction

in at the deep end Ltd as a company includes the Training Wave brand. Therefore, throughout all of our policies where we refer to in at the deep end it also applies to any bookings or courses undertaken within the Training Wave brand.

Commitment to internal quality assurance

The Internal Quality Assurance Policy requires commitment from everyone within the Company. Our Directors, are responsible for the implementation and effective operation of this policy and copies can be obtained from our Office via email upon request.

This policy will be taken into account during the design and development of all our processes and procedures. This document should be read in conjunction with our other suite of policies and procedures. Key documents include Malpractice and Maladministration, Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities and Complaints. All documents are available publicly on our website and via BaseCamp.

As a company we are committed to high quality courses which are fully compliant with all Awarding Organisation (AO) requirements. In the year 2018—2019 we monitored the number of courses we ran following implementation of these policies to ensure we were continuing to be compliant with all AO's. Throughout this period we ran such a small number of pre-booked courses (less than 5) that we have decided to modify our IQA monitoring periods so that they run over two years.

Most of our courses (90%+) are booked by external clients at short notice and so are added on to our IQA plans as and when they are booked in. Therefore our sampling plan will initially be based upon courses we are intending to run and then additional courses will be added in as they are booked and sampling and quality assurance processes will take place based upon risk ratings of each course as they are booked.

Our Responsibilities

As an approved Awarding Centre we will make sure:

- All tutors, assessors and internal quality assurers (IQAs) are familiar with this policy and all related documents
- All internal quality assurance activity will be completed in accordance with all relevant Awarding Organisation requirements
- Upon commencement of their employment, staff will be informed of the existence of this policy and the company's expectations of them under its terms

- All tutors, assessors and IQAs should have a working knowledge of internal quality assurance and all relevant assessment procedures
- All qualification suites will be allocated a sufficient number of internal quality assurers
- All qualification suites will have sufficient internal quality assurance activity carried out, including desk based reviews, tutor observations and action plans
- Standardised documentation, either provided by the Awarding Organisation's or internally by our Centre, will be used for recording the internal quality assurance process and subsequent activity
- As a Centre, we will encourage and enable our staff to attend standardisation meetings, however, we recognise that for many they may only deliver one or two courses per annum for us and as such we do allow for standardisation to take place remotely using our BaseCamp system.

Team Member Responsibilities

The ATC Co-ordinator — this is the person who deals directly with the Awarding Organisations and has overall control of the Approved Training Centre. This person is the person who oversees the quality assurance process as well as the administrative side (such as ordering resources, paying invoices and dealing with candidates before and after courses)

The Tutor — this is the person actually delivering the qualification to the candidates. They are responsible for ensuring they are teaching the correct and up to date syllabus as well as following the appropriate guidance documentation. They also have a responsibility to plan and deliver sessions to meet learner needs.

The Assessor — this person has the responsibility to assess candidates knowledge. It is possible, depending upon the course, that their Tutor may also be an assessor. They need to ensure they know, understand and apply the standards of assessment as well as plan assessments to meet learner needs while communicating how they will do this. They also need to ensure they are making fair and reliable decisions and then feed these back to the candidates and the ATC.

Internal Quality Assurer—this person has the roll of ensuring that the qualification is being delivered according to the specifications and requirements of the AO. They are also their to ensure there is a level of consistency between tutors and assessors via standardisation.

Our QA Processes

All of our courses will adhere to the minimum requirements of IQA as per the relevant Awarding Body (e.g. every Award in Education and Training course will be internally and externally verified and all tutors and assessors observed annually), however, all other courses will be quality assured based upon the risk rating of the tutor and/or us as a Centre.

Our training and quality assurance period runs from the 1st September to 31st August two years later.

Risk Ratings

Risk Ratings will be allocated to tutors as **high**, **medium** or **low** within the following areas. Please note, however, that these lists are not exhaustive and only to be used for indicative purposes:

Knowledge or prior experience of working with the Awarding Organisation

- **High**—brand new tutor or assessor to this Awarding Organisation, CPD not completed, there have been complaints or successful appeals on previous qualifications or lots of action points issued during EQA
- **Medium**—less than three courses delivered for this Awarding Organisation, CPD in date and only one or two action points issued during EQA
- **Low**— lots of experience of the Awarding Organisation, CPD up to date and no action points from previous EQA.

Knowledge and experience of delivering this specific qualification

- **High**—brand new tutor or assessor to this qualification
- **Medium**—less than three courses of the qualification delivered, or, recent Awarding Organisation changes to the qualification
- **Low**— lots of experience of delivering for this qualification.

Feedback from previous quality assurance exercises

- **High**—no previous IQA information available due to being a new tutor or more than three action points from previous IQA
- **Medium**— only one or two action points issued during previous IQA
- **Low**— no action points from previous IQA.

Each colour will be allocated a score (**red** 1, **yellow** 2 and **green** 3) which can then be added together to enable the Tutor score to be created which will then in turn become the Risk Rating as follows:

- 3—5 = **high risk**
- 6 or 7 = **medium risk**
- 8 or 9 = **low risk**.

It is possible that one tutor or assessor may have multiple Risk Ratings depending upon their knowledge of each Awarding Organisation we use, previous feed back or action points issued previously or knowledge / changes to the qualifications.

Our IQA Documentation / Plans

In order to be open and transparent with all of our tutors we have all of our IQA documents available to them via BaseCamp.

As part of our IQA process we use the following documents:

- Tutor Observation—this document includes a Tutor Observation, professional discussion with the tutor and discussions with learners. It is designed to give a 360 degree view of the qualification being delivered.
- Learning Walk—this document is a shortened version of the Tutor observation as it does not include learner or tutor discussions.
- Portfolio Audits—are designed to ensure that the completed portfolios/workbooks from candidates are up to the appropriate standard of the Awarding Organisation
- Desktop Audits—are used to quality assure that all paperwork which should be produced for a course has been and that it is compliant with the Awarding Organisation (e.g. its up to date etc.)
- Learner or Professional discussion—are in place to document conversations which may take place with candidates and or tutors. These may not necessarily be completed face to face but could be done over the phone.
- Assessor Observations—is used to assess the quality of external assessors who come to assess our qualifications.

Sampling Plans and Rates

As an organisation we do not deliver lots of courses per annum (usually about 15 across all of our qualifications portfolio per annum). Therefore our Sampling plan is very much based around sampling assessors initial courses with us per quality assurance period and then random sampling there after.

As an organisation our aim is to perform some sort of quality assurance activity on every course completed via our ATC. Where numbers allow we aim to ensure that every course and every tutor has each type of quality assurance activity completed (e.g. desktop, learning walk, learner discussion etc.) per quality assurance period. However, we also realise that there are some specific risk factors which we need to manage. Therefore we **aim** to perform the following per quality assurance period:

New Tutors

- New tutors to in at the deep end will have a tutor observation during delivery of their first course and 100% sample rate for their first three courses via a portfolio audit or desktop audit.
- For tutors delivering a new qualification we will perform a tutor observation of their first course and then a 100% sample rate for their first three courses via a portfolio audit or desktop audit.
 - Where a tutor observation is not possible (for example it's a short notice course and we are unable to arrange an in person IQA) an observation will take place at

the first available opportunity. However, where this is the case a learner discussion will take place and a 100% sample will take place of written work.

All Tutors

- Observed via a tutor observation or learning walk on an annual basis—this does not need to be per-qualification or per AO unless risk dictates otherwise.
 - Where a tutor observation takes place we will aim to observe a course where a tutor is both able to demonstrate their skills at tutoring and assessing (i.e. on a tutor assessed course). Where this is possible this will count towards their ‘Assessor’ observation.
 - Where this takes place two sets of IQA documentation will be produced—one for the tutoring and one for the assessing.
- The first course of each tutor per quality assurance period will be subject to a desktop or portfolio audit.

Assessors

- We will aim to observe every Assessor on an annual basis. This does not necessarily need to be per-qualification unless risk ratings dictates otherwise.
 - Where we are unable to observe an Assessor due to location or short notice bookings we will perform a Professional Discussion with the Tutor to discuss the assessment
- For qualifications where there are a low number of Tutors or Assessors within the area (for example STA qualifications) we may end up using the same Tutor or Assessor on a regular basis or the assessor may have to be member of IATDE staff. Where this is the case we will randomly select a 25% sample of candidates to be recorded during their assessment before the course is started. These will be chosen based upon the position they appear on the candidate register. The recordings of these assessments will then be stored along with the rest of the course paperwork as evidence of quality assurance should it be requested in the future.
- As detailed within the ‘All Tutors’ section we will aim, wherever possible to observe tutors delivering both a teaching and assessing session to ensure both requirements are fulfilled.

First Aid Courses

A requirement from STA is that all first aid courses will have the first course of each type observed per year. This, however, is not a (current) requirement of our other AO’s although it is something we will aim to do for all.

Sampling Plan and Risk Ratings

Once courses are booked in Tutors and/or Assessors are risk rated as part of the quality assurance process. This helps to identify the number size and quantity of the sample

required. When a risk rating is decided the following sampling rates apply:

- **High risk** = 50% (or 6 learners whichever is greatest)
- **Medium risk** = 25% (or 4 learners whichever is greatest)
- **Low risk** = 10% or three learners (whichever is greatest).

Within our sampling plans we document what type of information we will be looking at for each learner. Within some quality assurance types we have split them down in to individual components. For example a desktop audit may look at the learner information (registration and evaluation forms), tutor paperwork (e.g. registers, assessor confirmations, exam security paperwork) and assessment paperwork (e.g. competency sheets, assessment records). Throughout all quality assurance processes when a sample involves a section which can be broken down in to sub-components then all of these will be sampled across the number of learners as documented within the risk ratings above. For example should a tutor be low risk and needing a desktop audit then we may look at one candidate for each of the above sub-categories.

We have split the categories up like this so that we ensure a larger spread of work to sample. For example in the case of a STA Award Course where we are quality assuring Portfolios we would be sampling all parts of the portfolio across multiple candidates rather than all of just 1 or 2 candidates.

It should also be noted that where new qualifications be introduced, or qualifications with major updates (e.g. the five yearly CPR updates) it may be necessary to increase quality assurance checks as on all tutors to ensure compliance and understanding of the new protocols/procedures. This, however, would be reflected within Tutors risk ratings.

Observations of Tutoring / Assessing

Within the North East we are acutely short of qualified IQA's who have sufficient subject knowledge to be able to satisfactorily be able to perform in person IQA's. This means that we can end up in situations where we, either as an organisation or individuals, are observing the courses of the person observing us (albeit for other organisations).

Where this conflict of interests occurs these courses will be subject to additional remote audits (including but not limited to desktop and portfolio audits or learner discussions).

Sharing of Quality Assurance documentation

As an organisation we often quality assure work for other organisations. Due to the small number of tutors within this locality it can often mean we are quality assuring for tutors who also work for us, or, are internally quality assuring for tutors who work elsewhere. Should this

be the case, as long as the tutor agrees, we will share these reports as part of a candidates quality assurance portfolio.

Standardisation

None of the above replaces our standardisation sessions and meetings which we aim to undertake at least once per quality assurance period. This may increase should the need arise (e.g. CPR updates).

We recognise, however, that for many they may only deliver one or two courses per annum for us and as such we do allow for standardisation to take place remotely using our BaseCamp system. This also means that discussions can take place remotely and the data is continually stored in threads for tutors to refer to at a later date should the need arise.

Vocational Competency

We understand the need, and requirement, for quality assurance staff to be vocationally competent in the area they are overseeing. However, we are also realistic in the lack of vocationally competent staff within the region and the need for us to support some of our newer tutors in their generic teaching styles. Therefore, we may assign somebody to a course without vocational competency if they are assessing and supporting items which do not require it. For example second marking multi choice question papers, observing the **quality** of teaching (not content) or performing professional/learner discussions. Whenever a IQA is used who does not have vocational competency we will automatically assign a second IQA who will oversee the technical detail of the course and sample written documentation that includes this (for example portfolios or workbooks).

Multiple Quality Assurance Activities

As an organisation we are aware of, and fully support the need for Awarding Organisations to ensure that Tutors and Assessors are of high quality and understand that this means on occasions an AO may wish to undertake additional observations or quality assurance on a course.

Where this additional sample is a desktop based review (e.g. external moderation) it will not alter any of the IQA activities we have scheduled to undertake on the course. However, should the additional activity involve a face to face observation any face to face observations we had planned we may move to an additional course. This is to ensure that it does not become too overwhelming for either the Tutor/Assessor or the candidates themselves. If this were to happen we would ensure that the quality assurance process was changed to an alternative type of quality assurance so the course was still internally verified.

Monitoring and Review

We will monitor all of the feedback that we receive in relation to the issues affected by the Policy and will amend the policy as necessary.

The Policy will be updated with any amendments to existing legislation or new legislation.

In any event, all policies are reviewed annually although updates to versions etc. will only take place every three years should there be no other changes to the policy.

Document Owner and Approval

The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is the owner of this document and is responsible for ensuring that this policy document is reviewed in line with the review requirements stated above.

A current version of this document is available to all members of staff on BaseCamp.

This policy was approved by the Company Directors and is issued on a version controlled basis under the signature of Managing Director.

Date	Version	Author/Contributor	Amendment Details
December 2016	1.00	Mark Mc Nichol	Implementation
December 2017	1.10	Mark Mc Nichol	Included ref. to Safety Training Awards
May 2018	1.20	Mark Mc Nichol	Addition of Training Wave branding
August 2018	2.00	Mark Mc Nichol	Re-written to fit new IQA standards
August 2019	3.00	Mark Mc Nichol	Re-written following the first year of the new IQA standards
May 2020	3.01	Mark Mc Nichol	Minor formatting changes