



Assessment and Quality Assurance Policy

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1. Introduction

1.1. Assessment is the process by which a learner's skills and knowledge are reviewed to evaluate what they have learnt, or how they are performing, against the competencies they are required to demonstrate. Assessment will ensure that learners are fairly, accurately and regularly assessed in a consistent manner and:

- provide diagnostic information that assists both staff and learners to provide appropriate support to enable achievement of the learning outcomes (initial assessment),
- allow learners to monitor their own progress,
- enable tutors to review and develop their learning programmes to achieve their intended learning outcomes,
- provide evidence of progress and achievement to enable accreditation and progression to take place; and
- enable a dialogue between the learners and Tutor / Assessors to ensure progression within the provision (tracking).

2. Principles of Assessment

2.1. All Whitehead Ross Education and Consulting (WREC) assessment decisions adhere to the following five principles:

- **Authenticity:** All assessment activity must have in place processes to ensure that the achievement is the learner's own work. Learners must sign a statement to this effect (see Plagiarism policy).
- **Validity:** The method of assessment and the evidence provided must be appropriate and capable of demonstrating the achievement of learning outcomes/ competencies and related assessment criteria of the provision at the appropriate level.
- **Reliability and consistency:** The assessment results should be standardised across levels and provision. Standardisation and standardisation must follow the Awarding Body's procedures.
- **Fitness for purpose:** Assessment must be fit for the learners and the learning outcome. The assessment strategy must be clearly appropriate for the learners. The criteria and methods which are being used to judge the work must be clear to the learner, staff and internal and external moderators / verifiers and the Awarding Body.
- **Inclusiveness:** Assessment should be based on learners' needs. It must allow all learners to demonstrate their achievements regardless of individual circumstances. It must comply with the Equal Opportunities Policy.

3. Scope

3.1. This policy applies to all provision offered by WREC where all or part of a programme is formally assessed.

4. Assessment Strategy

4.1. Assessment will be a standing item on the agenda of all team meetings.

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4.2. Programme teams will review their assessments, procedures and processes annually to ensure that they are current and valid. The Managing Director will then update the Assessment and Quality Assurance Strategy to reflect any changes.

4.3. All programme teams will maintain a programme file containing a description of the overall approach to assessment. This will specify where relevant:

- Purpose, arrangements and choices of assessment methods.
- Details of any initial or diagnostic tests.
- The person carrying out the assessing.
- Arrangements for recording and tracking assessment evidence.
- Timing of assessment tasks e.g., a diary or table.
- Volume of assessment including assignments and an estimate of the time required to complete it.
- Number of attempts allowed at an assignment.
- Consequences of non-submission or late submission. It may only be possible to achieve a pass grade if the assignment is a late submission. It may be that a different assignment is used for any reassessment.
- Arrangements if the learner is absent for an assessment e.g., previous approval of absence, genuine reason or medical certificate.
- Plagiarism Policy.
- Arrangements for the secure retention of assessment evidence by WREC which may be required for standardisation, and will normally be returned to the learner, and only after the completion of the external standardisation process in accordance with Awarding Body.
- Nature of the standardisation process demonstrating that assessment decisions are to national occupational standards and that internal and external standardisation/ verification is in place to ensure that all assessments are applied consistently for all learners and that the final assessment mark/decision is accurate, reliable and recorded.
- Results for internally assessed units are final only after internal and /or external standardisation.
- Written and oral feedback is given to the learners as soon as possible after assessment (normally within 3 working weeks of the official submission date for the assignment).
- When an assessment takes place on non-WREC premises, it is the responsibility of the Tutor / Assessor to ensure that adequate arrangements are made for the supervision of the assessment activity and authentication of the learner's/ learner's assessment evidence.
- Arrangements for learners who are unable to demonstrate attainment through the standard assessment arrangements.
- Awarding Body requirements / regulations.
- Appeals Policy.

4.4. The assessment strategy enables learners / learners to know that:

- Open and transparent methods are used to assess.
- They are expected to spend a designated amount of time outside the programme each week completing assessments.
- There is feedback on the process and results of assessment.
- They have the opportunity to demonstrate that they have achieved the outcomes of their programme of learning.
- They are allowed to resubmit work under appropriate and agreed assessment regulations in line with Awarding Body regulations, in order to achieve to their best ability / capacity.
- Where work is part of external assessment then a record of the development process - e.g., first submission - feedback, second submission - feedback, third submission – feedback must be clearly

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signed and dated and photocopied and a review of this is part of the standardisation / standardisation process.

- Assessment is relevant and integrated into the learning process.
- Learners will normally be permitted an initial attempt and one further summative attempt at an assignment. A third summative attempt may only be offered where there are appropriate circumstances as agreed by the Managing Director.
- Learners have the right to appeal against assessment decisions which may adversely affect their achievement, if they feel there are just grounds such as error, inconsistent judgement, misinterpretation, or unfairness (see Appeals Policy).
- Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are not tolerated (see Plagiarism Policy).
- Progress as monitored by assessment will be reflected and tracked in the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).

5. Assessor to Learner Ratio

5.1. There will be a maximum assessor to learner ratio of 1:40 for a full-time member of staff.

6. Forms of Assessment

- **Initial/ Diagnostic** assessment usually takes place at the start and is used to identify the current learning needs in order to provide appropriate support.
- **Formative** assessment is developmental, supportive, encouraging and ongoing throughout the programme. It is used to give feedback and support to the learner on progress to date and to inform the learner and tutor of action to take to maintain or improve performance.
- **Summative** assessment takes place at the end of a programme and counts towards a final assessment decision. It is used to measure how much learning has taken place. It is a judgement on whether the learner has achieved all or some of the learning outcomes for a given level.
- **Formal** assessment is structured and usually takes place in clearly stated conditions, e.g., the completion of a practical task, or presentation. It may be undertaken by the whole group or by an individual. It is usually summative in nature and may be assessed externally.
- **Informal** assessment is ongoing integrated and flexible. It is varied and may be recorded by the learner and the Tutor / Assessor. It can include self-assessment or verbal feedback given by the Assessor. It can be formative or summative or both. If it is summative it must be recorded.

7. Assessment Activities

7.1. Any assessment will include a variety of assessment activities or methods, formal or informal mapped to the learning outcomes / performance indicators or criteria. These may include where applicable:

- Observation of activities such as role plays, simulations, practical activities, performance etc.
- Discussion ranging from unstructured informal conversations to guided discussions. This can be used in a group with a clear set of conditions for recording individual achievement, or on a one-to-one basis; question and answer session, oral or written, formally or informally structured e.g., worksheet, quiz, IT based activities etc.
- Structured tasks such as a research project, experiment, essay, or case study, or workplace task or presentations (individual or group).

8. Responsibility For Assessment

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8.1. The assessment strategy for each programme / course outlines who is responsible for making and recording judgements.

8.2. **Tutors** - The Tutor is responsible for:

- Planning the assessment strategy in accordance with the Awarding Body guidelines and ensuring that it complies with WREC's Assessment and Quality Assurance Policy.
- Including assessment details on the relevant Scheme of Work.
- Notifying learners of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria before the assignment is undertaken.
- Giving guidance to learners when there are choices regarding assessment.
- Ensuring that assignment briefs have been standardised before they are given to the learner.
- Using the assessment criteria equitably and fairly.
- Recording the assessment either in the Programme file, the ILP or other agreed tracking sheet.
- Retaining assignments in accordance with the Awarding Body guidelines.
- Participating in the standardisation process by keeping all the necessary records, attending meetings and submitting marked learner assessments as requested.
- Ensuring that provisional assessment decisions are internally verified before they are given to the learner and explaining that they may change after external moderation. This should be clearly stated on the assignment brief.
- Keeping all assessment records safe and secure.
- Giving on-going feedback which sets out very clearly what learners have to do in order to improve.
- Ensuring that all learners have equal opportunities for their achievements to be assessed.
- Ensuring that WREC's Plagiarism Policy is adhered to at all times.

8.3. **Learners:** Evaluating their own work helps learners to improve. This is a skill which is developed in reflective accounts.

8.4. **Peers:** Peer assessment involves learners in formal or informal situations, either as groups or individuals giving feedback in assessment. Assessment by other learners in the group can encourage evaluative skills and increase group cohesion. This sort of assessment must always be supported and moderated by the Tutor / Assessor.

8.5. **External assessors:** This may include Assessors, work placement coordinators and supervisors in the workplace. They must have full access to WREC's Assessment and Quality Assurance Policy. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring that each learner is aware of his/her responsibility with regard to the collection and presentation of evidence.
- Ensuring that the learner is fully briefed and understands the standards.
- Advising the IQA if a learner has any special assessment requirements that are not advised at the beginning of the programme but have subsequently come to light.
- Completing the ILP with the learner.
- Assessing the learner against the performance criteria, range statements and underpinning knowledge associated with each element of competence.
- Contributing to the learner's ongoing assessment plan to identify valid and sufficient evidence for assessment.
- Judging all evidence against performance criteria range statements and underpinning knowledge to identify the learner's achievements.
- Identifying gaps in evidence and discuss / agree remedial action with the learner.

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- Carrying out regular observations of the learner within their workplace and provide written reports.
- Providing the learner with written feedback on assessment and action planning.
- Signing and dating the learner’s assessment / action/ training plans, all evidence and any other documentation.
- Using WREC documentation for all records relating to the assessment process.
- Following the assessment guidance given by the Awarding Body and the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA).
- Attending standardisation meetings as required and liaising with the IQA and other Assessors, Centre Co-ordinators as necessary.
- Explaining and discussing special assessment requirements, problems or difficulties with the IQA.
- Maintaining records of their learners’ achievements and feeding back to the IQA.
- Carrying out appropriate risk assessment of where the learner is working to ensure they are working in a safe and healthy environment.
- Being mindful of the Data Protection Act and the learners right to see any information recorded about them.

9. Internal Quality Assurer

9.1. The IQA is the driver for quality assurance in qualifications. The role, in terms of managing assessment so that it consistently meets national occupational standards, is central to maintaining public confidence in each and every qualification issued. Therefore, Internal Quality Assurance is a key factor in managing ‘risk’ and ensuring that when certificates are claimed for learners the requirements of the national occupational standards have been fully met.

9.2. The IQA will monitor the work of all Assessors involved with a particular qualification to ensure they are applying the standards/syllabus consistently throughout assessment activities. As a general guide Internal Quality Assurance is the quality assurance function associated with:

- National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs)
- Vocational Related Qualifications (VRQs) assessed by competence-based/practical activities and documentary evidence
- Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications which specify the need for Internal Quality Assurance

9.3. Qualification co-ordination is usually carried out in the context of vocational qualifications (non NVQs) which incorporate mixed methods of assessment. The IQA will maintain an appropriate level of occupational competence (as specified in the qualification documentation).

9.4. For NVQs/VQs/QCF qualifications that require Internal Quality Assurance, the IQA will hold the appropriate IQA qualifications as approved and specified by the regulatory authorities within the required timescales of starting their role.

9.5. The IQA who is also acting as an Assessor cannot internally quality assure their own assessments.

9.6. The IQA is responsible for:

- ensuring that Assessors follow the assessment guidance provided.
- advising and supporting Assessors to assist them in interpreting and applying the standards/syllabus correctly and consistently.
- regularly sampling assessment activities, methods and records to monitor consistency of assessment decisions as specified by qualification documentation.

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- providing Assessors with prompt, accurate and constructive feedback on their assessment decisions.
- undertaking an active role in raising issues of good practice in assessment
- ensuring that equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices are upheld in the assessment process.
- liaising with other staff members and the EQA to implement the requirements of the assessment system.
- ensuring that all learners' achievement records and centre documentation are completed in accordance with requirements.
- countersigning appropriate assessment documentation.
- ensuring Assessors have opportunities for updating and developing their vocational and professional competence.
- supporting, countersigning, dating assessment and quality assuring judgements by Assessors and IQAs not holding the appropriate Assessor/IQA qualifications as approved and specified by the regulatory authorities.

10. Assessment Evidence

- 10.1. The evidence must always be linked to an assessment method e.g. if 'Tutor observation' is the method there must be a 'Tutor Observation Checklist'.
- 10.2. Evidence should comply with the principles of assessment and must always be:
- **Sufficient**, i.e., there must be enough evidence to enable a reliable judgement on achievement.
 - **Current**, i.e., up to date with the demands of the curriculum and able to demonstrate that the learner is competent at the time.
 - **Valid**, i.e., directly related to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
 - **Authentic**, i.e., the result of the learner's own work.
 - **Validated** by both internal standardisation and the Awarding Body.
- 10.3. Evidence will be generated by the learner throughout the course and may be:
- Paper based: notes, reports, learning journals, essays, examinations etc.
 - Non-paper based: evidence of role plays, videos, audio, witness statements, computer programmes, performance, oral questions and answers etc. There must be a transparent process for recording the evidence which clearly shows how judgements were made.
 - A portfolio which is a collection of assessed evidence used to demonstrate achievement.
 - It will always be flexible, varied and appropriate.

11. Recording Assessment

- 11.1. Assessment records form a vital component of evidence for the following purpose:
- To demonstrate the learner's progress towards the achievement of learning outcomes.
 - Evaluating the learner progress (useful to both learner and Tutor).
 - Presentation to internal and external moderator/ verifiers / Assessors as evidence of achievement.
- 11.2. Assessment records map evidence of progress through the programme. It is the Tutor's / Assessor's responsibility to record assessed achievement and to track this against the learning outcomes. Learners must

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be fully advised and aware of any assessment requirements or regulations, including the opportunities to resubmit and of the appeals procedure.

- 11.3. The assessment record must be available to learners and staff for review throughout the duration of the course / programme.
- 11.4. Evidence can be recorded in a number of ways but must be:
- Tracked against the individual learner and achievement of the relevant outcomes.
 - Clearly structured.
 - Available for internal and external moderators at any point throughout the year

12. Internal Quality Assurance Strategy and Sampling Plan

- 12.1. Internal Quality Assurance is the process of monitoring assessment practice to ensure that assessment is being carried out to national occupational standards and complies with Awarding Body requirements.
- 12.2. Our IQA Strategy and Sampling Plan will be implemented in line with City and Guild's *Guidance on Internal Quality Assurance of Qualifications*.
- 12.3. It is in everyone's interest for the delivery of training, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications to be of the highest quality.
- 12.4. To achieve this - quality and quality assurance must be included from the planning stage of programmes of learning – as they are integral to the programmes themselves.
- 12.5. IQA activity should be planned to occur throughout the assessment process (**formative**), it is not something that should be left exclusively until the end of the assessment process (**summative**). IQA's must sample what is considered to be a representative sample of assessment practice throughout the programme of study to ensure that assessment decisions are consistently accurate.
- 12.6. IQA should be planned and conducted formatively. This will include one sample during the course and at the end.
- 12.7. All Assessors must be sampled over a defined period, including peripatetic assessors and those based at satellite centres. All Units must be sampled for each Assessor over a period of time.
- 12.8. The sample plan will follow the 'CAMERA' principles in order for the plan to be representative of the whole and should give an accurate picture of what is happening in the delivery and assessment of the qualifications.
- 12.9. The IQA will sample the full range of delivery and assessment methods used for any qualification:
- Learning delivery
 - Observation of performance
 - Use of witness testimony
 - Professional discussion
 - Oral and written questioning
 - Assessment of learner work
 - RPL
 - Examination of work products

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- Reflective accounts
- Learner reports
- Assessments of projects
- Assessment of case studies
- Assessment of simulated activities

12.10. When selecting a sample for IQA several factors should be considered:

Characteristics	Features which should be considered when selecting a sample
Learners	Ethnic origin, age, gender, with/without a disability, learners with special assessment needs.
Assessors	Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience.
Methods of Assessment	Questioning, observation, witness testimony, RPL, use of simulation, product evidence, assignments, projects and tests, professional discussion.
Elements/evidence	Problem areas, special requirements.
Records	Reports from assessors, correct assessment practices, IQA records.
Assessment location	Workplace assessments, college, off-the-job training and other assessment locations.

12.11. IQA sampling cannot be random it must be planned. Planning must take each of the factors into consideration and should for efficiency's sake be the smallest sample size to cover each of the factors. The intensity of the sampling in each of the areas should reflect the IQA's confidence in assessment practice. New assessors should be sampled intensively and well-established staff sampled more lightly.

12.12. The IQA should produce an IQA plan which projects what quality assurance will occur – this should be based on the relevant assessment plan. The IQA plan must be made available to visiting External/Standards Verifiers together with a rationale on how it was formulated. The plan can be adjusted/amended if the intended dates are not feasible.

12.13. The IQA report must be completed for every IQA activity. A copy of the report should be given to each tutor or assessor.

12.14. Standardisation activities will initially be held monthly for the first six months and then quarterly thereafter. As a small centre, standardisation activities will predominately be between two members of staff; the Tutor/Assessor and IQA. Detailed minutes will be produced for all meetings.

12.15. Communication is essential in meeting our central aim of high-quality provision. As a small centre, staff will receive a monthly 1-2-1 meeting with their Line Manager. Records will be maintained of what is discussed, along with regular telephone contact.

12.16. Quality improvement will be monitored through the IQA carrying out observations of both learning delivery and assessment practice, looking at how they conduct the assessment process and giving them feedback on their performance. It also includes reviewing the Internal Quality Assurance records completed with all assessors and evaluating every aspect of their performance as recorded in the Internal Quality Assurance records. Monitoring also creates an opportunity to liaise with learners to ensure that their learning and assessment needs are being properly met.

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12.17. Observations of Tutors / Assessors will be carried out biannually for staff who have been employed at WREC for a continuous period of 1 academic year or more. New staff will have an increased observation rota – one per quarter. This observation schedule will be flexible depending on risk factors.

12.18. Assessors and the IQA will complete an annual training needs analysis (skills scan), such as completing learner diagnostics, to influence the staff development plan. Staff development will also be reviewed in monthly 1-2-1s and through the annual appraisal process.

13. Retention of Assessment Evidence

13.1. Retaining examples of assessment enables the monitoring of standards over a period of time.

13.2. A minimum of 2 pieces of assessed work (or portfolios) per programme should be retained for a minimum of 3 years. Ideally these should be electronic copies and not the original work.

13.3. The work should be representative of the sampling and standardisation process used for internal standardisation initially and subsequently submitted for standardisation. They should be supported by internal and external standardisation records to evidence the processes of sampling and standardisation.

13.4. Where retention of the assessed sample is impractical suitable photographic or equivalent records should be retained.

14. Good Practice in Assessment

- Assessment is not carried out exclusively for accreditation purposes – it is used to measure progress, build self-confidence and review the success of the course.
- Assessment has to consider the learning needs of the individual learners and target groups.
- Assessment tasks are standardised before use.
- Assessment documentation includes the requirement that learners state the authenticity of their own work.
- Assessment procedures are explicit and public.
- Assessment procedures are varied, flexible and may be negotiable, while assessment criteria are fixed for different levels.
- Methods of assessment are creative, innovative and varied.
- Assessment procedures allow learners to work at and be assessed at the correct level.
- Assessment builds the self-esteem of the learner.
- Assessment encourages self-assessment by learners to promote independent learning.
- Learners are encouraged to evaluate the assessment process to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.
- Assessments of learners will not be undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the result of the assessment. For example, a relative of the learner.

15. Reasonable Adjustment

15.1. This is agreed at the pre-assessment planning stage and is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, nor

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must they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

15.2. A learner must request any reasonable adjustments in writing to the Head of Centre following the first session of their course/induction, when the assessment criteria will have been communicated to all learners. The learner should also outline why they are requesting each reasonable adjustment. The Head of Centre will seek advice from the Awarding Body to determine what reasonable adjustments can be made. This will be communicated to the learner within 5 working days.

15.3. Reasonable adjustments must be approved (internally or externally) and set in place prior to assessment commencing. It is an arrangement to give a learner access to a qualification. The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners.

15.4. Below are examples of reasonable adjustments. It is important to note that not all adjustments described below will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed, the same adjustment for all assessments. Reasonable adjustments permitted may fall into the following categories:

- Changes to assessment conditions the use of mechanical and electronic aids
- Modification to the presentation of assessment material
- alternative ways of presenting responses
- use of access facilitators

15.5. Examples of reasonable adjustments as defined by the above categories are listed below.

- Allowing extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
- Using a different assessment location
- Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, CCTV
- Use of assistive software
- Assessment material in large format or Braille Readers/scribes
- Practical assistants/transcribers/promoters
- Assessment material on coloured paper or in audio format Language-modified assessment material
British Sign Language (BSL)
- Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices

16. Special Consideration

16.1. This is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty the learner faced at the time of assessment and can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised. Any request for special consideration must be submitted in writing to the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre will then liaise with City and Guilds before a decision is made.

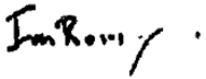
16.2. The following are examples of circumstances which might be eligible for special consideration (this list is not exhaustive):

- terminal illness of the learner
- terminal illness of a parent
- recent bereavement of a member of the immediate family
- serious and disruptive domestic crises leading to acute anxiety about the family

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- incapacitating illness of the learner
- severe car accident
- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative
- flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack
- recent domestic crisis recent
- physical assault
- broken

Signed:



Ian Ross
Managing Director

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