Staff Handbook for Core International Education

Contents

Scope

This staff handbook shall take effect from December, 2021 and will apply to all teaching associates, internal verifiers of the approved SQA RAK Centre approved programmes.

INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) is an international leader in education and qualifications development. With over 100 years' experience in developing qualifications and qualifications systems, and over 20 years' experience of working internationally in partnership with schools, colleges, universities, employers, training organizations, industry professionals, professional bodies, and governments. Through these partnerships SQA continuously enhances its skills and expertise through mutual and shared learning and in turn shares its knowledge, technical expertise and skills and other educational pursuits for the global good.

As a part of these partnerships, SQA supports and enhances the mobility of students seeking to complete part of their degree at an overseas university. The SQA Diploma to Degree Programs are well established and has made progressions for SQA students possible into universities in several countries for their undergraduate degree (Bachelor's) programs. SQA helps individuals realize their potential and achieve their ambitions by providing a wide range of high-quality, internationally recognized qualifications, and associated services.

Based in Glasgow, SQA is also recognized by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) in England, UK and is set out by an erstwhile and thereafter amended Act of Scottish Parliament. SQA is also one of the four partners of The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SQCF) which is the national credit transfer system for all levels of qualifications in Scotland, UK.

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

To be an innovative, inclusive, technology driven impactful, professionally-focused university, preparing students for the dynamic world.

Mission

To transform people and communities by providing demand-led teaching and contribute to economic, social and cultural development regionally, nationally and internationally.

Values

Student Centeredness

We carry out all our programmes and activities with a student centered mindset enabling students to achieve

excellence and competence as individuals and groups.

Respect Diversity

We foster unity and tolerance, thus aiming to create harmony and respect irrespective of creed, ethnicity, gender and social background.

Integrity and Ethics

We operate with the highest level of integrity and observance of ethics and inculcate moral behavior in students enabling them to develop a higher degree of morality

Transparency and Accountability

We act transparently and take accountability for the delivery of student outcomes and promote and expect similar transparent and accountable behavior from our students as we prepare them to the society.

Partnerships and Innovation

We deliver our programmes through highly reputed and recognized international and local partnerships delivering high quality education encouraging innovation.

SQA PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

SQA must ensure that its qualifications are credible with users, partner organisations and the wider community, and that they provide nationally and internationally recognised standards of attainment. This means that all assessment methods must meet our principles of assessment. All SQA assessments must be:

- [ ] valid
- [ ] reliable
- [ ] practicable
- [ ] equitable and fair

This guide is structured around these principles and shows how they can be applied to ensure that your assessments meet SQA's principles of assessment and meet national standards. The sections that follow focus mainly on validity and reliability, but you will see that the principles of equity, fairness and practicability are also addressed because they underpin all assessment issues.

E-assessment is becoming more common, but the same SQA principles of assessment apply to online assessments.

How to develop a valid assessment?

Validity is a measure of the accuracy of an assessment. An assessment is valid when it:
- [ ] is appropriate for its purpose

- has been designed to allow candidates to show that they have the required knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the standards of the qualification
- allows all assessors to make reliable assessment decisions
- allows the interpretation and inferences which can be drawn from the assessment outcomes to be meaningful and justifiable

Validity has to be ensured at each stage of the assessment process. There are two key aspects of validity used by SQA — **content** and **construct**.

Content validity is the measure of how closely the content of an assessment matches the content of the unit specification published by SQA. It is concerned with the level of knowledge, understanding and skills that is required to meet the standard of the qualification.

Construct validity concerns the extent to which an assessment actually measures what the unit specification states it is intended to measure. For example, an assessment that asked a candidate to write about a skill rather than demonstrate it would have low construct validity.

Both types of validity are achieved by subject experts choosing appropriate assessment methods, developing the assessment, and evaluating it against the unit specification.

Following the steps in the next section will help you to ensure that each assessment is appropriate for its purpose and has high content and construct validity.

QUALIFICATION STRUCTURE & ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

To be awarded an SQA Advanced Diploma, the student is required to achieve 30 SQA Credits(240 SCQF credit points) with a mixture of SCQF (Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework) level 7 and Level 8 Units

For candidates ,assessment is an important part of the learning process. Candidates should be given notice of assessment so that they can be properly prepared for the assessment. Once marked candidates should be given appropriate feedback which will allow them to evaluate their own progress. There are many different types of assessment strategies that can be used to evaluate learners knowledge and skills gained learning context. The assessment strategies are specified below.

- Closed book Assessment

- Open book Assessment

- Practical Assignment

- Open-book report generated under supervised conditions. Questions and report linked to case study

- Practical exercise Open/ Closed-book supervised

Requirements for all qualifications

All qualifications must:

1.1 Be outcome based and have identified content and structure

1.2 Satisfy an identified need and demand

1.3 Include a definition of what the qualification measures and what the learner will achieve

1.4 Have been developed following a defined qualification development process

1.5 Include a defined maintenance and review process

1.6 Be capable of being assessed consistently and objectively

1.7 Specify processes for effective delivery and assessment

1.8 Define assessment methods, ensuring they are fit for purpose and result in fair and consistent assessment

1.9 Define quality assurance requirements, ensuring they are fit for purpose

1.10 Define expertise and qualification requirements for all personnel involved in delivery, assessment and quality assurance

1.11 Be credit rated and levelled for the SCQF, unless by exception

Principles for the Assessment Strategy

The Assessment Strategy is designed to provide overarching principles for the Awarding Bodies that complement the requirements of the regulatory body for SVQs, SQA Accreditation. The Awarding Bodies are responsible for providing quality assurance processes for the assessment of the logistics standards within SVQs. The Awarding Bodies are in the best position to provide detailed assessment guidance and evidence requirements; they will need to consider whether this is achieved individually or collectively. Suitably qualified and experienced Assessors, Internal Verifiers, and External Verifiers, or the equivalent role, must be allowed to apply their professional judgement however, they must also ensure that they comply with the assessment guidance and evidence requirements in a consistent manner. Assessment should be effective but not overly burdensome, and assessors and verifiers should establish methods to achieve this balance.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES, PRACTICES AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

SQA units are assessed internally by centres. Internal assessment means that assessors in our centres are responsible for deciding how candidates have performed against the standards for the qualification. Centres do this by using either assessment tasks that they have devised themselves, or assessments that SQA has devised. These internal assessment decisions are externally verified by us. Assessment is the process of evaluating an individual's attainment of knowledge, understanding and skills. It has many uses but these can be divided into two major categories: uses for individual candidates and uses for external organisations.

Uses for candidates

Different forms of assessment take place throughout a candidate's career. Assessment should always contribute to an individual's learning and progress. There are three main types of assessment that help learning.

These are diagnostic, formative and summative.

Diagnostic assessment

An assessment can be used to discover a candidate's strengths and weaknesses, to identify a learning programme for them, or to assign them to a specific group. For example, if you enrolled to learn a foreign language in an evening class, you could be asked to complete an online test to establish your proficiency to allow the centre to allocate you to the right class — beginners, intermediate or advanced. This use of assessment is called 'diagnostic', and aids individual progress by identifying an appropriate learning path

Formative assessment

While diagnostic assessment may be used at the beginning of a learning process, formative assessment takes place in the learning environment to provide information on a candidate's progress. This information is used to contribute to individual learning by reinforcing and complementing that learning. Formative assessment is not recorded by SQA because it is an integral part of the learning process, but the results of formative assessment should be used to set learning goals and to provide constructive feedback. It is important to give feedback at an appropriate time and place and in a constructive and encouraging way. The correct use of feedback motivates candidates and encourages reflective and independent learning. One of the most effective feedback strategies is process-orientated praise, in which feedback focuses on the effort and strategies that a learner has used. This can help learners to take on challenges and to learn from any setback.

Summative assessment

Summative assessment is used for awarding formal qualifications when individual learning is assessed against a particular specification or standard. All SQA assessment is summative because it assesses performance against national standards. Summative assessment may take place at different points of the learning process, but the candidates must have been informed that their assessment results will be recorded and quality assured. Validity is a measure of the accuracy of an assessment. The key steps in ensuring validity are:

1 Get to know the units

2 Create an assessment plan

3 Consider the candidate

4 Choose assessment methods

5 Develop the assessment

6 Define evidence for the assessment

Following are the methods of assessment used by SQA

Method
Assignment: problem-solving exercise with clear guidelines, structure and length

Case study: describes a realistic situation. Candidates are prompted to analyse the situation, draw conclusions
Dissertation: substantial written essay, treating a subject or issue in depth in a formal, methodical
Examination/written test: collection of assessment methods which samples a domain of knowledge and/or
Listening test: assesses listening skills using live or recorded stimulus. Candidates demonstrate their
Oral questions: assesses knowledge and understanding, may be linked to the assessment of a practical activity or performance
Oral test: of a candidate's listening and communication skills. It is often described as the 'assessment of
Performance: assesses skills of which the evidence is ephemeral
Portfolio: representative sample of candidate evidence
Practical activity: any activity which involves a technical, artistic or creative skill
Professional discussion: discussion of evidence already provided or demonstrated
Project: task involving research or an investigative approach
Simulation: structured practical exercise with specific objectives which seeks to simulate real-life conditions.
Questioning (includes: Alternative response; Assertion/reason; Cloze; Completion; Extended; Grid; Matching; Multiple choice; Multiple response; Restricted response; Short answer; Structured)

Assignment

An assignment is a problem-solving exercise with clear guidelines, structure and specified length.

If the assignment takes the form of an investigation, candidates are required to produce and/or interpret information and draw valid conclusions from the results.

Use

An assignment is particularly suited to the assessment of learning outcomes concerned with applying practical skills and related knowledge and understanding to a situation that involves task management.

Advantages

- ☐ relatively straightforward to develop
- ☐ can access a wide range of both cognitive and practical competences
- ☐ provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate initiative
- ☐ can be used to integrate assessment across outcomes and/or units

- can be time-consuming to complete
- care has to be taken to achieve reliability in marking because of the range of approaches that the candidates might adopt in undertaking their assignments
- care has to be taken that any 'write-up' does not skew the assessment as assignments assess candidates' problem-solving abilities

Significant construction features

- The brief for the assignment must be clearly defined.
- A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved; this will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable, and the requirements of the situation defined in the brief are met. This checklist should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

Case study

A case study consists of a description of an event, usually in the form of a piece of text, a picture or an electronic recording that concerns a realistic situation. This is then followed by a series of instructions which prompt the candidate, as a detached observer of events, to analyse the situation, identify key issues, draw conclusions and make decisions or suggest courses of action.

It is important to remember that in many case studies there are no 'correct' answers and no 'correct' methods of arriving at the decisions. The importance lies in the process of interpretation and decision-making that leads the candidate to a valid conclusion.

Use

Case studies are designed to provide opportunities for exercising problemsolving and decision-making skills. They allow candidates to demonstrate skills of information-gathering, analysis and time management,

Advantages

- the realism/vocational relevance of a case study can be a useful way of motivating candidates

- allows individual initiative to be exercised

- allows candidates to explore complex issues without involving them in the stress of the real-life situation

- can be used to integrate assessment across outcomes and/or units

Limitations

- It can be difficult to devise good case studies.

- Reliability in marking might appear difficult to achieve because of the range of approaches that the candidates might adopt. Marking should focus on each aspect of analysis, problem-solving and the proposed solution or conclusion.

Significant construction features

☐   The brief for the case study must be clearly defined.

☐   A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable, and that the requirements of the situation defined in the case study are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

Dissertation

A dissertation is a substantial written essay, treating a subject or issue in depth in a formal, methodical manner.

It will be based on research on the literature for the subject, and may also involve some original research.

Use

Dissertations are used to test candidates' ability to apply their knowledge in a critical way, to evaluate evidence from a range of sources, to draw valid conclusions from this evidence and to present their ideas in a clear and coherent report.

Advantages

☐   allows scope for self-expression

☐   tests higher-order skills

☐   can be used to integrate assessment across units and/or outcomes

Limitations

☐   time-consuming to mark

☐   care has to be taken to ensure reliability because of the wide range of approaches that candidates might take

Significant construction features

☐   Requires a brief to be developed and agreed with the candidate.

☐   Requires review of the candidate's progress from time to time.

☐   A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable and that the requirements of the brief are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

Examination/written test

An examination or written test is used to sample a domain of knowledge and skills. It is administered under supervised conditions and is therefore kept confidential beforehand.

Depending on the level of the qualification, an examination will assess the range of candidates' ability to recall information, demonstrate understanding, interpret, apply their knowledge, solve problems, analyse and evaluate.

Use

- to assess whether the candidate can retain, integrate and consolidate the knowledge and skills gained in individual units, for example in the HN Graded Unit

- to grade attainment

Advantages

- taken under strict conditions, which ensures the confidentiality of the material and minimises any chance of malpractice

- marking is subject to a series of rigorous checks so reliability should be high

Limitations

- may lead to 'teaching to the test', to the detriment of learning

- not useful for assessing all cognitive skills, for example, creative writing

Significant construction features

- the language used in the question paper should not be a barrier

- the weighting given to a particular part of the question paper reflects its relative importance

- sampling is systematic but unpredictable to avoid question 'spotting'

- the level of difficulty of the individual questions is appropriate

- the mark available for each question must match the demands of the task and the test specification

- the level of difficulty of the overall paper must be appropriate to the level of the qualification

- the marking instructions must allow for a range of valid answers for openended questions

Listening test

A listening test assesses listening skills using live or recorded stimulus. It is sometimes known as 'listening comprehension'. Candidates demonstrate their understanding by oral or written responses.

Use

Frequently used in language courses and music studies.

Advantages

- can be offered and marked online

- can allow considerable coverage of content

- can be difficult to manage with large numbers of candidates if oral responses are required

- can be demanding of resources such as time, facilities and assessors

Significant construction features

- A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved; this will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable.

- The stimulus needs to be written/developed in advance and used consistently with all candidates.

- A detailed set of specimen solutions must be prepared so that there is a clear understanding, on the part of all assessors, of the credit available to a range of possible responses.

Oral questions

Oral questions assess knowledge and understanding. They may be linked to the assessment of a practical activity or performance.

Use

Oral questions are most often used in assessment when a candidate has been observed carrying out a practical task competently but knowledge and understanding associated with the task must also be assessed.

They may also be used as an alternative to written questions.

Advantages

- can occur naturally out of an observation and so assist integration of assessment

- can be non-threatening to the candidate

- can be used when there are some gaps in the candidate's portfolio of evidence

- can be offered to candidates with additional support needs

- can be used to authenticate evidence

Limitations

- can be difficult to manage with large numbers of candidates

- care must be taken to achieve reliability because of the range of responses that the candidates might give

Significant construction features

- A range of questions must be developed to meet the requirements of the outcomes and standards.

- If used as an alternative to written questions, a detailed set of marking instructions must be prepared so that there is a clear understanding, on the part of all assessors, of the credit available to a range of possible responses.

- The assessment should be recorded.

Oral test

An oral test is a test of the candidate's communication skills. It is often described as the 'assessment of speaking' or 'talking assignment'.

Oral tests may take the form of a presentation on a topic chosen by the candidate and a follow-up discussion with the assessor. Candidates are expected to convey information and deploy ideas. They may describe personal experiences. Candidates can be assessed individually or as part of a group discussion.

Use

It is used to provide evidence of candidates' ability to interpret and communicate ideas and to sustain conversation, either in English or in a foreign language.

Advantages

It provides a valid means of assessing skills that involve self-expression.

Limitations

- can be difficult to manage with large numbers of candidates

- can be demanding of resources such as time, facilities and assessors

- care must be taken to achieve reliability because of the range of responses that the candidates might give

Significant construction features

- A brief must be developed for candidates.

- A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable and that the purposes of the discussion are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

- Oral tests should be recorded.

Performance

A performance is a particular type of practical activity that is used for the assessment of skills where the evidence is ephemeral. It allows candidates to demonstrate their abilities and skills and so the **process** is normally the focus of the assessment, although the quality of the performance as a finished product may also be assessed.

In some cases, the candidate will also be required to analyse and reflect upon their performance, for example by providing a commentary, and this product may also be assessed.

Use

- widely used to assess vocational skills

- provides evidence of skills in music/ dance/drama/ sporting activities

☐ assesses skills in a 'live' environment

☐ can be very motivating for candidates

☐ may be used to integrate assessment across outcomes and units

Limitations

☐ can be very time-consuming to carry out with large numbers of candidates

☐ care has to be taken to ensure reliability of assessment decisions

Significant construction features

☐ A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable and that the requirements of the brief are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

☐ If a candidate commentary is to be assessed, information on suitable content, context and marking method should be developed and shared with all assessors and candidates.

Portfolio

A portfolio is a means of presenting evidence of candidate achievement. It is a representative collection of different pieces of evidence of a candidate's skills, knowledge and understanding which indicates that they have met the requirements of a qualification. They can be produced in a range of media. Further information is available in our e-portfolios guidance.

Uses

☐ Portfolios are frequently used to gather evidence for a full group award in vocational provision

☐ Portfolios are also appropriate for subjects with strong practical and/or creative content.

Advantages

☐ can be used to collect naturally-occurring evidence

☐ provides the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate personal initiative

☐ allows the inclusion of photographic/electronic evidence

☐ allows considerable scope for personalisation

☐ can provide the opportunity to integrate assessment across a number of outcomes and/or units

Limitations

☐ Assessment should be ongoing throughout the compilation of the portfolio. This can be time-consuming as each candidate will produce different evidence.

□ Care has to be taken to achieve reliability in marking because of the variety of evidence that the candidates might produce.

Significant construction features

□ Portfolios must be designed to allow the candidate and assessor to identify each piece of evidence against the relevant outcomes and standards.

□ Portfolios must contain some form of referencing, such as a contents checklist and index of evidence. This is important because the content of each portfolio may vary as candidates can include a variety of evidence. This allows the candidate and assessor to ensure that the necessary evidence has been produced. It also allows assessment judgements to be more easily reached if the evidence is available in a logical sequence.

□ The production of a well organised, clearly labelled portfolio which relates each piece of evidence to the outcomes and performance criteria requires a methodical approach by candidates and assessors.

□ A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is

valid and reliable and also allows space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard for each aspect of the portfolio.

Practical activity

A practical activity consists of any activity that allows candidates to demonstrate their technical, artistic and creative skills. The assessment may be based on the end-result of the activity (the product), or the carrying-out of the activity (the process), or a combination of both.

In some subjects, demonstrating a practical skill can show that candidates can apply the knowledge needed to demonstrate competence. In other subjects, the underpinning knowledge may not be so clearly apparent. In such cases, an additional assessment such as questioning may be required to supplement any observation of the skill.

Use

Practical activities allow candidates to display their specialised skills and techniques and can provide evidence of practical skills gained, for example, in the workplace

Advantages

□ assesses 'real-life' skills

□ the completion of an artefact/product/service provides tangible evidence of achievement

□ practical activity can be very motivating for candidates

□ may be used to integrate assessment across outcomes and units

Limitations

□ can raise issues of resources and time

☐ A brief or technical specification needs to be clearly defined for candidates.

☐ A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable, and that the requirements of the situation defined in the case study are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard. If the process is to be assessed, a clear set of questions and range of appropriate responses should be developed.

Professional discussion

A professional discussion between a candidate and an assessor focuses on evidence already provided or demonstrated by the candidate. This is likely to consist of real work activities, practical tasks, a case study, project, portfolio or some other form of assessment.

The assessor starts by asking the candidate questions about the evidence, and a discussion ensues. The assessor must record the discussion. The assessor is responsible for ensuring that the points that need to be covered are brought into the discussion by the candidate.

A professional discussion is not a substitute for the demonstration of skills. The candidate needs to be able to show the assessor how what he or she says in the discussion is backed up in other ways. This could be, for example, by product evidence, witness testimonies, workplace documents or other material either developed though work or in other assessments.

Use

☐ Allows candidate to demonstrate the authenticity of his or her evidence, and for the assessor to confirm its reliability and validity.

☐ Provides evidence when gaps have been identified in a candidate's portfolio.

☐ Suitable for assessing higher order analytical and decision-making skills.

Advantages

☐ the assessor is able to target particular areas for discussion and can gain additional evidence while the assessment is in progress

☐ the professional discussion can be used to integrate assessment across a range of units

☐ helps to make use of naturally-occurring evidence in the assessment of some higher order vocational learning

Limitations

☐ time-consuming to set up, prepare for and manage large numbers of candidates

☐ care has to be taken to ensure reliability because of the range of approaches that the candidates might adopt in the discussion

- risk of leading the candidate if not used correctly

- The assessment is wide-ranging and likely to cover outcomes from a number of units.

- The purpose of this assessment and its focus need to be clearly defined and agreed between assessor and candidate.

- The assessor must make a plan for the assessment and give this to the candidate.

- A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable and that the purposes of the discussion are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard.

- A professional discussion must be recorded.

Project

A project is a task which usually requires a research or investigative approach. A significant part of the work is carried out without close supervision, although guidance and support may be provided by the assessor.

The choice of project may be directed by the assessor, usually by providing the candidate with a topic or brief as a basis.

Use

Projects provide a useful way of bringing together assessment of a wide range of skills and of integrating different activities both within and across units. They are particularly suited to assessment of outcomes concerned with analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Projects are most effective when the candidates concerned already possess the necessary skills in planning, accessing resource material and writing reports.

Advantages

- can assess a wide range of high-order cognitive and practical skills

- provides the candidate with the opportunity to demonstrate personal initiative

- can provide the opportunity to integrate assessment across a number of outcomes and/or units

Limitations

- Assessment should be ongoing for each stage of the project from initial planning to final report. This can be time-consuming for assessors as each candidate may have a different project.

- Care has to be taken to achieve consistency in assessing because of the range of approaches that the candidates might adopt in undertaking their projects.

Significant construction features

The brief needs to be clearly defined and agreed with candidates. It should include the following aspects, each of which should be assessed during the project:

- project plan

- carrying out the project activities

- reviewing/analysing the project findings

- evaluating the success of the project

A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved in the candidates' projects. This will help to ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable and that the requirements of the brief are met. This should not simply consist of a set of boxes to tick but must allow space for the assessor to reference evidence against the outcome and/or standard for each aspect of the project.

Simulation

A simulation is a structured practical exercise with specific objectives involving the organisation and completion of a product or resource based task and which seeks to simulate real-life conditions.

In a simulation the candidates are active participants who shape the result by their involvement. To be effective, simulations must succeed in recreating the atmosphere, conditions and pressures of the real situation. A simulation focuses on a particular activity and aims to test behavioural, analytical and decisionmaking skills in a realistic setting.

Be careful not to confuse assessment by simulation with assessment in a realistic work environment (RWE), such as a training restaurant. You should be aware that reproducing a realistic working environment can be costly and timeconsuming for centres. One way of doing this is to form a partnership with an employer who can provide the workplace environment, but who does not necessarily have the expertise in assessment.

Sector skills councils often produce separate guidance on what constitutes a realistic working environment (RWE) for the qualifications they develop, and you must comply with these requirements.

Use

Simulations are used where assessment would be difficult to carry out for various reasons, such as health and safety, expense, client confidentiality, or dealing with contingency or emergency situations. Your decision to use simulation should be guided by references to simulation stipulated in the national standards. The evidence requirements for vocational qualifications stipulate the circumstances in which simulation is and is not allowed.

Reproducing real-life situations can be costly and time-consuming, so it is important to consider cost-effectiveness along with issues of validity and reliability. So, apart from ensuring that your plans to use simulation are in line with the guidance given in the unit specification (or in the Assessment Strategy for SVQs), you should also ask yourself how critical and frequent is the activity which your candidates have to

be able to demonstrate.

If the activity is critical and routine, the proportion and nature of the evidence for this activity is particularly important. For example, a candidate might be responsible for installing power appliances every day, but failure to meet health and safety requirement could be disastrous. You might want to think about obtaining evidence from different sources or using different methods of assessment so that you can be absolutely certain of your judgement. In this type of case, simulation might be useful in complementing naturally-occurring performance evidence.

If the activity is less critical but routine, the assessment would be best carried out using naturally-occurring evidence from the workplace. However, simulation may be necessary in circumstances where direct observation is unacceptable, for example, because confidentiality is an issue.

If the activity is critical and rare, simulation may be best used as a substitute for naturally-occurring evidence. You could use simulation, for example, where you are trying to assess how a candidate would handle a contingency, but where disruption to the workflow would have health and safety, and cost, implications.

If the activity is less critical but rare, simulation might be required because the opportunities for assessment do not arise often. However, you would need to weigh up the costs of using simulation very carefully — since the activity being assessed is not as important as others, the evidence generated will be very limited in what it can tell you about the candidate's expertise.

Advantages

☐ allows individual initiative to be exercised

☐ gives candidates the opportunity of displaying skills they are likely to need in the world of work

☐ assessment carried out in a 'safe' environment

☐ candidates are likely to be motivated by the realism of the assessment

☐ some simulations can be carried out online

Limitations

☐ often difficult or expensive to simulate real situations

☐ requires experienced tutors to handle well

☐ may be difficult to manage with larger groups

☐ reliability of assessment decisions may be difficult to achieve

Significant construction features

- The simulated situation should be designed to represent real, credible circumstances and must meet the national standards.

- The brief for the simulation needs to be clearly defined.

- Any resources or equipment that would normally be in real work should be available and in working order for the simulation.

- Candidates should complete the required tasks in the timescales that would normally be expected in real work, taking account of any legislation and regulations that would apply in real work.

- A checklist must be developed defining the outcomes to be covered and the standards to be achieved in the simulation. This will help to ensure that the

assessment is valid and reliable and that the requirements of the brief are met.

ROLES OF SQA COORDINATOR, ASSESSOR AND INTERNAL VERIFIER

Role of SQA Coordinator

The role of the SQA coordinator is as detailed below.

- Advise SQA of any changes in the centre that may affect the centre's ability to meet the quality criteria.
- Maintain centre records of students and assessments
- Maintain the Centre's quality assurance system with direction from assessors and internal verifiers.
- Attend standardization meetings as required.
- To be the first point of contact between the centre, SQA and candidates
- To ensure policies and procedures are in place to support the quality assurance process
- To ensure that policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and updated in line with current SQA guidance and with centre decisions
- To ensure that the most current version of all documentation is used
- To enable internal verifiers and assessors to meet on a regular basis
- To support the sharing of best practice amongst assessors and internal verifiers
- To liaise between SQA quality assurance staff and assessors/internal verifiers when SQA quality assurance staff wish to visit
- To circulate the subsequent quality assurance report to appropriate personnel
- To ensure that any required actions and development points identified in a quality assurance report are discussed and acted upon
- To ensure all data passed on by internal verifiers and assessors is processed and submitted to SQA according to the Centre's data management policy
- To ensure relevant centre staff check for Scottish Candidate Number (SCN)

Role of the Assessor

- To maintain candidate assessment records
- To attend standardization meetings as required
- To induct candidates into the SQA system

- To assess candidates as directed
- To adhere to all SQA policies and procedures
- To report malpractice

Role of the Internal Verifier

- To maintain candidate internal verification records
- To attend standardization meetings as required
- To induct candidates into the SQA system
- To internally verify assessment decisions.
- To adhere to all SQA policies and procedures
- To report malpractice
- To support the assessor.

MAINTAINING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

CPD enables learning to become conscious and proactive, rather than passive and reactive. CPD is the holistic commitment of professionals towards the enhancement of personal skills and proficiency throughout their careers. CPD combines different methodologies to learning, such as training workshops, conferences and events, e-learning programs, best practice techniques and ideas sharing, all focused for an individual to improve and have effective professional development.

This is no less true with CPD. Wanting to improve is not enough. Steps must be taken to conquer inertia or break bad habits. You must be prepared to assess and evaluate your current levels of knowledge and competence. You must put in place a plan that will not only help you identify and address learning needs but will also enable you to monitor your progress and successfully integrate the benefits gained. Anything can count as evidence if you show that you've learnt something from it. Typical examples include:

- work experience/on the job training

- qualifications

- short courses

- informal learning such as reading

- attending an event

- personal development

- out-of-work activities.

The assessor and internal Verifier's performance may include for example: records of your work on keeping up to date on the requirements for your role records of how you keep abreast of developments in your subject area feedback that you have stimulated from learners and colleagues self-evaluations of your own practice in your subject area your Personal Development Plan and evidence of how this has been updated over time records of continuing professional development activities evidence of how you have shared new knowledge and skills with colleagues.

The assessor and internal Verifier will also engage in a professional discussion with peers of their Verification

Group to explore how you have reflected on your practice and used these reflections to improve what you do. Remember, it's the outcome that is important and how it impacts on you and your role, rather than what you did. Please note that the above list is not exhaustive. Other formal and informal methods of CPD are also acceptable.

Internal Verification

Internal verification is an approach to quality assurance based on peer support and review that enables you to integrate quality into internal assessment from start to finish.

Internal verification:

- helps to ensure that all staff understand national standards and can apply them
- facilitates collaboration between staff and with external colleagues
- enables and ensures fair, accurate and consistent assessment judgements
- supports the credibility of internally-assessed qualifications with parents, employers, higher education institutions etc.
- allows quality concerns to be captured and addressed
- helps to protect assessors against challenges to professional assessment judgements
- supports preparation for successful external verification

'Assessor' refers to a teacher/lecturer who marks internal assessments for Units or Course components. They may be using SQA Unit assessment support packs (UASPs) or may devise their own assessment approaches.

'Internal verifier' refers to a teacher/lecturer who:

- supports assessors in understanding and applying national standards
- checks assessment approaches which assessors have devised to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose (before prior verification by SQA)
- samples assessment judgements to ensure that they are valid and reliable

Internal verification in the senior phase builds on your experience of 3-15 moderation in the broad general education, with many similar elements.

Internal verification can be divided into three separate stages:

- pre-delivery — understanding standards
- Support and Sampling During Delivery
- post-delivery reflection and review

While most internal verification activity will be integrated within existing processes, it is important that key activities are documented. Primarily, this will support you in managing internal assessment and verification and planning for improvement, but will also allow you to demonstrate to SQA that an effective internal verification system is in place.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose of Internal Verification:

- To guarantee that evaluation is accurate, steady, consistent, authentic and as per SQA standards.
- To guarantee the evaluation of all SQA programs conveyed by the center.
- To be a part of a review trail of student accomplishment records.
- To give valuable inputs to educate the Centre's focus on quality improvement.

Aim of this policy:

- To guarantee there is an authorize lead internal verifier in every primary subject.
- To guarantee that internal confirmation is legitimate, solid and covers all assessors and program action.
- To guarantee that the internal assessment system is open, reasonable and free from predisposition.
- To guarantee that there is exact recording of internal verification decisions.

In order to do this, the Center will ensure:

Pre-assessment

- An internal verifier for every key branch is established.
- Each interior verifier manages successful inner check frameworks inside every key branch of knowledge
- Assessors are advised and prepared in the necessities for current internal verification operations.
- Internal verification roles are characterized, maintained and supported.
- Internal checks are encouraged as a formative procedure between staff
- All internal evaluation instruments are checked as fit for purpose.
- A yearly internal check plan, connected to assessment plans, is set up
- A properly organized example of evaluation from all aspects of evaluation is internally confirmed, to guarantee focus programs fit in with national benchmarks and benchmarks check prerequisites.
- The result of internal verification is utilized to upgrade future appraisal practice.

During assessment and Post assessment

The **Examination Controller** guarantees that internal verifications and institutionalization forms work, and acts as the internal facilitator and primary point of contact for Advance Diploma programs. The **Examination Controller** guarantees policy reports are checked and any remedial activity if required is completed.

Internal verifier: a member of staff able to verify assessor decisions, and validate assignments. The internal verifier records findings, gives assessor feedback, and oversees remedial action.

External Examiner: the standards verifier is appointed by core committee and samples the quality of

assessment and internal verification.

Assessor: Faculty who handles a particular unit.

Procedures

1. **Briefing:** All assessors and internal verifiers will get standard instructions (in any event once every year) on SQA forms.

2. **Verification schedules:** These will be every year consented to cover all assessors. Calendars will be drawn-up and observed as the year progressed.

3. **Internal verification of student work:** This must be checked adequately to guarantee the standard of verification. Every assessor must be examined for every unit. The internal verifier must be satisfied that practical standards are being followed for all units, including for merit and distinction grades. The internal verifier will likewise observe measurable data identifying with the pass/merit/distinction rates of every student. Assessors can't confirm their own work. The procedure does not include the student.

4. **Internal verification records:** This will be correctly maintained in a secure place for 5 years after certification. The standard excel form will be used for this purpose.

5. **Standards verification:** The Examination Controller will be the underlying point of contact for the External Examiner and will liaise with interior verifiers, to guarantee that the External Examiner can complete his job. The External Examiner will be given:
   - the required samples of the student work
   - records for the student work inspected
   - assignments for the units recognized
   - internally verified documents for the assignments
   - Internally verified documents for understudy work.

Sampling Strategy

1. **Interval sampling:** This methodology involves an review of the evaluation procedure all through the course, including a survey of candidates work before decisions have been made on any unit and seeing course work with a couple of finished units. This will likewise include checking the review progress

report given to students by assessors. This will empower the internal verifier to decide the nature of evaluation and assessment planning. A very much built sample is supposed to guarantee that:

- The full scope of evaluation decisions made is secured
- External verifier from earlier years is taken into consideration.
- The experience of the assessor is considered
- The sample measure is adequate.

2. **<u>Aggregate sampling:</u>** This ought to include a survey of the decisions made process by the assessors and decide how these decisions were made. A review trail is required to guarantee the assessor has checked proof given, which should be:

- **Legitimate-**significant to norms and standards
- **Real and authentic**- delivered by the student
- **Reliable and solid**- reflecting dimension of performance reliably exhibited by the candidate
- **Adequate and sufficient**- fulfills guidelines and standards completely.

ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT: THE PRINCIPLES

As the national awarding body for Scotland, SQA has a responsibility to ensure that assessment leading to certification is rigorous and fair for **all** candidates, and that it allows candidates to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding required for the qualification. This is why it is important that assessment arrangements are only provided to those candidates identified as having a physical (including medical or sensory), behavioural, mental health or learning difficulty that prevents them from accessing an assessment and demonstrating their attainment.

The four key principles that underpin our assessment arrangements policy focus on the need to remove barriers for disabled candidates to provide them with an equal opportunity to access their assessments.

Principle 1: Assessment arrangements are intended to enable candidates to demonstrate their attainment, not to compensate for lack of attainment.

Assessment arrangements must be considered in the context of the distinction between a candidate's attainment and that of their ability to demonstrate their attainment under assessment conditions. They are agreed before an assessment takes place and allow disabled candidates to *access* the assessment and show the skills, knowledge and understanding they have acquired.

For example, a candidate may have an identified reading difficulty and may require text-reading software to support decoding written text to access a History assessment and show their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Assessment arrangements are not designed to compensate for a candidate not having acquired the key skills, knowledge and understanding of the qualification concerned.

For example, where a candidate has not been physically able to develop the practical skills in a subject such as Practical Metalwork or where a candidate has not been able to develop any reading skills in a subject such as ESOL, assessment arrangements cannot be put in place to compensate for this.

Principle 2: Assessment arrangements must not compromise the integrity of the qualification.

Assessment arrangements must be considered in the context of the assessment standards or competence standards for each qualification. Assessment arrangements must not compromise these standards or undermine the integrity of the assessment or the credibility of the award. All relevant stakeholders, including candidates, must have confidence that the qualification that is awarded to a candidate provides a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills, understanding and competence of that candidate.

For example, it is not possible for a candidate to use a human reader in a National Literacy unit, where independent reading skills are being explicitly assessed. The provision of a human reader would undermine the fundamental assessment objectives for reading in the National Literacy unit and candidates would not be able to demonstrate the required level of skill.

Principle 3: Assessment arrangements must be tailored to meet a candidate's individual needs.

Assessment arrangements must be considered in the context of the individual assessment needs of a candidate in each different subject area.

As part of the overall support offered to them, candidates should have an assessment arrangement plan, considered subject-by-subject, with no assumption that the same kind or level of support will be required in every case. Subjects and their methods of assessment may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. This is why you must consider the candidate's need for assessment arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis and, in collaboration with the subject specialist, make a judgement about the difficulties the candidate will experience in the specific assessment.

This will require due consideration of the candidate's achievements in the subject concerned and the extent to which the published assessment arrangements will prevent the candidate demonstrating these achievements.

For example, a candidate with significant writing difficulties might not be at any disadvantage in the multiple-choice question paper in the National 5 Chemistry examination. However, the same candidate might have significant difficulties producing a written essay in the National 5 History examination.

Principle 4: Assessment arrangements should reflect, as far as possible, the candidate's normal way of learning and producing work.

Assessment arrangements must be considered in the context of the ongoing support the candidate needs to access teaching and learning. There should be continuity between the candidate's need for support in learning and need for support in assessment. Assessment arrangements that are put in place should, where possible, reflect the ongoing support given to the candidate in the class.

> For example, if a candidate with dyslexia uses a computer with a text reader regularly in class to overcome specific reading difficulties, this would most likely be the assessment arrangement provided in the assessment.

However, there may be situations where a candidate's particular type of support provided in the learning environment is not acceptable in an assessment.

> For example, a candidate who has a language and communication impairment, and who normally has someone in class supporting their learning by explaining words and terms, would not be allowed such support in the externally-set examination question paper.

> For this reason, it is very important that candidates are aware of, and have practice in, working in a way that reflects what could be permitted as support in the assessment situation.

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Each candidate's assessment needs must also be considered in relation to the particular subject and assessment being undertaken. Subjects and their methods of assessment may vary, leading to different demands of the candidate. You must consider the candidate's need for assessment arrangements on a subject-by-subject basis.

The inherent flexibility of some internal assessments will allow many candidates to achieve the standard for the qualification without the need for an assessment arrangement to be provided. For example, in many internal assessments, candidates can provide evidence in a variety of ways, using a range of assessment methods to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

Examples of assessment arrangements

Adapted question papers

The following types of adapted question papers can be requested from SQA using the Assessment Arrangements Request (AAR) system.

♦ Digital question paper — this is the original question paper supplied as a PDF for on-screen display and completion.

♦ Question paper printed on one of SQA's suite of six specified colours.

♦ Standard enlarged print question paper — this is the original question paper enlarged to 18pt, in standard SQA font, on A3 white paper

♦ Modified enlarged print question paper — this is the question paper produced in one of the following font sizes: 14pt; 18pt; 24pt; 36pt and 48pt; and in one of the following font styles: SQA Standard; Arial; or Comic Sans font. In addition, and where appropriate, visual content is appropriately modified

♦ Braille question paper — this is the question paper produced in braille with visual content appropriately modified

♦ Raised diagrams — these are adapted tactile diagrams supplied with braille question papers. They can also be supplied with a modified large print paper on request

♦ Question paper with double line spacing — this is the question paper produced with double spacing between lines of text. Please remember that this increased line spacing will significantly increase the total number of pages in the question paper

MALPRACTICE

Malpractice means any act, default or practice (whether deliberate or resulting from neglect or default) which is a breach of SQA assessment requirements including any act, default or practice which:

- compromises, attempts to compromise, or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any SQA qualification, or the validity of a result or certificate; **and/or**

- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of SQA or any officer, employee or agent of SQA

Malpractice can arise for a variety of reasons:

- Some incidents are intentional and aim to give an unfair advantage or disadvantage in an examination or assessment (deliberate non-compliance).

- Some incidents arise due to ignorance of SQA requirements, carelessness or neglect in applying the requirements (maladministration).

Malpractice can include both maladministration in the assessment and delivery of SQA qualifications and deliberate non-compliance with SQA requirements.

Whether intentional or not, it is necessary to investigate and act upon any suspected instances of malpractice, to protect the integrity of the qualification and to identify any wider lessons to be learned.

Malpractice - students

Some examples of student malpractice are described below. These examples are not exhaustive and all incidents of suspected malpractice, whether or not described below, will be fully investigated, where there are sufficient grounds to do so.

1.1.1. Obtaining examination or assessment material without authorization.

1.1.2. Arranging for an individual other than the student to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment not undertaken by the student.

1.1.3. Impersonating another student to sit an assessment or to submit an assignment on their behalf.

1.1.4. Collaborating with another student or individual, by any means, to complete a coursework assignment or assessment, unless it has been clearly stated that such collaboration is permitted.

1.1.5. Damaging another student's work.

1.1.6. Inclusion of inappropriate or offensive material in coursework assignments or assessment scripts.

1.1.7. Failure to comply with published SQA regulations.

1.1.8. Disruptive behavior or unacceptable conduct, including the use of offensive language, at centre or assessment venue (including aggressive or offensive language or behavior).

1.1.9. Producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, including but not limited to:

- personal identification

- supporting evidence provided for reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications and

- SQA results documentation, including certificates

1.1.10. Falsely obtaining, by any means, a SQA certificate.

1.1.11. Misrepresentation or plagiarism.

1.1.12. Fraudulent claims for special consideration while studying.

1.1.13. Failure to comply with instructions given by the assessment invigilator, ie, working beyond the allocated time; refusing to hand in assessment script / paper when requested; not adhering to warnings relating to conduct during the assessment

Malpractice - centre employees and stakeholders

Examples of malpractice by, teachers, tutors and other officers, (including, invigilators and examination administrators) are listed below. These examples are not exhaustive and all incidents of suspected malpractice, whether or not described below, will be fully investigated, where there are sufficient grounds to do so.

All instances of centre malpractice will be reported to SQA before any investigation takes place as SQA may wish to carry out their own investigation into the malpractice.

1.2. Failure to adhere to the relevant SQA regulations and procedures, including those relating to center approval, security undertaking and monitoring requirements as set out by SQA.

1.3. Knowingly allowing an individual to impersonate a student.

1.4. Allowing a student to copy another student's assignment work, or allowing a student to let their own work be copied.

1.5. Allowing students to work collaboratively during an assignment assessment, unless specified in the assignment brief.

1.6. Completing an assessed assignment for a student or providing them with assistance beyond that 'normally' expected.

1.7. Damaging a student's work.

1.8. Disruptive behavior or unacceptable conduct, including the use of offensive language (including aggressive or offensive language or behavior)

1.9. Allowing disruptive behavior or unacceptable conduct at the center to go unchallenged, for example, aggressive or offensive language or behavior.

1.10. Divulging any information relating to student performance and / or results to anyone other than the student.

1.11. Producing, using or allowing the use of forged or falsified documentation, including but not limited to:

- personal identification

- supporting evidence provided for reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications

1.12. SQA results documentation, including certificates Falsely obtaining by any means a SQA certificate.

1.13. Failing to report a suspected case of student malpractice, including plagiarism, to SQA.

MPRC (Mal Practice Review Committee) of CIE will bring candidate malpractice concerns to the attention of SQA only if:

♦ the concern came to CIE's attention after submission of internal assessment marks

♦ any candidate affected by a malpractice decision, who —having exhausted their right of appeal within the centre — wishes to exercise their right of appeal to SQA; or

♦ there are other exceptional circumstances, eg the CIE believes that the malpractice case involves a criminal act

The matter must also be reported to the police if the malpractice involves a criminal act.

Investigation Process

All investigations will be under the direction of the SQA Coordinator.

The SQA Coordinator may appoint a member of staff to lead the investigation on the SQA Coordinators behalf and to carry out interviews with the relative parties. A MPRC (Mal Practice Review Committee) will be formed with the following members

1. SQA Coordinator
2. Exam controller
3. Faculty Representative

All interviews will be fully documented and the person being investigated may bring representation with them to the interview.

Once the investigation has been completed the decision of the investigation will be advised to the person being investigated within 5 working days of the decision being made.

The investigated person has the right to appeal any outcome of the investigation and must do so within 5 working days of the decision being advised to them.

Any appeal will be heard by an independent person who has not been involved in the investigation.

Possible malpractice sanctions

1.14. Following an investigation, if a case of malpractice is upheld, the MPRC may impose sanctions or other penalties on the individual(s) concerned. Where relevant MPRC will report the matter to SQA, and SQA may impose one or more sanctions upon the individual(s) concerned. Any sanctions imposed will reflect the seriousness of the malpractice that has occurred.

1.15. Listed below are examples of sanctions that may be applied to a student, or to a teacher, tutor, invigilator or other officer who has had a case of malpractice upheld against them. Please note that

1.16. this list is not exhaustive and other sanctions may be applied on a case-by-case basis

1.16.1. where the malpractice affects assessment performance, SQA may impose sanctions of its own

Possible study center actions and sanctions that may be applied to students

- A written warning about future conduct.

- Student may be required to resubmit assessment evidence

- Notification to an employer, regulator or the police.

- Removal from the course.

Possible actions and sanctions that may be applied to teachers, tutors, assessors, invigilators, and other officers

- A written warning about future conduct.

- Imposition of special conditions for the future involvement of the individual(s) in the conduct, teaching, supervision or administration of students and/or examinations.

- Informing any other Organization known to employ the individual in relation to SQA courses or

examinations of the outcome of the case.

- MPRC may carry out unannounced monitoring of the working practices of the individual(s) concerned.
- Dismissal.

Appeals

Staff and candidates who are found guilty of malpractice can appeal the decision if they think that they have been treated unfairly.

They must appeal to the Head of Centre, with 5 days of being informed of the outcome of the malpractice investigation.

The Head of Centre, or their nominee, will arrange for a further review of the evidence, by persons who have not been previously involved in the investigation.

In addition, where malpractice is investigated by SQA, decisions can be appealed.

Centres have the right to appeal a decision where a case of reported malpractice by the centre has been confirmed through investigation by SQA. Reference must be made to the SQA document "The Appeals Process: Information for centres".

Record retention

Core International Education will keep records of investigations of suspected malpractice and the outcomes of these.

Where an investigation of suspected malpractice is carried out, MPRC will retain related records and documentation for three years. Records will include any work of the candidate and assessment or verification records relevant to the investigation.

In an investigation involving a potential criminal prosecution or civil claim, records and documentation will be retained for six years after the case and any appeal has been heard. If there is any doubt about whether criminal or civil proceedings will take place, we will keep records for the full six year period.

In the case of an appeal to SQA against the outcome of a malpractice investigation, assessment records will be retained for Six years.

CANDIDATE COMPLAINTS:

We are committed to providing high quality services to members of the public, including applicants for admission. We value complaints and use information from them to help us improve our services.
Complains can be about:
1. The quality and standard of any service we provide or fail to provide.
2. The quality of our facilities and learning resources.
3. The quality and standards of academic services and personal support services available.
4. Failure to follow an appropriate administrative processes.
5. Unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a student or staff member.

It is easier for us to resolve complaints if it is made quickly and directly to the service concerned. We require the Following details:

1. Your full name and address.
2. Details about the complaint.
3. What went wrong.
4. How to resolve the matter.

We have two step/procedures to resolve the matter:

1. Step one - Upfront Resolution:

This process aim to resolve complaints quickly. This could mean an on-the-spot apology and explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and immediate action to resolve the problem. Where possible, concerns should be raised with the relevant staff/department member. This can be done face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email.

We will give you our decision under this process in five working days or less, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

If not satisfied with the response we give, then we escalate the matter to Step 2 of the complaints procedure. Candidate/Applicant may choose to do this immediately or shortly after our initial decision.

2. Step Two – Investigation:

This process deals with two types of complaint: those that have not been resolved at Step one and those that are complex and require detailed investigation.

A complaint form will be provided , which will help to state the complaint clearly. Although acceptations are made for complaints that are made in person or on the phone, it is advisable to complete the complaint form in the interests of clarity and in order to best assist the investigation process. The complaint form and any supporting documents will be seen by the person investigating complaints, by anyone named in the complaint and by relevant staff in the department(s) being complained about.

During this process we will: · acknowledge receipt of complaint within three working days and tell who is dealing with the complaint · discuss about the complaint to understand why it remain as dissatisfied and what is the outcome wished for · give a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.

Candidates of SQA qualifications also have the right to complain to SQA awarding body. SQA will only consider your complaint if you have already gone through all stages of e International Education complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with the outcome, or the way in which we handled your complaint.

SQA will deal with complaints about:

- assessment — in the broadest sense, including the conduct of, preparation for, and environment for, assessment
- dissatisfaction with the way in which the centre handled the complaint

SQA will not deal with complaints about:

- assessment decisions (use Appeals or Post-results Services)
- the wider experience of being a candidate (eg support services, funding, facilities etc.)

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEALS

Internal assessment appeals procedure:

In the event that a student is disappointed with an inner evaluation result she/he has the privilege to appeal. There are three phases in the interests system and each stage must be finished before proceeding to the next one. All students may demand extra help for assistance with their appeals to address any seen obstructions in accordance with the 'Single Equality'.

Stage 1:
In the event that students are not happy with the assessor's decision and feedback, they reserve the authority to directly appeal to the assessor who completed the assessment. This appeal must be recorded as a hard copy and show:

The points of contradiction and reasons.

- The proof in the portfolio which the student trusts meets the prerequisites of the performance criteria.
- The appeal must be submitted inside **five working days** of receipt of the evaluation result.
- The appeal reaction must be given inside 5 working days of receipt of the appeal.

The fundamental purposes behind an appeal are probably going to be:

- The student does not comprehend why she/he isn't yet capable, because of absence of, or unclear, feedback from the assessor.
- The student trusts she/he is skilled and that the assessor has misconstrued them or missed/confused some essential proof.

Stage 2:
Students who are not happy with the result of their Stage 1 bid can additionally appeal the Internal Verifier for the course inside 3 working days. This appeal must be in writing, yet need not rehash the details given at Stage 1 as all the documentation utilized at Stage 1 will be passed on to the Internal Verifier. The Internal Verifier will report back to the understudy in **three working days**.

Stage 3:
Prior to continuing to Stage 3, the students probably have exhausted with the necessities of Stage 1 and 2.

- Students who are not happy with the results of Stage 2 of the Appeals Procedure may then continue to Stage 3 by engaging recorded as a hard copy to the Examination Controller inside **three days** of receipt of the result of stage 2.
- The Examination Controller will look at the discoveries and consider a gathering to answer to the student, assessor and internal verifier.

Candidates undertaking SQA Advanced Certificates/Diplomas have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with CIE. SQA will not accept internal assessment appeals.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A conflict of interest is a situation where an appointee has competing interests or loyalties when carrying out their SQA activities that could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions.

Examples of conflicts of interest:

Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances relating to appointee activities. The following are examples of situations (not an exhaustive list) that could lead to actual or perceived conflicts of interest that must be declared by Appointees:

• Undertaking SQA activities in a centre where the appointee is a member of staff or has some other connection eg as an adviser or consultant. NB where this type of activity has been declared as an 'exception centre' as part of the contracting process, there is no need to submit a separate conflict of interest form.

• Undertaking SQA activities in a centre where an appointee has friends or relatives taking SQA assessments or exams in that centre. NB where this type of activity has been declared as an 'exception centre' as part of the contracting process, there is no need to submit a separate conflict of interest form.

• Where an appointee undertakes SQA activities, but may have personal interests – paid or unpaid - in another business that uses SQA products and services.

• Where an appointee undertakes activities for another organisation that is in competition with SQA eg another awarding body.

• Where an appointee develops or delivers training materials that support SQA qualifications for another organisation eg writing text books/commercial prelim papers, delivering 'how to pass' workshops.

Managing conflict of interest:

The following steps should be taken to manage conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest: Appointee responsibilities:

• All appointees must familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with it.

• All relevant SQA staff must be familiar with this policy and the process for managing conflicts of interest.

• All appointees will be reminded of the conflict of interest policy as part of each contracting process. • Information provided by appointees identifying a potential conflict of interest will be evaluated by the SQA team responsible for the appointee activity and appropriate action agreed within 10 working days.

• This process is managed by the Appointee Management Team who will advise appointees of the outcome of the evaluation and any actions required.

• All conflict of interest forms will be stored electronically by the Appointee Management team for a period of 2 years.

SECURE STORAGE AND TRANSPORT OF ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

Introduction:

The security of evaluation materials, including assessment instruments, test question papers, contents and electronic stored proof, is the obligation of all academic staff. This is especially vital for assessment materials which are utilized authorized conditions, for instance HN Graded Unit tests.

External Examination:

Materials for outer evaluation are sent legitimately to the Examinations Officer and are gathered carefully guarded in the safe and checked by the Chief Invigilator (Internal verifier for each branch) and the **Examination Controller**. Finished scripts are assembled up by the Chief Invigilator and the Examinations Officer and secured in the safe until being dispatched by courier to the SQA for stamping. Special assessment materials are gotten and checked by the **Examination Controller**.

Internal Examination:

1. Solicitations for evaluation instruments from the SQA secure site would be established.
2. Evaluation instruments downloaded from the SQA Secure site will be sent to assessors by means of assessor email accounts.
3. The Examination control will log and screen all solicitations for assessment materials.
4. When assessment materials have been gotten by the concerned assessor, it is their obligation to guarantee that they are stored safely, for example a safe individual drive or in a protected region of the particular center to which just they approach.
5. Assessors should just approach appraisal instruments for units that they are or will be timetabled to educate.
6. Printed evaluation materials must be put away safely in rooms with controlled access.
7. Students must be made mindful that removing appraisals, duplicates or pictures of evaluations which are conveyed under controlled conditions is negligence and could result in disciplinary activity.
8. It is additionally misbehavior for staff to give evaluation materials, duplicates or pictures of assessments to students without valid justification or authorization
9. Any breaks of security of evaluation must be accounted for quickly to the **Examination Controller** and Academic Coordinator so that the SQA body could be informed.
10. All units must have a performa document which ought to be put away electronically with access limited to just staff conveying and evaluating the unit.
11. External verifiers should be given secure access to electronic proof amid a visit.

Graded Units:

1. Graded unit evaluations are printed off by the approved assessor and go to the **Examinations controller** who makes arrangements to set up examinations. The test invigilator will gather every single finished paper and return these to the **Examinations controller** who stores these safely in the safe until the approved assessor gathers them for marking.
2. Graded unit papers ought to be come back to the **Examinations controller** for storage.
3. Graded Unit proof is to be submitted electronically. Students must protect their proof before they submit it and it must be put away safely in a limited access record within the center all through the evaluation procedure and until the assessment and verification forms are finished.

RETENTION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE:

1. For the purpose of Data Protection, understudy assessment proof will incorporate any material, electronic or printed copy, which contains students' details and data identifying with the student, or to people or an organization, utilized in the creation of that evaluation proof.

2. Electronic student evaluation proof must be stored safely in a confined access record room inside the Center throughout the evaluation procedure and until the evaluation and confirmation forms are finished.
3. Printed copy evaluation proof ought to be stored safely in a recognized extra room which is lockable and which has limited access only for approved staff (Examination Control).
4. Student evaluation proof, regardless of whether electronic or printed version, should just be assembled, utilized and held as required by College and SQA body for quality approach and strategy and as per recognized timescales.
5. All assessors are in charge of guaranteeing that student evaluation proof is stored safely while being prepared for checking.
6. The **Examination controller** and assessors are responsible for ensuring that marking takes place in a secure environment and that personal details and information are kept confidential.
7. Student evaluation proof, regardless of whether electronic or printed version, ought to be discarded safely when never again required. This will ordinarily be through destroying the material in a safe domain or erasing as suitable.