

INTERNAL VERIFICATION OF ASSESSMENTS

1. Purpose

To describe the arrangements which are made to ensure that:

- a. all internal assessments leading to the award of nationally recognised qualifications are subject to internal moderation or verification to ensure alignment of assessment decisions with required standards
- b. internal assessment procedures and practices are valid, reliable, fair and consistent with the standards required of the awarding bodies
- c. internal moderation and verification practices meet the requirements of the relevant awarding bodies
- d. assessment decisions made by different assessors within the same programme are accurate and consistent
- e. assessors are consistent in their interpretation and application of national occupational standards contained within awards

2. Scope

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all programmes leading to the award of NVQs which are run by Stephenson College or its franchises
- 2.2 It shall also apply, as appropriate, to programmes leading to other awards within the national qualifications framework where internal verification is required by the awarding body or by the College
- 2.3 Internal verification includes the internal moderation of assessments which is dealt with in Section 7

3. Verifying Assessments

- 3.1 All internal assessments which contribute towards the award of a qualification included in the national qualification framework or accredited by the College shall be subject to internal verification
- 3.2 The College shall develop, maintain and implement an effective internal verification procedure which applies to all Sections and curriculum areas within the College
- 3.3 The College will co-operate with awarding bodies to ensure that their requirements

for internal verification and those contained in the current codes of practice published by the regulatory authorities are met

4. Organisational Arrangements for Internal Verification

- 4.1 Sufficient numbers of appropriately qualified and experienced staff shall be appointed to effectively carry out the internal verification of assessments of NVQs and other learning programme in each Section and curriculum area of the College
- 4.2 Within each Section of the College, at least one internal verifier shall be appointed to fulfil the role of a lead internal verifier as described in the procedure. Wherever possible and appropriate, the Section Head shall be a Lead Internal Verifier
- 4.3 Appropriate training and development opportunities shall be provided to ensure that all internal verifiers:
 - a. are properly trained to carry out any internal verification duties and responsibilities allocated to them
 - b. hold any necessary internal verifier qualifications within 18 months of commencing their role
 - c. meet any requirements for occupational expertise specified by the relevant standards-setting body before commencing their role
 - d. understand the content, structure and assessment requirements of the awards they are verifying
- 4.4 Every Lead Internal Verifier shall be a certificated assessor and internal verifier who is occupationally competent in the area in which he/she makes assessment decisions and/or carries out internal verification
- 4.5 The Director of Learner Achievement shall:
 - a. meet monthly with the Lead Internal Verifier from all Sections of the College to discuss and address issues relating to assessments and their verification, share good practice and improve the quality of internal assessment across the College
 - b. maintain a record of development activities undertaken and the qualifications held by all internal verifiers across the College
 - c. monitor the feedback from external verifiers
 - d. review annually the operation of the internal verification procedure and report to the Quality Management Team and the Academic Board

5. The Role of the Internal Verifier

- 5.1 The internal verifier(s) for each qualification shall be nominated by the Section Head in consultation with the Programme Co-ordinator
- 5.2 The internal verifier(s) appointed for a qualification shall be responsible for:

- a. agreeing with assessors the assessment plan(s) for candidates for the qualification, unit(s) or subject(s) which are to be verified
- b. where assignments form part of the assessment plan, verifying assignment briefs before they are issued to learners (form IV02)
- c. agreeing with assessors, the Lead Internal Verifier and the external verifier, a sampling strategy for choosing assessments to be verified and preparing a sampling plan which schedules the verifications to be carried out over an appropriate period of time (forms IV01 or PIV03)
- d. using sampling plans to regularly check the assessment decisions made by assessors and providing feedback to assessors, the Lead Internal Verifier and the external verifier on the quality and effectiveness of assessment (forms PIV01 or IV03)
- e. maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activities and ensuring that these are available for external verification, NVQ records will be retained for a period of 3 years in accordance with NVQ Code of Practice
- f. monitoring assessment practice to ensure that the relevant standards of assessment are being observed, that problems or areas where assessors need advice/support/development are identified and addressed and that candidates are aware of and satisfied with the assessment process (forms IV04 and PIV02 or IV05)
- g. standardising assessment judgements among assessors who are assessing the same units or subjects or assessing on the same programme to ensure that each makes valid decisions and assesses learners fairly
- h. in conjunction with the Lead Internal Verifier, ensuring that new assessors receive an effective induction to their role
- i. ensuring that they and all their assessors have relevant up-to-date information relating to the assessment and award of the qualification
- j. agreeing actions for improvement with assessors and providing support to enable these to be carried out
- k. liaising with the external verifier and ensuring that actions required in external verifier reports are carried out
- l. ensuring that, in the case of NVQ assessments, the assessment decisions made by uncertificated assessors are checked, authenticated and counter-signed by an assessor or internal verifier who has the appropriate assessor and/or internal verifier qualification and relevant occupational expertise as specified for the NVQ in question

5.3 All sampling and verification activities carried out by internal verifiers shall comply with the requirements of the awarding body concerned

6. Sampling Assessments for Internal Verification

- 6.1 Each internal verifier shall draw up a sampling plan in consultation with each assessor whose assessment decisions are to be verified and the lead verifier
- 6.2 The plan should provide for the verification of assessment decisions at both the interim and the summative stages of the assessment process
- 6.3 Interim sampling will enable candidates' work to be reviewed at different stages throughout the learning programme and before the completion of units of the award. The verifier will be able to:
 - a. check candidates' progress review reports
 - b. evaluate the quality of the guidance provided on assessment and the effectiveness of assessment and learning plans
 - c. identify problems at an early stage and improving achievement rates
 - d. identify assessors' needs for support and training
 - e. identify areas of good practice which can be shared through the College
- 6.4 Summative sampling will enable the quality of the final assessment decision for a unit or an award to be reviewed by evaluating how the assessor has reached that decision. The internal verifier must be able to follow an audit trail which clearly shows that the assessor has checked that the evidence on which the assessment decision is based meets the following requirements:
 - a. valid – relevant to the specified standards
 - b. authentic – produced by the candidate
 - c. reliable – accurately reflects the levels of performance demonstrated by the candidate
 - d. current – sufficiently recent to be confident that the same level of skill/understanding/ knowledge exists at the time of the claim and to be within any time limits set by the awarding body
 - e. sufficient – meets in full all the requirements of the specified standards
- 6.5 The strategy for selecting assessments for a sampling plan should be agreed beforehand with the Lead Internal Verifier and the external verifier
- 6.6 The sample of assessments should include assessment decisions made:
 - a. using the full range of assessment methods in use
 - b. by all members of the assessment team

- c. at all assessment sites
 - d. of different cohorts and categories of learners
 - e. in all units or subjects in the award
- 6.7 The sample should be large enough to present an accurate picture of the overall quality of assessment. It should include more assessment decisions made by inexperienced assessors, assessors new to the award and those with heavy caseloads
- 6.8 Sampling plans for NVQs should be prepared using the form PIV03 entitled 'Internal Verification of NVQ Assessment – Internal Verification Sampling Plan'. For all other awards, the form IV01 entitled 'Internal Verification/Moderation Plan' should be used
- 6.9 Each internal verifier shall provide copies of their sampling plans to the Lead Internal Verifier, the Director of Learner Achievement and the external verifier as soon as they have been drawn up

7. Standardising Assessment Judgements (Moderation)

- 7.1 Where a number of assessors assess the same units of an award, or where members of an assessment team are together responsible for the grades awarded in a qualification, the internal verifier shall undertake standardisation or moderation exercises with all the assessors on a regular basis
- 7.2 Standardisation exercises could involve different assessors making independent decisions based on the same specimen evidence presented for assessment and grading. The assessment outcomes and gradings are then discussed by the assessment team. The exact nature of the standardisation process should be decided by the internal verifier and the assessment team, but it must be appropriate for the award and be agreed by the Lead Internal Verifier and the external verifier
- 7.3 Evidence of standardisation exercises should be retained in the programme file and made available to external verifiers

8. The Role of the Lead Internal Verifier

- 8.1 Lead Internal Verifiers shall be responsible for:
- a. fulfilling the role of internal verifier for an agreed number of candidates/awards/subjects
 - b. co-ordinating with the work of other internal verifiers within their Section or programme area
 - c. monitoring the verification practices of other internal verifiers within the Section to ensure that standards of verification and assessment are being maintained
 - d. maintaining an up-to-date record of the qualifications held and the training/development activities undertaken by assessors and internal verifiers within the Section
 - e. arranging induction programmes for all new assessors and internal verifiers within the Section or programme area (form LIV01)

- f. taking a leading role in the development and support of assessors and internal verifiers within the Section and carrying out an annual audit using the Internal Verification Checklist for Developing and Supporting Assessors/Internal Verifiers (form LIV03)
 - g. ensuring that a training needs analysis is carried out for all new assessors within the Section (form LIV02)
 - h. ensuring that all documentation required for the proper management, delivery and assessment of awards within the Section is available on the College intranet and is up-to-date (form LIV04)
 - i. ensuring that the verification reports of uncertificated internal verifiers on assessment decisions in NVQ awards are checked, authenticated and counter-signed by a certificated internal verifier who has the appropriate occupational expertise
 - j. ensuring that all claims for certification for NVQ awards for candidates within the Section are confirmed and authenticated by an appropriately qualified and occupationally expert internal verifier
 - k. ensuring that internal verifiers do not verify their own assessment decisions
 - l. ensuring that all requirements of awarding bodies and external verifiers/moderators relating to the verification of assessment decisions within the Section are met
 - m. ensuring that effective communication is maintained with the external verifiers or moderators for the awards within the Section or programme area
- 8.2 Lead Internal Verifiers shall have a leading role in managing the quality of the delivery of programmes within their Sections or programme areas. In particular, Lead Internal Verifiers with responsibilities for NVQ awards shall complete annually a Lead Internal Verification Checklist for Managing the Quality of NVQ Delivery (form LIV05)
- 8.3 In order to monitor the verification practices of other internal verifiers within their Sections, Lead Internal Verifiers shall:
- a. sample the work of each internal verifier within the Section using a sampling plan drawn up for an appropriate period, in consultation with that internal verifier (LIV06)
 - b. ensure that the sample includes the internal verification of different methods of assessment, including the observation of performance and the assessment of written and portfolio evidence
 - c. complete a Lead Internal Verification Sampling Report (LIV07) for each internal verification activity included in the sample
 - d. talk with learners about their learning and assessment plans and experiences and, where appropriate, complete an Internal Verification – Candidate Interview Record (form IV05)
 - e. at least once per year, complete an Internal Verification Checklist for Verifying

Assessments for each programme within the Section (form LIV08)

- f. observe each internal verifier carrying out verification by observation of an assessor carrying out an assessment at least once per year
- 8.4 At least once per term, the Lead Internal Verifier shall hold a formal, minuted meeting with other internal verifiers in the Section or programme area in order to discuss and address issues relating to assessments and their verification, share good practice and improve the quality of internal assessment within the Section or programme area