

# Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Strategy



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The internal quality assurance sampling strategy involves reviewing the quality of assessor judgements at both interim and summative stages. This includes reviewing learner portfolios perhaps before decisions have been made on any unit or when one or two units are completed. It will include checking the planning, review and feedback given to learners by assessors and will enable the IQA to evaluate the quality of formative guidance on assessment and to pick up any problems at an early stage. It will also highlight individual assessor needs, which in turn may be used to develop the assessment team as a whole. The IQA will achieve this by good planning, which must in part include observing assessor performance.

Where interim sampling has not taken place, the centre will call in the portfolio for sampling to ensure the learner is progressing, receiving appropriate assessment and fair access to assessment.

## Sampling

Correct sampling should entail reviewing the quality of the assessment judgement by evaluating how assessors have reached those decisions. The internal quality assurer must be able to follow an audit trail, which clearly demonstrates that assessors have checked that the evidence presented meets the rules of evidence.

### Evidence must be confirmed by assessors as:

- **Valid** – relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed
- **Authentic** – Produced by the learner
- **Current** – Sufficiently recent for assessors to be confident that the same level of skills, understanding or knowledge exists at the time of claim
- **Sufficient** – meets in full **all** the requirements of the standards

### Factors IQAs need to consider

**Learners** Ethnic origin, age, gender, other factors, particular assessment requirements etc. Every learner portfolio must be sampled.

**Assessor** Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience  
CPD, evidence of countersigning assessors supporting unqualified assessors.

**Methods of assessment** Observation, testimony, professional discussion, RPL, product evidence, assignments, projects and tests, use of simulation.

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## **Evidence/LO' within the qualification Records**

Problem areas, particular requirements.  
Reports from assessors, correct assessment practices, internal quality assurance records, assessor records, learner portfolios and files.

## **Assessment locations**

Workplace and other assessment locations.

## **Assessment process**

The IQA must sample the quality of planning, review, feedback, records and portfolio organisation when reviewing learner portfolios.

## **Sampling Plan**

The IQA must complete a *sampling plan* at the beginning of the learner's assessment programme and must record, on the plan, any variations made to it\*. Each sampling plan applies to all learners registered within a three month period. Learners registered after the three month period will be allocated to the next sampling plan. \*A copy of every Sampling Plan should be submitted by the IQA to the centre.

It is important that the IQA looks at decisions of the assessment team in any given period (possibly on a calendar basis or by learner cohort). The standardisation unit should be included on all sampling plans. The sampling process must not be determined by any rule of thumb such as 10%. However, every portfolio must be sampled. The centre requires that final portfolio sampling and signing of the *Award Summary Sheet* is undertaken by an ARC Development Officer and this must take place prior to claiming final certification.

The IQA must sample the full range of assessment methods used for any one qualification eg observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, products, RPL, simulation etc. It is imperative that the internal verifier knows the qualification thoroughly and the likely range of assessment methods and evidence sources that could be used.

The IQA must sample the full range of the assessment process from the Assessor/Learner Agreement, through planning, review, feedback and documentation and must include at least one assessor observation each year.

All assessors are to be included in the sample, but a number of other factors must be considered:

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## Experience

If assessors are qualified and experienced it may not be necessary to look at more than one or two units per learner. If assessors have less than 12 months' experience, are new to the centre or a particular qualification or out of practice, the IQA will need to sample substantially more of their decisions for the first 6 - 12 months.

## Workload

The IQA needs to look at the workload of each assessor so that the total sample fairly reflects the number of decisions being made by individual assessors. Increasing ratios of learners to assessors may also indicate assessment problems.

## Assessor Concerns

If the IQA has a particular concern regarding the assessment decisions of a particular assessor, then the ratio of sampling can be increased. This decision is at the discretion of the IQA, who then makes a judgement about when to return to the original sampling plan. The IQA should record their concern on the relevant form.

