

## **Construction Helpline Ltd**

### **23 – Assessment Strategy & IQA/Verification Policy**

#### **Version 4**

#### **Introduction**

Construction Helpline Ltd (CHL) is committed to excellence and a focus on quality. It is our policy to have fully trained and qualified assessors / lead mentors and Internal Verifiers in place to enable learners to achieve the full qualification. We recognise therefore, that a robust Assessment & Internal Verification strategy is essential to ensure that quality is maintained throughout the organisation and that all those involved in the process are adopting the same reliable, fair, and consistent methods of assessment and verification. This strategy applies to all programmes offered by the centre.

This policy is in two parts:

- Assessment Strategy
- Internal Verification Strategy

#### **Assessment Strategy**

The Assessment process is the method by which the learners/candidate's knowledge, understanding & competence is judged. Assessors are responsible for assessing the learner/candidate against specified criteria, i.e. the Learning Outcomes and/or Evidence Requirements for each of the units being undertaken within a qualification. At CHL Assessors will normally be the tutors delivering the learning programme for the relevant unit.

#### **Lesson Planning**

The tutor/assessor should prepare lesson plans for each of the units they are delivering. The lesson plans should follow the scheme of work issued for each unit (although the order can be changed if/as required) and cover each of the Learning Outcomes.

#### **Delivery**

- Can be via distance learning, classroom based or blended learning.
- In delivering learning the tutor/assessor should take into account the personalities and characteristics of each learner, together with their learning styles. Their level and understanding of the English language must also be considered, with regular formative assessment to ensure information has been absorbed and understood.
- The tutor/assessor should provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment and provide regular guidance and feedback on progress (see also documentation).

#### **Assessment Methods**

- Tutors/Assessors should use a variety of assessment methods (Guidance in Qualification Specification) to ensure the full picture of the candidate's knowledge and competence is obtained. This can include observation of individual and group activities, presentations, discussions (these may be via webinar or Teams for distance learners), questioning, witness statements, formal examinations, and written work which the learners will provide for each unit assignment.

### **Programme Assessment Plan**

- A programme assessment plan will be prepared at the start of each term (Apprentices) or each cohort (Skills Boot Camps) and will detail all the units currently being undertaken, timescales for achievement, details of the tutor/assessor and information on the internal verifier for this unit. Information regarding the assessment methods to be used and dates for the assignment to be issued, reviewed (formative/interim assessment) finally assessed and internally verified will form part of this plan. This plan will be checked on a regular basis by the IQA/Lead Internal Verifier.

### **Assignments/Assessments**

- The tutor/assessor will be responsible for producing an assignment(s) or assessment form except where it is required to use the Awarding Body's assignment or assessment (such as set examinations), to meet all the requirements of the unit in terms of the Learning Outcomes/Evidence Requirements. Learners should be informed about how the assignment/assessment will cover these outcomes.
- The assignments should follow the house style, complete with front sheet.
- In setting the assignments the tutor/assessor should be encouraged to use a variety of assessment methods to best meet learner needs and ensure that no learner is disadvantaged because of their level of written English (or any other specific requirements).
- Assignments/assessment sheets should be issued in line with the timetable on the Programme Assessment Plan and students informed of review and completion dates.
- Students are to be made aware of the assessment process for their assignment tasks including the formative/interim and summative assessment arrangements. They should be made aware of the process for the marking (and, where applicable, grading of assignments and the procedure for referrals and resubmission. Students must also be advised about internal verification arrangements. They must be made aware of the appeals procedure should there be any dispute about an assessment decision.

### **Documentation**

- Assessors will be issued with documentation to use throughout the programme. This will include the Assignment/assessment front sheets and feedback sheets. They will also have templates for all appropriate documentation including observation records, discussion record sheets etc. Assessors will also have feedback sheets to provide for students to help them build up their own personal portfolio with a record of their learning and development throughout the programme.
- Assessors are to provide written documentation at the time of formative/interim and summative assessment. Assessor forms are provided for this purpose.

- Documentation is to be signed by both the learner and the assessor (and the Internal Verifier/Lead IQA/IV where appropriate).
- Relevant documentation is to be stored in agreed location and passed to the Internal Verifier when requested and according to the IV sampling plan.
- All documentation will be retained in line with the relevant awarding bodies' requirements.

### **Undertaking Assessment**

- All assessment activities should be carefully planned, taking into account the individual needs of each student and any specific requirements of the Awarding Body.
- The tutor/assessor must ensure that the student/learner understands how the assessment will happen, when & where it will take place, the assessment methods to be used and how this relates to the requirements of the assignment/meets the Learning Outcomes/Evidence requirements.
- The tutor/assessor should document the assessment using relevant documentation outlined above (for example if observing a presentation or group exercise, an observation sheet would be completed) and indicating the criteria which has been covered. Learners can then store this along with all other evidence (written reports etc.) towards meeting the Assessment criteria for each relevant unit.
- Holistic assessment is to be encouraged, for example where an assessment can be planned to cover more than one Learning Outcome (or cross over more than one unit, in line with awarding body regulations).
- Assessors must ensure that they are satisfied that all work produced by the students is their own work. Signatures to confirm this must be obtained and written work passed through relevant software. Distance learning must include discussions and questioning to ensure and confirm understanding (see also Plagiarism policy and Distance Learning Policy).

### **Liaison with Lead IQA**

- Tutor/Assessors are responsible for providing feedback to the Internal Verifier in order to facilitate the quality assurance process.
- Tutors/Assessors will raise any issues in respect of candidate progress with the IV and appropriate personnel or any matters of concern in relation to Health & Safety or Equal Opportunities.
- Tutor/Assessors will be responsible for passing on any disputes or appeals to the IV/Quality Manager.
- All tutor/Assessor will attend a mandatory monthly standardisation meeting, where ongoing reviews of assessment environments and referencing to assessment material will be an agenda item for discussion

## **Internal Verification Strategy (Internal Quality Assurance – (IQA)**

The centre recognises that Internal Verification (or Internal Quality Assurance) is the key element in ensuring Quality Assurance across the programmes. It is important to have a comprehensive and workable Internal Verifier Strategy to ensure that the three main aspects of the Internal Verifier (IV) role are carried out efficiently and to the standards required by the awarding organisation. These three aspects are:

- Verifying assessment.
- Developing and supporting assessors.
- Managing the quality of delivery.

Our IQA manager leads on the implementation of the IQA Strategy managing and coordinating all three aspects. They, in turn report to the Training Manager at our monthly performance meetings providing regular updates on progress with the sampling plans for each cohort of learners and raising any issues that may arise from them.

A summary IQA report is produced for the CEO to take to the bi monthly board meetings so that there is a full understanding and an opportunity to challenge the findings if they feel improvements are required.

### **Verifying Assessment**

Maintaining the Quality of Assessment is carried out in three ways:

- Sampling Assessments
- Monitoring Assessment Practice
- Standardising assessment judgements

### **Sampling Assessments**

It is essential that there is a clear audit trail of the assessment process and that the work of the Assessors is verified at regular intervals. Verifiers will undertake formative/interim sampling as well as summative sampling, to ensure that this happens, according to the IV sampling plan.

Different methods of sampling can be used by the IQA including studying assessors work, candidate interviews/discussion and assessor observation. IQA activities will also involve looking at feedback provided by Assessors to Candidates.

The IV will not reassess the learner's evidence.

Sampling will mainly evaluate how the assessor has reached an assessment decision by following the audit trail which should demonstrate that the assessor has checked the evidence presented and has confirmed that it is: **valid; authentic; reliable; current; sufficient**. To do this the IV will carry out sampling throughout the assessment process, and not just at the completion of a unit or the award. IV activity is planned throughout the learner's journey.

The number of decisions sampled will depend on the experience of the assessor / lead tutor, the learner, whether any additional learning needs exist, whether any reasonable adjustments have been applied, and the amount of assessing undertaken by each assessor.

Additionally, in sampling the evidence the IV will be looking for a variety of assessment methods, including: natural performance (naturally occurring work products); learner personal statements (including storyboards); witness statements and questioning (oral and written).

Assessment records will also be sampled including assessment plans, review meeting notes, final assessment report and notes.

IV's will follow a standardised pro forma to show consistent activity across the whole learner journey.

The IQA will use CAMERA to assess the standard of assessment:

- **Candidate** (age gender etc.)
- **Assessor** (Experience workload)
- **Method** (Practical observation, Prof Discussion, Oral questioning etc.)
- **Evidence** (All types)
- **Records** (Assessor reports, IQA reports)
- **Assessment Sites** (Workplace, Centre)

In all cases all units of all qualifications delivered by the Centre will be subject to an interim and summative IQA audit on all folders claimed through the awarding body.

Our IQA strategy will identify and risk band all assessors, and all assessments. This risk banding will form part of a 'traffic light system' i.e. the assessor and or the qualification that is being assessed will be identified as red or amber or green. E.g. all new assessors to the Centre will initially categorized as red and will have their first 12 portfolios IQA'd 100%. After this the IQA Manager in agreement with the Training Manager may reduce the amount to a lesser percentage.

A traffic light system will be adopted to show the amount of sampling required by each assessor and the competence of their assessment practice:

Red	New assessor/unqualified/Assessor lack of experience/actions points/dev points to be addressed	75-100% sample (cohort size dependant)
Amber	IV happy with standards yet still ongoing development points	50-75% sample (Cohort size dependant)
Green	IV happy with standards/ development point always addressed and work adopts those dev points	25-50% sample (Cohort size dependant)

### Monitoring Assessment and Supporting Assessors

The IV will observe every assessor across a 12-month period and give them feedback on their performance against those set out in the Assessor standards. The IV will also carry out learner interviews at the early, middle and end stages of all programmes. These activities will:

- Ensure that the assessing / mentoring standards are being adhered to
- Help to identify any development issues required for the assessor / mentor
- Ensure that learners are aware of and satisfied with the assessment / mentoring process and
- Should any learners have additional learning needs, or any reasonable adjustments have been applied, these learners will be interviewed to ensure adequate support has been provided. These will be planned in at appropriate points of the programme.

- Follow the Awarding Organisations SA/RC policy

Observation of assessor	Desk Top IV activities	Learner interviews
observation to determine RAG rating over 12-month period	Summative and Formative % dependant on RAG rating	% sample dependant on RAG rating
<b>RED:</b> 2-3 Observations	75-100%	75% of case load
<b>AMBER:</b> 2 Observations	50-75%	50% of case load
<b>GREEN:</b> 1 Observation	25-50%	25% of case load

All new tutor/assessors are to be provided with an induction and copies of all relevant paperwork including the Appeals procedure and Equal Opportunities policy as well as any other relevant organisational policies.

The Quality Assurance Manager and Lead IQA will review Tutor/Assessors and identify any training needs/requests.

Assessors are to be updated on a regular basis through standardisation meetings and particularly when any changes to standards are introduced.

IV and Quality Assurance observation of Assessment to take place on an occasional basis with appropriate records kept.

Assessors and Internal Verifiers will be trained and qualified in line with external quality assurance body requirements.

### **Standardisation of Assessment, Judgements and Feedback**

This activity will ensure that assessment team (including the Lead IQA) consistently make valid judgements, make the same judgements on the same evidence base and ensure that all learners are assessed and mentored fairly. This will be done Quarterly, and the activities within the meetings will be dependent on recent IV/EV/Awarding body/mentoring activity and the numbers of learners on particular programmes. The assessment team will take part in a standardisation exercise. The exercise may consist of one of the following activities:

- The assessment of the same piece of evidence by the whole team to ensure consistency of decisions.
- Discussion of the standards / work topic to ensure a common understanding; and the completion of assessment records / mentoring feedback.
- Best practice across the assessment / mentoring team
- Looking at the detail within the awarding body / internally written paper work and ensuring that the standards / apprenticeship guidance are met
- Looking at SMART target setting for the learner and how to monitor progress
- ALN and how to adapt assessment / mentoring methods to individuals that may require extra support
- Feedback from IV common dev points or actions and any EV visits
- Feedback from EV visits

Standardisation is an integral part of the company's assessor training and development. Giving the assessment team the Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) that they need to do their role.

- Assessors / Lead Mentors will be required to read and keep the minutes from each meeting and adapt their assessment / mentoring practice according to the standardisation within it

- Minutes of meetings are held on drop box and can be located by all Assessors / lead mentors
- Any issues will be directed back to the IV – Appeals/Complaints procedure if relevant
- Should a conference calls be required for any urgent matters or updates seemed fit by the IV or training manager then they will be arranged accordingly
- Each meeting will be minuted and records kept
- Assessors will be expected to attend identified e-clinics and maintain CPD records.
- Maintaining CPD records are the responsibility of each assessor and will be sent into the lead IV when asked for – a log of CPD will be collated accordingly
- Assessors / lead mentors are expected to attend standardisation unless agreed with training manager
- Standardisation across the whole learners journey

### **Developing and Supporting Assessors**

The IV must guide, support, and ensure the continuing professional development of the assessment team.

All assessors will be given an induction covering the qualifications / apprenticeship content in detail, together with the assessment standards / course content maintained within the centre (e.g. standard documentation to be used etc.). The IV will ensure that all members of the assessment team have copies of the relevant standards / course content and Awarding Organisation / apprenticeship content & Syllabus. Guidance will be given when any standards / course content change and following the External Verifier visit if actions have been identified. The IV will ensure that copies of the relevant certificates and CPD are held centrally for each member of the assessment lead mentoring team.

- Tutor/assessor/ lead mentor records are updated electronically and paper file in office
- Records of any CPD are updated at each standardisation meeting
- Regular visits (depending on the assessor / lead mentor grading) from the IV to offer IAG
- Regular email and telephone support and guidance
- Development and resources to aid assessors located on drop box and sign posted by IV
- Assessors / lead mentors to complete training calendar with planned visits for H&S/IV/External Audits

### **Managing the Quality of Delivery**

The Lead IQA will act as the link between the centre and any awarding organisation. Although day-to-day administration will be carried out by the Training Manager, ultimate responsibility for ensuring that information issued by the awarding organisation is passed to assessors rests with the Lead IQA.

Qualification and Apprenticeship learning content and updates will also be the responsibility of the Lead IQA and will be disseminated to the assessors as appropriate.

### **Linked Policies and procedures**

- Complaints
- Appeals
- Diversity and Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Malpractice and Maladministration

The content of the IQA process and CPD will then feed into the formalised appraisal process of the training staff to identify potential development points and training opportunities to further develop the skill set of each training staff

member to better assess the learners and apprentices during their learner journey.

### **Plagiarism**

All allegations of plagiarism will be investigated and may result in action being taken. Full details can be found in the centres Plagiarism Policy.

### **Malpractice**

Any allegation of malpractice by candidates or by any member of centre staff will be taken seriously and fully investigated. The centre will fully cooperate with the relevant awarding body in cases of investigation into centre practice. See the centres Malpractice policy.

### **External Verification**

All requests made from awarding bodies/external quality assurance bodies will be accommodated. Any feedback and/or recommendations will be disseminated to relevant staff and management. Any resultant actions will be logged and the responsibility for activity assigned to the IQA manager. Progress and completion of actions will be monitored through the monthly performance management meetings.

### **The appeals process for internal assessment**

The candidate will in the first instance:

Discuss their concerns with the assessor within 5 working days of the assessment date.

If an agreement cannot be reached, then the IQA will be informed by the assessor within 1 working day

The IQA will review the specified assessment decision and will inform the assessor and the candidate of their decision within 5 working days.

If an agreement still cannot be reached, then the relevant awarding body will be informed within 1 working day, and the candidate and the assessor will be informed of this and kept informed of developments.