# LINCOLN COLLEGE

# INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

# POLICY CQ/PO/12

## SPONSOR

Director of Performance and Standards

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Lincoln College strives to treat all its members and visitors fairly and aims to eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination, specifically across all protected characteristics. We will work towards a fair and just organisation and promote inclusion for all those impacted by Lincoln College and the wider community.

**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY**

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**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**

**POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES**

# 1   POLICY STATEMENT

As an accredited assessment centre for a wide range of national qualifications, Lincoln College is committed to maintaining a rigorous system of quality assurance and control that meets the requirements of each awarding organisation (AO) along with our own internal quality assurance on courses that do not have national qualifications within them. The internal quality assurer (IQA) plays a key role in the management of quality on all courses (the term course within this policy refers to all educational and training provision within the college portfolio) throughout the learner journey by ensuring the **validity**, **authenticity, sufficiency, reliability and consistency** of assessment decisions. This enables all learners and stakeholders to have confidence in the integrity of courses delivered and qualifications achieved.

# 2   PURPOSE

The intention of this  document is to provide a standardised approach to internal quality assurance and internal standards moderation which can be applied to all courses.

The policy is designed to:

- Be simple to apply
- Avoid duplication of effort
- Ensure that assessment processes are tracked
- Meet all awarding organisation requirements
- Support and encourage good practice
- Support valid, authentic, sufficient and accessible assessment
- Support compliance of the National Occupational Standards for Assessing and Ensuring the Quality of Assessment (LLUK, March 2010).

# 3   CONTEXT

This policy and set of procedures will be applied to all courses.

In this context the terms internal quality assurer and internal moderator are interchangeable and require the appointed person to implement quality assurance procedures which ensure that both internal quality assurance and standards moderation take place.

3.1   Internal Quality Assurance (IQA); also referred to as Internal
        Verification (IV)

"A monitoring process ensuring quality in the learner journey which includes that assessment decisions and practices are regularly sampled and evaluated and findings are acted upon to ensure integrity, consistency and fairness"

3.2     Internal Standards Moderation

"All internal assessment must be subject to moderation to ensure alignment of assessment decisions with required standards".

**4     KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A diagram depicting key roles and responsibilities is provided in Annex 1.

4.1     Director of Performance and Standards

To have overall responsibility for the consistent implementation of effective internal quality assurance across the college, via the cross-college co-ordination of managers and internal quality assurers.

4.2     Quality and Compliance Officer (QCO)

- To be the main point of contact for awarding organisations (AOs), i.e. 'Centre Contact' for City and Guilds, 'Quality Nominee' for Edexcel. The AO's external quality assurer (EQA) should contact the QCO to initiate the sampling process. EQAs should forward activity reports to the QCO in all instances (in electronic format wherever possible). The QCO will distribute the report as described in 'EQA Report Distribution Procedure' (annex 2)
- To ensure clear lines of communication between AOs and key contacts within the college.
- To be responsible for the consistent implementation of effective internal quality assurance (IQA) across the college, via the co-ordination of IQA co-ordinators.
- To identify ineffective IQA and monitor remedial action within the organisation.

4.3     Assistant Principals

To be responsible for ensuring that effective systems for assessment and internal quality assurance are established for all relevant courses. This includes the identification of personnel and allocation of appropriate time allowances to carry out the role correctly

Responsibilities:

- Maintaining the instance and effectiveness of internal quality assurance and internal standards moderation within their area
- The allocation of assessors and lead internal quality assurance co-ordinator (LIQA) and internal quality assurers (IQA) to each course
- The performance management of internal quality assurers and the appraisal, training and development of assessors and LIQA and IQAs
- Ensuring the maintenance of all necessary assessment and IQA records for a minimum of three years (as AO/ OFQUAL requirements where applicable) on all courses.

4.4 <u>Lead Internal Quality Assurance – LIQA (e.g. C&G) or Lead Internal Verifier – LIV (e.g. BTEC/Curriculum Lead).</u>

Responsibilities will include:

- Co-ordination of internal quality assurance
- Assuring all aspects of internal quality assurance are carried out, i.e. standardisation, planned IQA activity
- Ensure timely registration and certification of all learners and ensure the importance of correct and accurate registration and claim processes are adhered to.
- Communicating with the awarding organisation and their representatives
- Practising as an IQA to include all responsibilities listed under 4.6
- Providing induction, support and training for assessors and IQAs
- Monitoring the quality and impact of IQA feedback
- Provision of advice to all stakeholders
- Maintain assessment and IQA records for a minimum of three years to AO/OFQUAL requirements
- Liaison with QCO, curriculum leads and assistant principals regarding assessment and verification issues
- Random audit sampling of all allocated IQAs' evidence
- Liaise with the performance and standards team with regard to identifying and providing evidence of malpractice and maladministration

The LIQA or LIV will normally be the curriculum lead with some exceptions. Some of the above responsibilities could be delegated to another named person(s). This should be stated in the IQA strategy.

4.5 <u>Internal Quality Assurer (IQA), Internal Verifier (IV)</u>

Responsibilities will include:

- Ensuring learners are registered with AO prior to any assessment taking place and IQA activity
- Carry out IQA of the assessment process (including form F & G)
- Identifying and ensuring that agreed criteria for choosing and supporting assessors are applied
- Planning and participation of standardisation activities
- Ensuring effective use of procedures for appeals and complaints
- Using internal and external quality assurance measures to enhance provision
- Ensuring that assessors have appropriate and current vocational expertise
- Identifying and facilitating the development of assessors
- Monitoring assessor practice and providing feedback
- Checking consistency of assessment
- Ensuring good assessment practice with regard to relationships with candidates

- Ensuring good assessment practice in relation to health and safety, environmental protection, equality and access criteria
- Monitoring the quality and impact of assessor feedback
- Planning, collating and analysing information on assessment decisions
- Agreeing timing and nature of external audits
- Liaising with external auditors and provide feedback to assessors
- Monitoring and checking for malpractice and maladministration
- Ensuring external audit decisions are included in internal reviews of procedures
- Ensuring integrity and authenticity of learners work through random recorded checks of plagiarism

N.B. It is important that the roles and responsibilities within 4.4 to 4.6 are defined within the Internal Quality Assurance Strategy (5.2).

### 4.6 Assessor

Responsibilities will include:

- Support and assess learners working towards a vocational qualification
- Ensure that learners meet the occupational standard required to achieve their qualifications
- Check learners work for validity, authenticity, sufficiency, reliability and consistency through assessment decisions
- Complete and maintain safe and secure records
- Be knowledgeable of and be compliant with relevant policies and procedures
- Countersign novice assessors' judgements
- Put into action internal and external quality assurance actions and recommendations
- Liaise with others involved in the assessment process
- Make competent judgements based on the relevant criteria
- Involve learners in their assessment planning
- Use a variety of assessment methods
- Provide effective, supportive and developmental feedback to the learners to allow for progression and achievement
- Reflect on own assessment practice, maintain and update continual professional learning and record evidence where requested
- Actively work alongside IQA to uphold internal quality standards through standardisations and regular meetings
- Review and record learners progress
- Observe learners in their workplace (where relevant)
- Examining a candidate's portfolio of evidence

## 5 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

### 5.1 Internal Quality Assurer

Each identified group of learners for a qualification will have, identified by the assistant principal, a lead internal quality assurer (LIQA) and an

internal quality assurer (IQA); the IQA should have knowledge and understanding of the occupational area/subject specialism (this is essential for competence based/NVQ type programmes.

Some course teams may wish to take a team approach to IQA and share the responsibility across a number of tutors/assessors, taking the role of IQA on courses that they do not assess. Where there is only one tutor delivering a qualification, that tutor cannot internally verify their own assessments. A suitable IQA from another sector area can be used.

5.2    Internal Quality Assurance Strategy

The IQA strategy will vary for each area according to the needs of that area and the particular programme, in all cases the strategy must be agreed with the AO EQA/ EV and QCO. Each assistant principal should prepare an IQA strategy for their area(s) of responsibility. This should clearly identify the type of course, if applicable the qualifications within it and whether it is related to employment (WPL), classroom learning (CL) or on-line learning (OL). There should be a separate IQA strategy and structure where there is a different IQA approach adopted, although it is acceptable to group qualifications under the same strategy where appropriate (e.g. within common curriculum areas and AOs).

The strategy should include the minimum elements listed below to satisfy AO requirements and internal college standards:

- The assessor to internal quality assurer ratio, per suite of qualifications
- A defined, hierarchical structure of roles and responsibilities for the IQA team
- Planned/diarised dates for whole-team standardisation activity (minimum termly, recommended twice-termly, ideally one in each term).
- The strategy should make clear links to the IQA plan (5.3)
- An explanation of how a 'risk-assessed' approach is implemented (applying the principles of the 'CAMERA' model below).
  Using this model assessors need to be categorised as low, medium or high risk or green, amber and red. This needs to be clearly identified in the IQA plan (5.3).

**C**andidates: all types of candidates. Consider ethnic origin, age, gender, other factors, special needs etc.
**A**ssessors: experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience.
**M**ethods: of assessment, questioning, observation, testimony, APL, use of simulation, product evidence, assignments, projects and tests.
**E**lements: all elements of the qualification including special requirements
**R**ecords: from assessors, correct assessment practices, IQA records, candidate portfolios and files.
**A**ssessment locations: workplace assessments, college and off-the-job training, other assessment locations.

5.3    Internal Quality Assurance Plan

Each course will have a plan for internal quality assurance prepared by the LIQA, LIV or IV, before the start of the course taking into account the assessment schedule. Starting the process of IQA early stimulates assessment and provides early feedback to assessors, particularly inexperienced ones.  IQA activity must be planned having due regard to:

• Policy of the specific awarding organisation, where applicable
• Agreed practices of the school/ programme area
• Agreed practices of the course team

The planning will include:

• Dates, times and frequency of IQA activity. This should include visits to the workplace and observation of assessors if appropriate. Formative and summative IQA is essential to ensure activity throughout the assessment process
• Identification of candidates, assessors, units, assignments, themes (such as knowledge, skills and behaviours) and all assessment methods to be sampled in line with relevant AO requirements, applying the principles of CAMERA (5.2).  The size of the sample should be sufficient to inspire confidence that all assessment decisions not sampled also meet national, AO and internal college standards.

IQA dates should be set at the start of the course having appropriate regard to the dates of the EQA (EV, QA Consultant)/ Standard Moderator's visit dates.

5.4    Assessment Schedule

Each course, or part of a programme/course is required to have an assessment schedule planned in advance by the lead, or appropriate person, which must be checked by the LIV/IV to ensure that it provides a comprehensive coverage of the course aims, objectives and criteria. This document should be found in the course master file (stored in each areas T drive) and should be accessible by all relevant tutors and learners in the most appropriate place (Canvas or e-portfolio such as Smart Assessor for example)

5.5    Information for the External Quality Assurer (EQA), Internal Verifier, Standards Verifier or External Examiner.

The LIQA/LIV/IV must prepare and provide (in consultation with the course co-ordinator if applicable) information on assessment and IQA for the awarding organisation's EQA representative.

5.6    Novice Assessors

Novice assessors are defined as follows:

- Unqualified competence/NVQ assessors
- Assessors/ lecturers/ instructors new to further education, the college, the subject area, the course or assessment in a non-NVQ context

All novice or new assessors will be inducted, using Form H, and have their assessment practice supported and monitored. They will require a higher proportion of sampling instances than experienced assessors. Novice assessors undertaking competence/NVQ assessment will require all assessment decisions to be countersigned until they have achieved the Assessor Award (A1), NOS 2010 Assessor Qualifications (e.g. C&G TAQA) or equivalent.

5.7 <u>Novice Internal Quality Assurers</u>

Novice internal quality assurers are defined as follows:

- Unqualified competence/ NVQ IQAs
- Inexperienced IQAs in a non-NVQ context

All novice or new IQAs will be inducted, using form H, by an appropriate person. The practice of novice NVQ IQAs will be monitored, sampled and countersigned by the IQAC/LIV or a nominated, qualified IQA until the NOS 2010 IQA Qualification (or equivalent) is achieved.

In a non-NVQ context the LIQA will monitor and countersign a sample of internal quality assurance activities for a minimum period of 3 term-time months until the IQAC/LIV is confident of the novice IQA's abilities.

5.8 <u>Continuous Professional Learning for Competence/NVQ Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers</u>

The External QA (EQA, EV) and QCO will expect to see evidence that the LIQA/ LIV/IV has identified and addressed the learning and development needs of all assessors and internal quality assurers in the team. To do this a system of continuous professional learning must be in place and be maintained. CPL documentation is embedded within the LAT strategy and can be found: <u>T:\[DOCUMENTS]\College Policies\Curriculum and Quality Policies</u>

This may include specific training e.g. alternative assessment methods or update on AO requirements. It may also include opportunities to update vocational knowledge encouraging links with industry.

Holders of the A and V awards will not be required to gain the NOS 2010 Assessor and IQA qualifications, which have now replaced the A and V awards. However, assessors and quality assurers will be required to demonstrate through CPL records that they are aware of and are meeting the requirements of the 2010 National Occupational Standards in Assessing and Internal Quality Assurance (e.g. C&G TAQA).

5.9    Standardisation Meetings

For each qualification IQA standardisation meetings, organised by the LIQA/IV, are to be held on a regular basis, minimum termly, recommended twice-termly, and IQA processes are to be discussed at team meetings under the fixed agenda item 'quality assurance'.

# 6    WAYS OF MANAGING THE IQA PROCESS

6.1    Time Allocation

The college fully recognises that IQA is an important activity and that the time taken to undertake this task cannot always be accurately predetermined and indeed varies from one qualification to another.

Standard assessment and verification activities may be included in the duties of the academic contract for lecturers, instructors and assessors.

Where specific knowledge, experience or qualification is required that creates an exceptional workload for an individual, however, remission may be requested for IQA duties (see Time Allocation Guidance).

All duties and allocations must be identified in the IQA strategy **at the start of the academic year**.

6.2    Internal Quality Assurance Documentation

As a minimum requirement internal quality assurers should use the following internal quality assurance documentation (or replacement documentation (approved by the QCO) for the AO concerned):

**Form AB** – Combined  internal quality assurance sampling matrix/ plan
**Standards Form AB** - Combined internal quality assurance sampling matrix/plan to be used for standards.
**Form C** – Internal quality assurance (IV) of assignment briefs
**Form D1** or **D2** –Internal quality assurance report on assessment decision
**Form E** – Observation of IQA performance by EV/ lead IQA
**Form F** – Learner interview record – Should be used in conjunction with Form G.
**Form G** – IQA observation report of assessor performance- **All** competence based assessors within employer provision should be observed **at least once a year**. It is also recommended that this  form is used for practical summative assessments on full-time courses.
**Form H** – Assessor or IQA induction programme checklist

6.3    Work Based/Competence/Online Type Qualifications

Internal quality assurance on competence/NVQ qualifications will use the e-portfolio for all learners. Continuing learners not using an e-portfolio will use the relevant internal quality assurance documentation to meet AO requirements.

6.3.1 To continue positive communication between the learner/assessor and IQA, a process is to be followed to support timely completion. See annex 4.

6.3.2 Online e-learning courses will follow our internal quality assurance processes meeting the relevant awarding organisation requirements. Regular standardisation events will be required to monitor the standards of internal and external assessors and IQAs. Specific online materials from the relevant AOs are to be used.

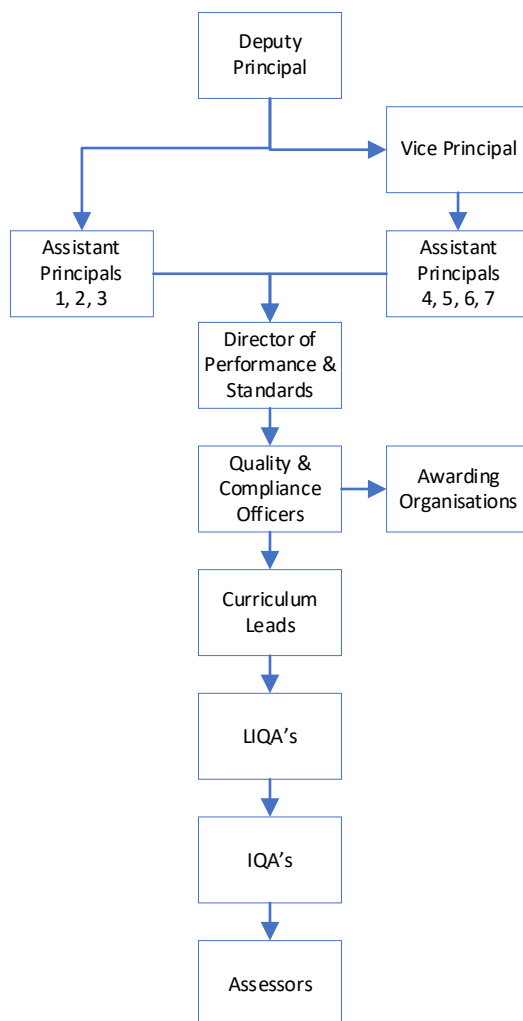6.4 Internal quality assurance documentation is available at:

T:\Quality\Public\IQA

Pearson/BTEC documents at:

**T:\Quality\Public\BTEC**

**ANNEX 1**

**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE**

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                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Deputy     │
                    │  Principal   │
                    └──────┬───────┘
                           │
                           ├──────────────────┐
                           │                  ▼
                           │          ┌──────────────┐
                           │          │ Vice Principal│
                           │          └──────┬───────┘
                           ▼                  ▼
                 ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                 │  Assistant   │    │  Assistant   │
                 │  Principals  │────│  Principals  │
                 │   1, 2, 3    │    │   4, 5, 6, 7 │
                 └──────────────┘    └──────────────┘
                           ▼
                 ┌──────────────┐
                 │  Director of │
                 │ Performance &│
                 │  Standards   │
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                 ┌──────────────┐    ┌──────────────┐
                 │  Quality &   │    │   Awarding   │
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                 │  Curriculum  │
                 │    Leads     │
                 └──────┬───────┘
                        ▼
                 ┌──────────────┐
                 │    LIQA's     │
                 └──────┬───────┘
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                 ┌──────────────┐
                 │    IQA's      │
                 └──────┬───────┘
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                 ┌──────────────┐
                 │   Assessors  │
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**ANNEX 2**

**EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT DISTRIBUTION PROCEDURE**

- Quality and Compliance Officer (QCO) receives electronic report from awarding organisation (AO).

- QCO highlights any issues/actions and sends report to admin to distribute with standard email describing the process. Distribution to: assistant principals, curriculum leads/lead IV/IV. Admin to save a copy of the report on the team share.

- If sanctions/tariffs have been applied with mandatory actions, the QCO copies in the Director of Performance and Standards. QCO to update relevant assistant principals, curriculum leads/ team share with EQA actions required with deadline. QCO and relevant assistant principal to monitor the actions.

- All contacts asked to respond with feedback by completing Microsoft Form within 10 working days. Admin follow up with email after 10 working days of comments of external report feedback.

- Admin collates the feedback and saves on the team share.

**ANNEX 3**

**SMART ASSESSOR - Communication with learner process**