

Internal Verification Policy and procedures

Our Internal Verification (IV) Policy and Procedures are in line with the requirements of all of our awarding bodies. Internal verification occurs before and during delivery of assessment. Verification is a crucial element of the quality assurance and enhancement process. It ensures that all candidates, entered for the same qualification, are assessed fairly and consistently to the specified standard to maintain national standards.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance on quality assurance in assessment processes by establishing quality control mechanisms for assessment through a system of internal quality assurance, verification, moderation and standardisation.

Swindon Dance is committed to providing learners with an assessment process that is fair and addresses the basic principles of authenticity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability, currency and sufficiency.

It aims to promote learning and achievement by providing access to assessment and accreditation services, ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners within a clear structure.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to all practices covered by this policy:

- **Assessment** is the measurement or evaluation of learners' knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and behaviours, against explicitly stated criteria for success.
- **Internal Quality Assurance/Internal Verification** is the process whereby internally set and marked assessment carried out by assessors is checked for consistency and quality by other teachers or managers within the Group. External quality assurance/external verification is a further process carried out by professionals nominated by awarding authorities for vocational qualifications.
- **Internal Moderation** is the process whereby internal marking of externally set assessment carried out by teachers is checked for consistency and quality by other teachers or managers. External moderation is a further process carried out by professionals nominated by awarding authorities.
- **Standardisation:** when a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation should be implemented before any formal assessment and internal verification has taken place. The standardisation process is to agree the standard of learner work by discussing and mutually assessing a sample of learner work to reach a consensus. This should be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided by the awarding body in the qualification specification. Once agreement has been reached, the Assessors can then individually assess the work of their appointed learners, after which internal verification will take place. Standardisation can also be used as a staff development tool.

Roles and Responsibilities

Assessors:

- ensure that assessments are valid, reliable, realistic and impartial,

- ensure that internal assessment is conducted by using appropriate assessment instruments against qualifications and/or standards, assessment criteria or mark schemes,
- apply the standards of assessment uniformly and consistently, and
- Judge if learners have met the national standards for the qualification.

Internal Verifiers or curriculum teams ensure that **assessments** are:

- appropriately administered,
- valid for each qualification,
- capable of generating sufficient evidence to demonstrate that national standards have been met, and
- sampled for external or internal verification Sampling Form.

Lead Internal Verifiers ensure that **assessors** and **verifiers**:

- are familiar with the required national standard,
- are using the most up-to-date unit pack and assessment and verification templates,
- reach accurate and consistent decisions for the same qualification for all candidates in line with the required national standards,
- are given appropriate support, and
- convene standardisation meetings to agree on Assessment and Marking Decisions.

Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

The Internal Verifier should check that the assignment brief:

- has accurate unit and programme details,
- has clear deadlines and an appropriate timeframe for assessment,
- has a suitable vocational scenario or context,
- shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit(s) covered in the assignment,
- indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted against each task,
- clearly states what evidence the learner needs to provide, and
- is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient.

All assignment briefs must be verified at least a week before being distributed to learners; if any issues are identified by the Internal Verifier, they should be addressed by the Assessor prior to issue.

If planning to re-use an assignment from the previous academic year, check the dates and deadlines are updated and that the assignment is appropriate for the new group of learners.

Review assignments regularly to ensure they are still fit for purpose and make improvements based on experience delivering and assessing them.

Internal Verification of Assessment decisions

During the course of a programme, sampling from Assessors must cover the following as a minimum:

- every Assessor,
- every unit,
- work from every assignment, and
- every assessment site (where appropriate).

There is no requirement that all learners must be internally verified during the lifetime of a programme.

There is no set sample size, however a sufficient sample should reflect:

- the full range of assessment decisions made: pass, merit, distinction criteria, and not yet achieved, should all be included in the sample where possible,
- the experience of the Assessor: new or inexperienced Assessors should have more work internally verified than experienced Assessors,
- where a new programme or unit is introduced, the sample size should be increased
- the size of the cohort of learners, and
- known issues within internal verification: these may have been previously identified (such as staffing absence of change of role; learner feedback; feedback from Standards Verification or External Verification, such as QMR and other QA processes).

Giving feedback to the Assessor

Internal Verifiers should use the general comments section on the form to provide advice and guidance to the Assessor if appropriate. Any actions identified must be detailed by the Internal Verifier in the actions required section. Internal Verifiers should make any actions clear, using SMART principles.

If an action is identified by the Internal Verifier, the Assessor must complete this and return it to the Internal Verifier for sign off prior to an Assignment being issued to learners.

The internal verification of assessment decisions process

The Internal Verifier reviews the Assessor's judgements against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification. This will include checking:

- the learner work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately, and
- the feedback from Assessor to learner is accurate and linked to the assessment criteria.

Following internal verification, if there are any assessment concerns, feedback should be provided to the Assessor with any actions applied to the whole cohort and not just the sampled learners.

Internal verification of assessment decisions must take place before learners receive confirmation of their achievement and feedback and within 10 working days. This allows any inaccuracies identified by the Internal Verifier to be corrected before results are made available to learners.

Internal Verification of resubmissions

If a request for a resubmission is made and providing there have been no issues with the Assessor's decisions at the first submission stage, then the resubmission does not need to be internally verified if the learner's grade has not improved.

The Lead Internal Verifier should however check the decisions if the learner's grade has shown improvement to safeguard against any potential malpractice issues (see Malpractice and Maladministration Procedure for more details). Completing best practice internal verification at the first submission stage should avoid issues around resubmission. Resubmissions should be submitted and reviewed within 15 working days.

The key principles underlying best practice for internal verification are that:

- Each course or group of courses has a named lead internal verifier/moderator and an appropriate number of internal verifiers/moderators,
- A sampling plan will be produced either at course, assessor, programme or centre level in line with Awarding Body guidelines,
- A representative sample including a selection of assessments/assignments from all assessors across all units/modules/levels and across all assessment sites is internally verified or moderated,
- Evidence requirements are met, appropriate standards maintained and assessment is valid, authentic, practicable equitable and fair,
- Internal verification/moderation ensures that assessors clearly understand what evidence is required to meet the assessment outcomes/criteria,
- Internal verification/moderation provides appropriate feedback to assessors,
- Records are kept of the IV/moderation process and made available for audit,
- Where IV takes place in the workplace, any health and safety issues which are noted during the IV visit are reported to the divisional health and safety representative to action as appropriate,
- The outcomes and any actions resulting from internal verification/moderation are followed up, acted upon, reported and signed off,
- Appeals are documented and where appropriate, forwarded on to the external verifier/standards moderator, in line with the awarding body's requirements,
- Standardisation/moderation should take place when a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person; standardisation must be carried out before any formal assessment and internal verifications has taken place. Standardisation is the process to discuss and mutually assess a sample of learner work to reach a consensus. This will be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided in the qualification specification,
- An audit of the internal verification and standardisation / moderation processes in each Curriculum area will take place at least once each year with formal reports presented to the Deputy Principal of New College.

The policy and the associated documents to which it relates together outline the rights and responsibilities of:

- Awarding bodies,
- Group staff,
- Learners,

And the procedures to be followed in the event of breaches of policy, regulation or procedure.

Linked Policies:

- Staff guidance on Internal Verification,
- Standardisation and Moderation, and
- Associated paperwork from the relevant awarding bodies.