

SECTION B: INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY FOR FURTHER EDUCATION COURSES

1. UCA INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY (Further Education courses)

The Policy is revised to reflect the guidance issued by our current awarding bodies; UAL Awarding Body (UALab) and Laser Learning. The Policy proscribes a course of action and format of recording using a single procedure and templates which is compliant with both awarding bodies.

1.1 Aims:

- a) To ensure that Internal Verification (IV) is valid, reliable and covers all assessors and programmes.
- b) To ensure that the IV procedure is open, fair and free from bias.
- c) To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of IV decisions.

1.2 In order to achieve this, UCA will:

- a) Ensure that all assignments and assessment tasks are verified as fit for purpose;
- b) Verify an appropriate sample of assessed work from all courses and assessors, to ensure all assessment decisions conform to national standards and awarding body expectations;
- c) Plan an annual internal verification schedule, linked to assignment plans;
- d) Define, maintain and support effective internal verification roles;
- e) Ensure that identified staff will maintain secure records of all internal verification activity;
- f) Brief and train staff of the requirements for the current internal verification procedures;
- g) Provide standardised IV documentation;
- h) Use the outcome of internal verification to enhance future assessment practice;
- i) Discuss and confirm with external moderators/examiners during their interim or summer visit that UCA IV practice remains appropriate.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QAE) Department and the Head of the School of Further Education will review this policy annually.

2. THE INTERNAL VERIFIER ROLES

2.1 The Lead Internal Verifier (IV)

The Lead IV is responsible for ensuring effective verification. The Course Leader for FE at each campus will act as Lead IV for the campus cluster and may act as the IV or nominate subject/course/year Internal Verifier(s) as appropriate.

The Internal Verifier:

- checks the quality of assignments before distribution to students; and
- verifies the quality of assessment decisions to ensure they meet national standards.

2.2 The Internal Verifier should have:

- a good understanding of the relevant awarding body assessment requirements (currently UALab and Laser Learning); and
- have subject specific knowledge of the programme being verified.

2.3 The internal verifier should undertake the following tasks throughout the duration of the course:

A. Planning

- Ensure that the IV schedule covers all units and all assessors on any given programme;
- Advise on the interpretation of national standards;
- Co-ordinate assessment arrangements including cross pathway and campus if appropriate;
- Internally verify all assignment briefs before these are issued to students or posted on myUCA.

B. Implementation

- Ensure an effective system of recording student achievement is in place;
- Advise on opportunities for evidence generation and collection;
- Keep records of the verification process for three years after certification, or the period specified by the awarding body if longer;
- Liaise with external verifiers.

C. Assessment / Internal verification

- Advise on the appropriateness of assessment evidence with regard to level, sufficiency, authenticity, validity and consistency;
- Use subject specialism to sample assessed work to verify assessors' judgements;
- Check the quality of assessment to ensure that it is consistent, fair and reliable;
- Ensure another person internally verifies own assessment decisions;
- Give feedback to assessors and identify action to be taken where appropriate;
- Provide advice and support to assessors on a regular basis.

D. Follow up

- Ensure appropriate corrective action is taken in regard to assignment briefs or assessment decisions as appropriate;
- Advise programme team of identified training needs;
- Provide feedback on aspects of the assessment system to the programme team, senior management or external moderators/examiners.

E. Standardisation

- Standardisation of assessment must take place when there is more than one assessor engaged in delivery and assessment of an assignment or unit;
- Standardisation meetings can be used to develop quality and consistency of assessment across assessors involved in different units across a programme or across different programmes;
- Each course team should conduct Internal Standardisation (IS) to ensure that they meet the awarding body quality standard for pass with non-graded units and the grading criteria for units that are graded;

3. THE INTERNAL VERIFICATION PROCESS (all FE courses)

3.1 Internal verification is a three-stage process.

3.2 Stage one – draw up an assignment and verification schedule.

The assessors and internal verifiers for each unit should be recorded, either:

- on an internal verification schedule at the start of the year; or
- as each assessment takes place and is internally verified.

A one page template for completion by the Internal Verifier is included as (Form IVFE1) in SECTION B: Appendix 1 to this document.

This document records the identity of the assessor, the identity of the internal verifier, the assessment date/point of the assignment/unit and the date that internal verification took place. A partially completed example is shown in SECTION B: Appendix 1b.

3.3 Stage two – Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs.

All UCA devised assignment briefs must be internally verified before they are issued to students. The objectives of this stage of verification are to ensure:

- a) the tasks and evidence will allow the learner to address the targeted criteria;
- b) the brief is written in clear and accessible language;
- c) learners' roles and tasks are appropriate to the level of qualification;
- d) equal opportunities are incorporated.

In accordance with the criteria laid down by the awarding bodies, a template for completion by the Internal Verifier (Form IVFE2) is included as Section b: Appendix 2.

The outcome of internal verification must be recorded on this form including any actions identified by the internal verifier. If actions have been identified, the assessor must complete the form and return it to the internal verifier to sign off. This form must be signed and dated for external quality audit purposes. Once the assignment is verified as fit for purpose, it can be issued to students.

3.3 Stage three – Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

A sample of assessed work from every unit and every assignment must be internally verified to check the accuracy of assessment.

Internal verification of assessed work must be recorded. If action is required, the assessor should complete the form and return it to the internal verifier for sign-off.

Internal verification of assessment decisions should be undertaken at each part/stage/progression point and should be a continuous process throughout the year

A one page template for completion by the Internal Verifier is included as IVFE3 in SECTION B: Appendix 3 to this document.

4. THE INTERNAL VERIFICATION SAMPLE

4.1 During the course of the programme, a sample should be taken from:

- each assessor;
- each assessed unit; and
- every assignment.

The sample should be constructed in a way that ensures that it checks the entire assessment process rigorously.

4.2 Awarding bodies may recommend a specific sample size and the sample must comply with the minimum size required. When determining the composition of the sample the following should be taken into account and may lead to a larger sample being verified:

- The full range of assessment decisions made' i.e. work meeting distinction criteria, merit criteria, pass criteria and work not yet passed should all be included in the sample;
- The experience of the assessor; new or inexperienced assessors should have more work internally verified than an experienced assessor;
- When a unit has content changed or revised the sample size should be increased;
- The size of the group of learners;
- Issues identified at previous external moderation visits may also affect sample size.

5. GOOD PRACTICE

5.1 Internal verification can be undertaken in a number of ways, Examples of good practice are as follows:

- a) There is a recognised team of internal verifiers, who meet regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures;
- b) There is an internal verification policy which promotes a rigorous commitment to quality improvement;
- c) Internal verification processes are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all members of course teams and assessors;
- d) Internal verification forms are standardised across similar courses;
- e) Internal verification schedules are drawn up to ensure timely implementation;
- f) All assessors are involved in the internal verification role;
- g) A lead internal verifier is identified, who manages the process and provides support;
- h) Standardisation meetings are seen as pivotal staff development;
- i) The time required to carry out internal verification is recognised in the assessment process;
- j) Assessors have the opportunity to be aware of and discuss assessment decisions for the cohort.

Flowchart summarising Internal Verification procedure

