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Edinburgh College

For the future you want

Internal Verification Procedure

Curriculum Planning & Performance

1. SCOPE

Internal Verification is a key element of the College's documented quality management system required by awarding bodies and is used by College auditors and External Verifiers to ensure that the College has internal verification and assessment systems in place that allow valid, reliable, equitable and fair assessment decisions to be made, based on candidate evidence that is authentic, current and sufficient.

Verification is a crucial element of quality assurance. It ensures that all candidates entered for the same qualification are assessed fairly and consistently to the specified standard.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Internal Verification Procedure is designed to provide support and checks for the three key stages of assessment:
- Selecting and/or devising and/or modifying assessments (including marking schemes)
- Conducting assessments
- Making assessment decisions

3. OVERVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This procedure sets out the roles and responsibilities of those involved in:
- Supporting assessors
- Checking assessment instruments to ensure validity
- Arranging standardisation exercises
- Sampling assessment decisions
- Maintaining assessment and verification records
- Ensuring compliance with assessment procedures

The Internal Verification Procedure covers all SQA qualifications (Higher National, National Certificate, Scottish Vocational Qualifications, National Progression Awards and Professional Development Awards). Where there are

additional requirements for SVQs, these are highlighted. The verification guidelines of other awarding bodies are similar to the Internal Verification requirements of the SQA. However, if they differ, the guidelines issued by these awarding bodies should be followed to ensure that their particular requirements are met.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Head of Curriculum Planning and Performance

Oversee the development and implementation of all quality assurance policies and procedures.

Quality Assurance/Enhancement Team

- Provide assessor and verifier training to ensure staff are assessing and verifying to the correct standard
- Provide support and advice on the implementation of the Verification Procedures
- Monitor the implementation of the Verification Procedures
- Carry out audits of the Internal Verification process to ensure consistency across the College and provide corrective action reports to Curriculum Managers and Lead Internal Verifiers
- Provide support and advice on preparing for an External Verifier (EV) visit
- Ensure that action points identified by external verification visits are disseminated to appropriate staff and that corrective measures are implemented and recorded within the timescales set by the EV
- Send assessment evidence to the SQA for Central Verification/Postal Verification
- Respond to requests from staff for assessment support materials from the secure SQA website
- Check Assessors are appropriately qualified and/or experienced and, for SVQs, meet the continuous professional development (CPD) requirements set out in the Sector's Assessment Strategy

Curriculum Leaders/Lead Internal Verifiers

- Have a minimum of one year's experience as an Internal Verifier prior to performing Lead Internal Verifier duties
- Hold a valid internal verifier qualification (see key principle 1)
- Identify Internal Verifiers (IVs), in conjunction with Curriculum Managers, for every unit/subject assessed within the curriculum area
- Update the Internal Verification Schedule (IV2) for the session before the end of September. This should contain all units included in each course (including serviced units). Units should be internally verified based on risk (see key principle 3) and as part of a 3 yearly cycle or prior to a scheduled EV visit
- Liaise with relevant IVs to check that all centre-devised assessments and amended assessment support materials have been prior verified by the SQA
- Share good assessment practice
- Co-ordinate the work of IVs within each verification group
- Ensure verification takes place based on risk (see key principle 3) and as part of a three-yearly cycle or prior to a scheduled EV visit.   The IV2 form should be completed and agreed actions carried out, with records being retained and made available for audit
- Follow up corrective actions identified during internal quality audits of the Internal Verification process
- Help to co-ordinate External Verification visits in conjunction with IVs
- Ensure that all action points arising from EV visits are completed within the timescales set
- Where central and postal verification is used, liaise with IVs and collate the required assessment evidence and return the completed documentation to the Quality Support Officer in the Quality Assurance team
- Participate in Internal Verification Panels: Assessment Arrangements, working with the Student Support team to ensure that assessment support needs are being met (see Alternative Assessment Arrangement Procedure)

Internal Verifiers

- Have a minimum of one year's experience as an assessor prior to performing Internal Verification duties. If this is not possible, the

Curriculum Manager and Lead IV must monitor any new Internal Verifiers until a satisfactory level of experience has been achieved

- Be competent in the subject/occupational area to a level appropriate to the qualification
- Provide copies of all relevant certificates, to be stored by Human Resources and in the EV folder on the S: drive (Private)
- Work with Assessors to create and maintain EV folders for all units they assess (see key principle 2)
- Work with Assessors to ensure all assessments used comply with College Quality and Equality of Learning and Teaching Materials (QELTM) guidelines
- Ensure all centre-devised assessments or amended SQA assessment support materials are sent to SQA for prior verification if they are substantially different
- Verify all assessment instruments (including SQA exemplars and Assessment Support Packs) on a three-year cycle to ensure that they are current, valid and reliable (use IV9 form). A date and signature should be included on the instrument of assessment
- Check that SQA assessment exemplars are valid and relevant to the context in which the unit is delivered
- Ensure that all copies of SQA assessment support materials are stored under secure conditions (see key principle 5)
- Complete the IV1, IV2 and IV9 forms at the beginning of the semester for units scheduled to be internally verified during that semester
- Follow College guidelines on sampling student work (see key principle 3)
- Verify the assessment practice; this includes making arrangements for sampling candidates' work, choosing samples and keeping appropriate records
- Provide a second opinion in cases where a student makes an appeal against an assessment decision. If the student remains dissatisfied, the appeals process should be initiated (see College Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Ensure assessments are appropriately conducted, comply with the unit specification (or equivalent) and that there is parity of standards for all assessors, assessments and modes of delivery, i.e. full-time, part-time, open learning and online learning. (Please refer to the College Assessment and Appeals Procedure)

- Advise/support assessors on assessment decisions when requested, or as part of the appeals process. (Please refer to the College Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Organise and record the outcomes of standardisation meetings using the Standardisation Meeting Form (IV3) and store in the EV folder in the S: drive (Private)
- Complete required IV forms and store them in the EV folder on the S: drive (Private)
- Conduct formative internal verification
- Retain records pertinent to the verification process, including communications between verifiers and assessors
- Prepare and collate the documentation required by SQA to be sent for external verification on request
- Conduct yearly observation of the assessment practice of assessors
- Assist assessors in preparing for External Verification visits
- Assist assessors in addressing Action Points identified during EV visits

Note 1: Internal Verifiers must not verify their own work or verify the work of students they have assessed.

Note 2: Edexcel Lead Internal Verifiers must achieve the Edexcel Lead IV Training (OSCA) before appointment. Any replacement must achieve OSCA before being appointed as Lead IV.

Additional requirements for Scottish Vocational Qualifications

- Confirm the suitability of the workplace for the delivery of the SVQ
- Hold a valid internal verifier qualification (see key principle 1) or prove that you are currently working towards one. This qualification must be achieved within 18 months of practising
- Create a sampling strategy including formative and summative verification
- Produce a sampling plan showing what will be sampled and when to meet the requirements of the assessment strategy of the qualification. Distribute this plan to all assessors within four weeks of the start date and file in the appropriate verification folder

- Monitor assessment practice by observing assessors at different points throughout the assessment process (preparing, planning, assessing and giving feedback to inform achievement and progression)
- Monitor candidate progress by checking portfolios on a regular basis

Assessors

- Hold a current assessor qualification or be working towards one.
- Be competent in the subject/occupational area to a level appropriate to the qualification
- Provide copies of all relevant certificates, to be stored on iTrent and in the EV folder in the S: drive (Private)
- Work with Internal Verifiers to create and maintain EV folders (see key principle 2)
- Keep up-to-date evidence of continuous professional development (CPD) in assessment practice and current industry competency
- Have a yearly observation of assessment practice by the IV
- Use current Arrangements Documents, Unit Specifications and SQA assessment support materials
- Store SQA assessment support materials securely (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Check that SQA assessment exemplars being used are valid and relevant to the context in which the unit is delivered
- Follow assessment guidelines set out in Unit Specifications, or for SVQs, meet the requirements laid out in their Sector's Assessment Strategy
- Verify all centre-devised assessments or amended assessment support materials and send to SQA for prior verification if they are substantially new
- Ensure all assessments used comply with College Quality and Equality of Learning and Teaching Materials (QELTM) guidelines
- Work with the Curriculum Leader and others assessing units included in the course to produce a Course Assessment Schedule with dates for all units which make up the course
- Give students a unit Assessment Schedule during the first meeting of the class
- Inform students of assessment criteria and mode and format of assessments
- Provide induction on the assessment and appeals process (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)

- Identify any additional student requirements and organise support via the Learning Development Tutor/Student Experience team
- Conduct appropriate diagnostic assessment to plan student learning programmes
- Conduct appropriate formative assessment (Assessment for Learning) to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding and use this information to plan future learning
- Provide timely, direct and constructive feedback (both verbal and written) that moves learning forward
- Conduct internal summative assessment under the conditions set out in Unit Specifications or equivalent. Where use of notes or reference material is allowed, this should be clearly explained by the assessor
- Require students to bring their student ID card as proof of identity to any external assessment. In the absence of a student ID card, they should bring their Passport, Driving Licence or bank card
- Judge student evidence
- Provide one re-assessment attempt if the student does not achieve the required standard at their first attempt, or does not submit work by the deadline, or attend for the first attempt, or request an extension (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Conduct internal assessment under the conditions set out in the Unit Specification or equivalent. Where use of notes or reference material is allowed, this should be clearly explained by the assessor
- Use SQA approved checklists (where available) to record assessment decisions
- Complete assessment registers in a timeous manner
- Produce Prelims, where required, in line with College guidelines (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Submit to SQA estimate grades for National Courses based on evidence from individual unit results and/or a separate prelim
- Alert the Quality Support Officer immediately if you believe a candidate has suffered as a result of exceptional circumstances when taking a national SQA examination (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Contact the Quality Support Officer if you are concerned by a candidate's results in a national SQA examination (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Comply with the College malpractice guidelines (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure/Malpractice Procedure)

- Record student results by the end of the academic session, unless the student can prove exceptional circumstances and is allowed an extension to the submission date (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Comply with College guidelines in relation to remediation, re-assessment and re-enrolment (see Assessment and Appeals Procedure)
- Provide assessment evidence in line with the schedules for both internal and external verification
- Retain appropriate records and evidence of candidates' work in line with awarding body requirements
- Work with IVs to prepare for EV visits
- Contribute to addressing Action Points identified during EV visits

Note 1:
Under no circumstances should SQA assessment support materials for closed book or supervised assessments be emailed or posted to candidates or placed on Moodle.   Where assessment support materials have to be sent to external nominated invigilators, they must be posted by recorded delivery.

Additional requirements for Scottish Vocational Qualifications

- Support candidates in collecting sufficient and valid evidence to prove competence that meets the standards
- Hold a valid assessor qualification
- Support candidates in correctly presenting their evidence (including cross-referencing) to prove competence that meets the standards
- Meet the requirements laid out in the Sector's Assessment Strategy
- Meet the CPD requirements set out in the Sector's Assessment Strategy
- Review candidate progress and agree an assessment action plan as appropriate

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Assessor / Verifier qualification requirements

Assessors and Internal Verifiers must either hold the appropriate qualification to carry out these roles or be working towards achieving it. They must achieve this qualification by the end of the academic year in which they start practising. Training to meet the standards is provided by the Quality Enhancement team.

The table below sets out assessor/verifier qualification requirements:

Award you are assessing	Acceptable Assessor qualifications	Additional information
SVQs/units and SQA qualifications assessed in the workplace	• L&D9Di: Assess Workplace Competence Using Direct and Indirect Methods • A1 or A2 plus CPD in line with current L&D9Di standards • D32 or D33 plus CPD in line with current L&D9Di standards	If you hold A1 or D32/D33, you must attend an update session to ensure you are up-to-date with additional requirements in L&D9Di.
Non-workplace qualifications awarded by the SQA (e.g. HNs, NQs, NCs, NPAs, non-workplace PDAs, Skills for Work, PC Passport, Core Skills)	• L&D9Di • D32 or D33 plus CPD in line with current L&D9Di standards • TQFE plus CPD in line with current L&D9Di standards • Conduct the Assessment Process	If you hold A1 or D32/D33, you must attend a College update session to ensure you are up-to-date with additional requirements. If you hold only TQF/SE, you must attend a College update session to ensure you are up-to-date with additional requirements.
Award you are verifying	• **Acceptable Verifier qualifications**	**Additional information**
SVQs/units and SQA qualifications assessed in the workplace	• L&D11 • V1 plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard	If you hold V1 or D34, you must attend a College update session to ensure that you are

	• D34 plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard	up-to-date with additional requirements in L&D11.
Non-workplace qualifications awarded by the SQA (e.g. HNs, NQs, NCs, NPAs, non-workplace PDAs, Skills for Work, PC Passport, Core Skills)	• L&D11 • V1 plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard • D34 plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard • TQFE plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard • Conduct the Internal Verification Process • Internally Verify the Assessment Process plus CPD in line with current L&D11 standard	If you hold V1 or D34, you must attend a College update session to ensure that you are up-to-date with additional requirements. If you hold only TQF/SE and/or Internally Verify the Assessment Process, you must attend a College update session to ensure that you are up-to-date with additional requirements.

2. The EV Folder

Internal Verifiers should work with assessors to create and maintain EV folders. The diagram below shows the layout and contents of the EV folder.
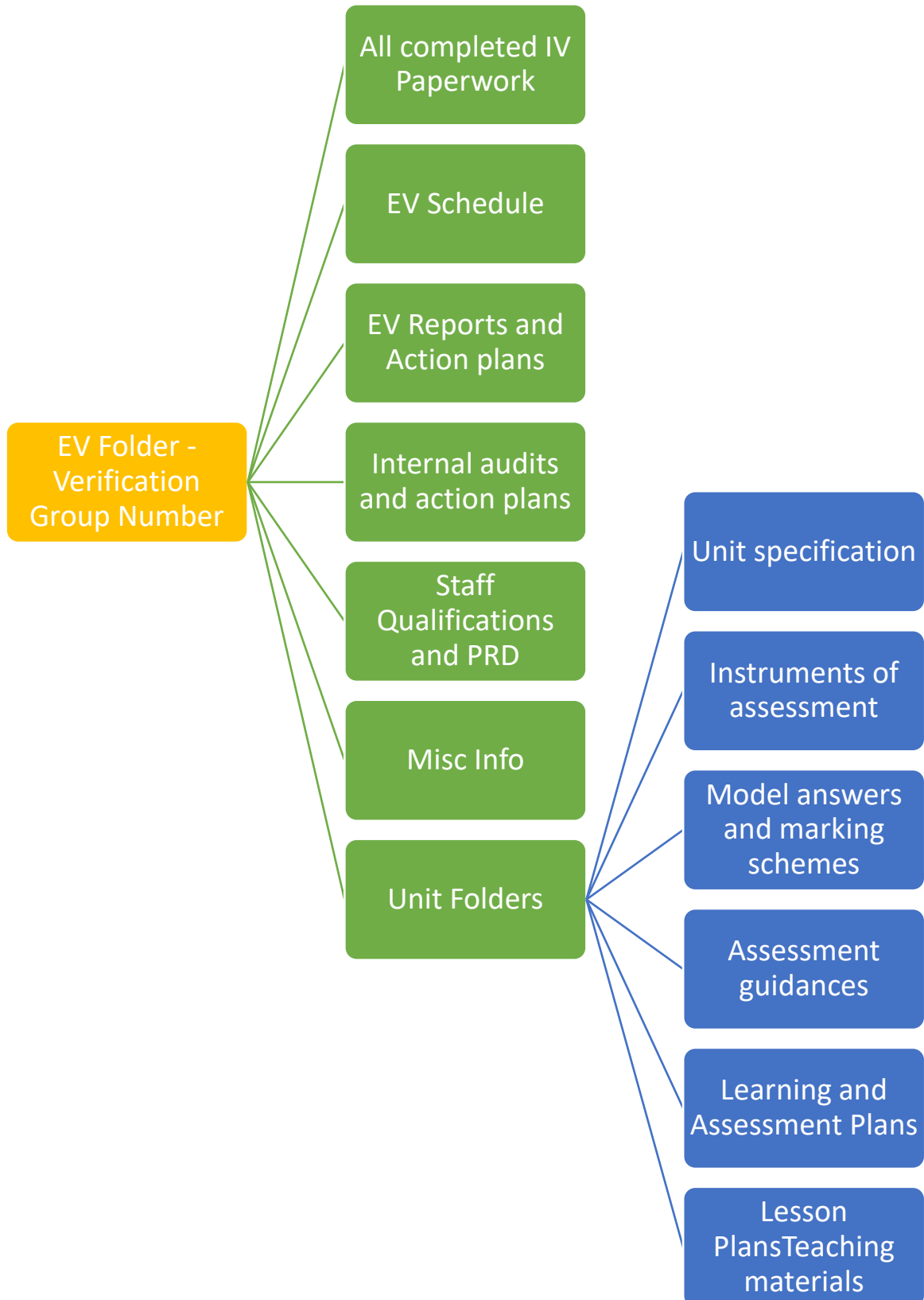
3. Student Evidence Sampling Guidelines

Sampling allows the Internal Verifier to check that each assessor is making consistent assessment judgements, in line with the standard, for each group of candidates over time.

Sampling should be carried out both formatively (i.e. during the delivery of the unit) and summatively (i.e. at the end of the unit). Sampling should ensure that:

- All staff assessing the same units are subject to Internal Verification to ensure consistency between assessors
- All modes of delivery for the same unit/subject (e.g. FT, PT, OL) are subject to Internal Verification to ensure parity of assessment decisions
- Over time, all assessments within a qualification are internally verified
- Sampling reflects the nature of the award (knowledge-based or practical)

For non SVQ qualifications, Internal Verifiers should sample students' work on the basis of the following priorities:

Priority	Element	Frequency	Sample size
1.	New/inexperienced assessors, i.e. assessors who have not previously assessed the unit in the College	At the first two occurrences of the unit	30%
2.	A new qualification (or one that's new to the College)	At the first occurrence of the qualification (all units)	• 30%
3.	New or substantially revised assessment instruments	At the first occurrence of the unit	• • 25%
4.	Units for which corrective action has been identified in previous IV or internal audits	At the next occurrence of the unit	• • 25%
5.	All other assessors/units/assessment instruments	Once every three years on a rolling programme. This should be scheduled so that **every** unit delivered within a team is internally verified once every three years	• • • 20%

N.B. If during the sampling process issues are identified, the sample size should be increased in line with the risk presented.

All SVQs must be internally verified annually.

For **SVQs,** Internal Verifiers must create a sampling strategy explaining how the sampling will be done across both formative and summative assessments, as well as a sampling plan, setting out what will be sampled and when, to conform with the assessment strategy of the particular qualification. The assessment strategy does not indicate sample size as it is based on risk.

N.B. Edexcel BTEC assessment materials, all assessed units and assessors must be internally verified annually.

4. Internal Verification Auditing Process

Audits of the Internal Verification process will be conducted as part of the Quality Enhancement team's audit schedule. Any points for improvement will be highlighted and an action plan produced and assigned to the relevant Curriculum Manager, Internal Verifier and assessor.

5. Security of Assessment Instruments

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WHAT TO DO

- Store all assessment support materials electronically in the EV folder on the S: drive (private)

- Store paper copies of assessments in secure areas to which students have no access. If it is necessary to store assessments in classrooms or other areas to which students do have access, keep them in a locked cupboard. (The stockpiling of large quantities of assessments well in advance of assessment events is discouraged)

- For open/flexible learning, mail assessments to approved local assessors by recorded delivery

- Securely dispose of assessment support materials in designated 'confidential paper shredding and recycling' bins

- Apply the same principles to the access and storage of internally-devised assessments as to assessments published by the SQA

- Collect back in assessments which have been issued to candidates during assessment and either shred them, put into confidential waste or store again securely

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- Make candidates aware that taking away assessments, copies or images of assessments is malpractice and could result in a disciplinary process

- Any breaches of security of assessment must be reported immediately to the SQA Co-ordinator, Gavin Lang

- Electronic assessment evidence should be submitted by the candidate and held securely using an e-portfolio or Moodle

WHAT NOT TO DO

- Do not place assessment materials for closed book or supervised assessments on Moodle

- Do not mail or email assessment support materials for closed book or supervised assessments to students

- Do not store assessment support materials on a memory stick or other portable storage device

- Do not leave assessments lying in classrooms or work rooms

- Avoid accepting assessment evidence by e-mail, unless used with locked password access

The Curriculum Leader for each programme area will check that assessments are stored in secure conditions and will keep a log of where assessments are stored.

Staff who give assessments, copies or images of assessments to candidates out with the assessment process, without good reason or permission, are committing malpractice, which could result in a disciplinary process.