

Quality Assurance Policy

Introduction

Medeshamstede Academy is committed to Quality Assurance and believes it is an integral part of an Examination Centre's processes.

The focus of Medeshamstede Academy is on Learners with the provision of relevant and flexible quality training programmes and assessment to suit their needs and lifestyles.

Purpose

- To ensure high quality examination and testing standards at Medeshamstede Academy.
- To ensure a high quality examination and testing system is in place with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.
- To ensure examination and testing provision is regularly monitored and reviewed by an in-house quality assurance representative.

Process

This is a process by which Medeshamstede Academy ensures that the qualifications we are delivering are done so in accordance with awarding body requirements.

It is a process by which we regularly sample and evaluate our assessment practices and decisions and acts on the findings to ensure consistency and fairness. It involves two key processes which are carried out by one or more Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) or Internal Verifier (IV);

- Internal quality assurance
- Standardisation

The Role of the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer is to ensure that:

- Assessment setting and marking is appropriate, consistent, fair and transparent and does not discriminate against any learner.
- Tutors/Assessors receive on-going advice and support, for example in contextualising assessments.
- Learners clearly understand assessment requirements and are given opportunities to achieve against the assessment criteria.
- Learners' work is presented in a manner that enables effective internal and external quality assurance to take place.
- Evidence of learner achievement is clearly mapped to the assessment criteria.
- Certification claims are valid, reliable and consistent.

Medeshamstede Academy Internal Quality Assurance arrangements includes:

- An identified individual staff member for co-ordinating the internal quality assurance process.
- A planned structure for internal quality assurance that incorporates all of our provision.
- An agreed and published annual timetable for internal quality assurance, including, sampling, standardisation and meeting dates.
- Clear and documented roles and responsibilities for all those involved in the process.
- Sampling of assessed work.
- Full and clear records of feedback and action plans.
- Regular evaluation of the IQA process.

For evidence based assessment:

- An Internal Verification process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained by cross-marking.
- Internal Verification is carried out on an on-going basis.
- All cases of borderline achievement are Internally Verified.
- At least 10% of other assessments are checked across all markers and modules.
- Where a new marker is assessing, all work is double marked until the Centre Manager is satisfied with the standard.
- Internal Verification is recorded on Learner work and records and on central recording systems.

Internal Quality Assurance Activities

The following activities take place during an IQA cycle. The length of this cycle is based on an academic year.

Planning for Internal Quality Assurance

A plan of the proposed IQA activity is developed by the Secondary Phase Leader (Lead IQA) before the cycle begins. This indicates what will happen, when it will happen, who is to be involved and how it is to be recorded.

Induction and training for staff

All new tutors/assessors are introduced to the centres provision, processes and practice. It is essential that they:

- Have all the relevant units, assessment materials and other course documents.
- Clearly understand the assessment requirements and procedures.
- Have information about and access to training opportunities and support materials, both within the centre and as provided by the awarding organisation.

All tutors/assessors must know who is managing the IQA process and who will actually carry out the IQA of the work that they will be assessing. They need to know what is in the IQA plan and about any issues relevant to their work, as well as any issues that may have arisen from previous internal or external quality assurance activities.

All staff involved in the administration and/or assessment of qualifications will have undergone relevant training to their role. All new invigilators will be observed during their first test session and annually thereafter to ensure assessment regulations are being followed. Existing invigilators will have yearly top up training and will be observed conducting an assessment at least once a year. Information from the awarding body is disseminated to all members of staff involved in the delivery of qualifications. The organisation's policy for Equal Opportunities is followed and monitored.

Planning and managing assessment

It is essential that assessment is carried out in a structured way, both for the benefit of the learners and in order that effective IQA can take place.

The IQA will therefore need to work with tutors/assessors before a course begins to ensure that:

- Assessment tasks allow learners to meet all the necessary assessment criteria.
- Wherever possible a range of different types of assessment are used.
- Where more than one tutor/assessor works with a learner group, the assessment tasks form a coherent whole across the course in terms of content, style and timescale.
- Where more than one learner group is following the same course the assessment tasks are either the same for each group or, if the diversity of the groups requires differing tasks, they are consistent with each other in terms of fairness to the learners.
- Learners are made aware at the beginning of the course what the assessment requirements will be.

- A process is in place that incorporates constructive individual feedback to learners on their assessed work.

Over the duration of the course, the IQA will need to ensure that assessments are being carried out as planned. This will involve holding regular IQA meetings with tutors/assessors.

The IQA will also need to meet with the learners at some point during their course to ensure that their experience of assessment is positive. In particular, it is important that they:

- Understand the assessment requirements.
- Are receiving clear and constructive feedback on their assessed work.
- Are making good progress towards meeting all the required assessment criteria.

The timing of a meeting with learners should be appropriate to their particular course and group. It should be far enough into the course for some meaningful assessment to have taken place, but early enough for any issues to be addressed before the learners' chances of achievement are compromised.