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QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

BACKGROUND

This policy and procedures have been prepared by the Quality Management Team following extensive consultation with the College stakeholder.

The College is committed to providing high quality learning opportunities to meet the needs of individuals, employers and the community. This Code aims to clarify the standard of conduct to which support quality assurers, tutors and internal quality assurers are expected to adhere to help achieve the College's objectives.

SCOPE

For this policy: the Delivery Team encompasses all forms of activity that check and validate assessment. It may be implemented through the systems of verification as required or laid down by examining or awarding bodies. It may occur through shared observation of student activities or second marking of students' work/assignment.

AIMS

To provide a continuous check on the consistency and quality of delivery, including the consistency, quality and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of learners' work/assignment.

To meet and exceed the requirements placed upon us by Awarding Bodies, and the student charter.

To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all our learners and that external requirements are fully adhere to.

To support teaching staff in their classroom delivery by providing them the opportunity to receive critically supportive comment and to be able to conduct peer observation.

To support assessment team in their assessment activities by providing them the opportunity to receive critically supportive comment on the assessment decisions reached.

The key features of an effective system must include:

- monitoring of assessments and a way of standardising assessment judgements
- Sample assessments on a 'formative' basis, therefore giving feedback to quality assurer on an ongoing basis (not at the end of the accreditation process)

- support and develop the assessment team
- accurately recording to providing a clear audit trail
- Carrying out by suitably qualified and occupationally competent staff.

RANGE OF APPLICATION

Quality underpins all aspects of the College's provision:

- the curriculum
- cross-College provision
- the support services
- outreach provision
- Partnerships.

Continuous improvement will be achieved by developing and improving standards at all levels, reviewing entitlements, setting targets and measuring performance against these standards and targets.

The Centre Charter states the standards and entitlements that can be expected by learners/students and employers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Everyone is responsible for ensuring quality within his/her area of work.
- Quality Assurers, Internal Quality Assurers and Tutors are responsible for ensuring the quality of the learners' experience within their areas of delivery.
- Internal Quality Assurers are responsible for ensuring that the quality assurance procedures are fully understood and used by all the teams they are responsible for.
- Quality Manager, Internal Quality Assurer and Quality Assurers have responsibility to:
- Promote, facilitate and monitor the implementation of quality procedures within their respective programme area and to ensure continuous improvement.
- Draw up, in consultation with their staff, Implementation Plans which reflect relevant specific objectives and actions identified in the College's Development Plan.
- The Internal Quality Assurer reports to the Quality Manager

- She/he develops monitors and evaluates the quality assurance strategies and quality control procedures to ensure continuous improvement.
- She/he must ensure that all staff are aware of, and implement, those quality processes that are appropriate to their role within the Centre.
- The Quality Manager and College Quality Assurer hold the ultimate responsibility for quality across the College.

MONITORING PROCESSES

- Quality Assurers are under the guidance of their allocated Internal Quality Assurer, to implement and monitor the appropriate quality assurance strategies to ensure that their students/learners receive the best quality provision possible.

QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGIES

Monitoring the College's achievement through the attainment of performance indicators and benchmarking as recorded in programme Logs, as well as making sure that the needs of our customers are met by establishing systems to monitor their views.

These are sought in the following ways:

- Qualification reviews and evaluations
- Student/learners focus groups
- Staff and learners' surveys
- Employer and stakeholder surveys
- Internal Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures
- Learners Charter and Students' Charter
- Observation and Appraisal of Staff Policy and Procedures
- Self-Assessment Reporting and Development Plans
- A complaints process which enables learners and other customers to submit comments, in confidence, through the College Admin Manager.

Observing all teaching staff annually to ensure that the individual learning needs of their learners are being met and to identify appropriate support and development of the teacher concerned, should areas for improvement be identified.

Appraising all appropriate staff annually to identify and support the achievement of personal targets and goals to assist in the attainment of the College's strategic objectives.

The self-assessment of all aspects of college provision and services. This is a key annual process which:

- enables the College to identify its strengths and weaknesses
- provides the steer for identifying action for improvement with clear targets and deadlines
- is informed of the outcomes of all other quality assurance strategies employed within the College.
- Involves, and is the responsibility of, ALL members of staff.

FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Action and improvement strategies in response to issues raised through the quality assurance procedures are implemented and monitored through the following forums:

- Assessment Team
- Internal and External Verification
- Annual review of programme Logs
- Personnel, Curriculum and Quality Committee
- Customer feedback and general consultation sessions and briefings as appropriate
- External accreditation and assessment.

Information on action taken in response to issues raised is fed back to staff and learners/students through the various quality committees, verbal and written communication delivered by the Quality Manager, Trainers, Quality Assurers and Internal Quality Assurers.

CONCLUSION

The quality assurance position statement for the College is:

To ensure that all resources and services of the Centre are organized and delivered in the most efficient and effective way for the continuous satisfaction of candidates, employers

and the community, and the attainment of their educational, training and career aspirations.'

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

PROCEDURES FOR QUALITY ASSURENCE

BACKGROUND

This policy and procedures have been prepared by the College Quality Team following extensive consultation with the Tutors and the Quality Assurers and bearing in mind the standard rules/procedures that cut across the various awarding bodies.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to provide guidance on assessment and internal verification to the course team and to ensure that the requirements of the awarding body in relation to all assessment decisions made on the programme are fully met.

SCOPE

This procedure covers NVQ and work based learning programme. Although this procedure aims to ensure quality standards across all courses, it is not exhaustive, and should be used in conjunction with other requirements.

AIM

The aim of internal verification is

- To maintain standards, ensure the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between quality assurers operating within JFC Training College.
- To offer support and guidance to quality assurers.
- To ensure learners have the opportunity to achieve their award within the timescale.

Delivery Method

It is the responsibility of the Quality Manager to allocate a reasonable number of quality assurers to the internal quality assurers. Each programme is looked at independently and taken into consideration is the number of learners, their geographical location, the delivery method of the award, the quality assurer's capacity and how experienced they are. A decision is made

taking these factors into consideration i.e. an internal verifier may support a small number of experienced assessors with considerable number of learners or a large number of inexperienced assessors with a smaller number of learners. The Quality Manager is the designated Lead Internal Quality Assurer for the programme of learning.

The Quality Manager receives the details of the quality assessors and learners and then takes on the responsibility of monitoring and supporting the work of the Internal Quality Assurers with their allocated Quality Assurers.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

Sampling should be conducted on both an interim and summative basis so that problems are picked up early and IV is not “end loaded”. Work should be sampled by following the guidelines set by awarding body, however the Internal Quality Assurer will verify a minimum number of unit, all borderline assessments will be internally verified.

For newly qualified Quality Assurer this should be 100% of the assessments during the first year. For experienced Quality Assurer 25% to 30%. This is not fixed rate, judgement on the number verified should take into account other factors, for example, those that identify level of risk for the unit. All learners enrolled and registered with the awarding body will be included within the sampling strategy.

SAMPLING PLAN

Internal Quality Assurers must devise their sampling plan according to which qualification that they sampled. This sampling plan identifies how experienced the quality assurer is and the learner’s work which is to be verified. This includes regularly sampling evidence of assessment decisions made by the quality assurer across all aspects of QCF assessment in order to monitor, and ensure, consistency in the interpretation and application of standards within the college.

This sampling plan includes direct observation of assessment practise, internally verifying evidence produced by the learner as well as observing the introduction session and checking the validity of the progress reviews. The original record completed by the internal verifier is sent to the quality assurer and any action points included are completed prior to the evidence

being signed off as sufficient, authentic, valid and reliable. A copy of this is then kept on the quality assurers file at the college, with a copy being sent back to the internal verifier for their records.

STANDARDISATION

Standardisation is the mechanism by which JFC Training College ensures that each Quality Assurer and Internal Quality Assurer consistently makes valid decisions, and that is based on the same evidence. All Quality Assurers and Internal Quality Assurers would reach the same conclusion. Standardisation will take place during Course Team meetings when appropriate.

The standardisation process involves copies of submitted units by the Assessment and Course Team.

Records of the meeting must be recorded and feedback given to the Quality Assurers and Internal Quality Assurers.

STANDARDISATION MEETINGS

The internal assurer is also responsible for arranging and attending regional standardisation meetings, in line with the college's policy. To ensure standardisation the agenda is discussed and agreed with the Quality Manager. The agenda is sent to all quality assurers prior to the meeting in order that they are aware of issues being discussed and also, it gives them all the opportunity to add items into it. These meetings are held in accordance with the awarding body requirements as well as giving the assessment team the opportunity to meet and share ideas with other.

It also supports establishing a procedure to develop a common interpretation of the national occupational standards between assessors. All meetings include dissemination of information on the following contents – college issues, news from the awarding body, a standardisation exercise as well as looking at any training and development needs of quality assurers. Minutes of the meeting are taken and distributed to all quality assurers, internal quality assurers and college management team.

INTERNAL VERIFIER MEETINGS

Internal quality assurers meetings are arranged in accordance with the centre's policy and the centre coordinator facilitates these meetings. The agenda is discussed and agreed with the Quality team. The agenda is sent to all internal quality assurers prior to the meeting in order that they are aware of issues being discussed; it will also give them the opportunity to add items into it. Minutes of the meetings are taken and distributed to all quality assurers, internal quality assurers and the college quality team.

ONGOING INTERNAL VERIFICATION

JFC Training College undertakes ongoing Internal Verification of the assessment carried out by quality assurers and the evidence generated by learners and do not end load the qualification. This ensures that the assessments are being carried out in accordance with the assessment strategy of the joint awarding body; as well as ensuring the learner is progressing well.

On the monitoring form it is indicated when evidence may well be ready for internal verification. It has to be noted that this is an indication only and individual learners may well choose to complete their qualification independently of this. Internal Quality Assurers are expected to undertake interim internal verification of evidence produced by the learner. This is particularly useful when quality assurer is not producing records of assessment at the indicated time. It also helps to support both the quality assurer and learner throughout their time of study, instead of end loading the programme of learning.

Completed units must be signed by the internal quality assurer on the summary sheet, as soon as the internal quality assurer is satisfied that all the awarding body requirements have been met for the qualification. If the evidence has been internally verified, the internal quality assurer should not initial the Unit Summary Sheet, but encloses the completed Internal Verifier's Report.

To ensure that all internal quality assurers are meeting the requirements of the awarding body as well as the requirements of the college, they receive a copy of the following during their introduction to JFC Training College:

- NVQ Code of Practice.
- Policy & Procedures of JFC Training College.

- Guidelines on Internal verification
- Portfolio for each qualification they are verifying
- Copy of Standards for each qualification they are verifying.
- Copy of QCF workshop course files.
- Copy of quality assurer Good Practise Guidelines when observing learners in the workplace.
- Guidelines on Constructive Feedback.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION GUIDELINES FOR NVQ/QCF PROGRAMMES

These guidelines are based on the Code of Practice. Every programme has to be assessed by quality assurer which is then internally verified before submitting for external verification.

Quality Assurer must meet the qualification criteria set by awarding body, for example – D32/D33, A1/A2 or TAQA Award. Staffs who are working towards the required qualification can carry out assessments but, the assessment decisions in such cases should be countersigned by an experienced quality assurer.

All internal quality assurer must meet the qualification criteria set by the awarding body, for example D34 or V1 award. Staffs who are working towards the required qualification can carry out IQA but, only under the supervision of an experienced Internal Quality Assurer, and the experienced Internal Assurer must countersign any assessment decisions. The college must have copies of all the quality assurer and Internal assurers occupational competence records as well as specimen signature.

The Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) must check that learners understand the assessment process, methods and evidence required and be able to verify that the evidence collated by the learner has been confirmed by the Quality Assurer as: - Valid, Authentic, Current, Sufficient.

IQA must be completed before the learners is notified of the decision(s) where there is a delay in internal verification and learners receive work back prior to the process taking place, all work will be marked with the work “provisional”.

Learners should receive the results of assessment decisions within 4 weeks of submission and IQA must take place within this time.

The results of verification must be recorded on the Internal Verification Feedback Form. This form is also used to provide feedback to the Quality Assurers.

Disagreement over assessment should initially be resolved by discussion. If a decision cannot be reached by consensus then the appeals procedure should be implemented. If still a mutually agreeable decision cannot be reached then the matter should be referred to the External verifier.

The results of IV must be an agenda item, at Course Team Meetings and at Programme Review Meetings. Assessors and Internal verifiers will be given sufficient time to complete their tasks. Time allocation, if an issue, will be discussed during team meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Responsibility of Quality Assurer

- Ensuring that they are aware of, and familiar with, all the assessment requirements of awarding bodies for all the courses on which they teach.
- Identifying and planning appropriate assessment opportunities to enable learners to provide sufficient evidence of competence.
- Assessing evidence of learner competence fairly and objectively against the requirements of the awarding body.
- Ensuring that learners are given timely written feedback.
- Ensuring that accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date records are kept of all assessment decisions.
- Liaising with other Quality Assurers and Internal Quality Assurers to ensure standardisation and ethical practice in Assessment.
- Liaising with Quality Manager and other staff to ensure that learner achievements are accurately reported.
- Taking part in the appeals procedure and programme review as appropriate.

- Ensuring that their own knowledge and skills are current, and that opportunities for training and development are actively sought and taken up when offered.
- Maintaining an up-to-date staff development records and CV, providing copies to IQA and EQA's as required.

Responsibilities of Internal Quality Assurer

- Ensuring that assessors are appropriately qualified and experienced and facilitating appropriate staff development and training.
- Ensuring that all new assessors have an appropriate induction.
- Identifying assessor's training needs.
- Ensuring that there is accuracy and consistency in assessments of learners.
- Establishing, if appropriate to the course, an annual IV schedule based on the assessor's schedule and the requirements of awarding body.
- Ensuring that assessment decisions are evidence based and satisfies the requirements of awarding body.
- Commenting and providing feedback on decisions made by the assessor.
- Maintaining and checking that appropriate records are kept.
- Informing assessors promptly of any changes in awarding body's requirements.
- Liaising with the External Quality Assurer and participating in the internal standardisation process.
- Monitoring appeals by learners and the outcome of those appeals.
- Ensuring that the certification process for the learner has been completed.

Responsibilities of Quality Manager

- Allocation of assessors and internal quality assurers to each course/qualification.
- Ensuring that all quality assurers and internal quality assurers have the appropriate qualifications and experience specified by the awarding body.
- Ensuring that internal verification is followed as per procedure.
- Ensuring that the assessment decisions of uncertified internal quality assurers are checked authenticated and counter signed by an appropriately qualified IQA.
- Ensuring that quality assurance issues are discussed and recorded at meetings with staff.

- Liaise with External Quality Assurer (EQA), if appropriate, if there is an appeal against an assessment decision.
- Ensuring that any action points raised in EQA reports are closed off.
- Ensuring that Internal Verification is followed as per the planned schedule. An Internal Verification checklist has been produced as an aide memoir.
- Monitoring the completion of action points raised by External Quality Assurers.
- Ensure learners are registered with the awarding body

PROCEDURES FOR RETENTION OF RECORDS

Assessment records shall be accessible and available to Quality Assurers, Internal Quality Assurers and learners as required and as appropriate.

Any form of contact with a member of the awarding body should also be documented and retained for three years.

Students will be given the opportunity to:

- Central Database: Records should be held centrally at one site and be accessible to candidates all the way. From induction to certificate
- Withdrawn candidates, will be tracked
- Records of assessor development, CV, Cert, feedback and progress of candidate
- Quality Assurers will be aware of new regulation and records will be given to students
- Guidelines will be implemented for internal verification

DETAILS OF ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- JFC Training College will provide staff and learners with the assessment tools and portfolio building materials
- Assessment instructions will be provided using a variety of methods for evidence
- Induction programmes will be offered to candidate and support for candidate in portfolio development

- Internal verification strategy to be developed and implemented- Sampling Strategy, team meetings, standardisation, observations of assessors, portfolio records, assessor feedback, quality checks, reviews and evaluations.
- Arrangement will be made for learners to access the training rooms, assessments etc
- Regular standardisation meetings will be in place between Quality Assurers and Internal Quality Assurers.

Support for new Assessors

- IQA sampling will vary depending on the quality assurers' confidence, experience and competence. The IV will carry out holistic workplace observation of the assessor and provide verbal and written feedback.
- There should be a minimum of one support visit per academic year to the assess competency and support needs. This can occur in any part of the assessment procedure, planning, Direct Observation or feedback.
- Fully support new and uncertified quality assurers for the first 12 months.
- Ensure all work presented by new quality assurer is checked and counter-signed.

Process:

Apart from the verifying the units presented at each IQA visit or contact:

- Sampling the first assessment judgement and the assessment process used for every unit assessed by an **unqualified** assessor
- Sampling a minimum of 3 units at different points in the candidate's assessment for **qualified** and competent assessors. [This may include the common unit identified for all IVs to sample]; you will also need to focus on all additional arrears of verification responsibility.

NB: IQA increase the extent of their sampling beyond the above if they have identified concerns about assessment practice. The reason should be recorded.

INTERNAL verification sample Framework (policy and Process)

- In consequence of the above and to confirm the awarding bodies requirements IQA's must complete the Internal Verification Sampling Framework Record for the qualification level and candidate intake period/cohort for which they are responsible.
- The Internal Verification Sampling Framework Record ensures that all aspects of the assessment process, evidence gathering methods, observation requirements and a

single identified unit and full range of units are sampled for each and all quality assurers, and is evidenced on the record. This will allow you the IQA/ and EQA to ensure that the agreed process is being applied.

- This record will be kept on the intake period/cohort basis. Should more than one IQA be involved, a single shared record must be used and passed to the Quality Manager on completion of the qualification.
- IQA'S are reminded that when using the minimum sampling process allowable e.g. 3 units from each candidate qualification, the verification activities must be carried out throughout the period of assessment (beginning/middle/end).

Under **NO** circumstances must internal verification only take place towards or at the end of the candidate's period of assessment or qualification

NB IQA's are reminded that they must sign the unit and/or summary sheets and evidence sampled in **red**. This indicates sampling has taken place. Unit summary sheets for units verified but not sampled should be signed in **black**.

When working with quality assurers who have not achieved D32/33 or A1/A2, all units summaries must be counter signed in **black** by the second line quality assurer and **red** by the Internal Quality Assurer.

The quality team will sample verification decisions made within the IQA team taking into consideration the identified common unit, plus other units from the qualification. They will provide feedback to the IQA team using Sampling/Standardisation Sampling Summary Sheet.