

## CENTRE VISITS POLICY

An External Quality Assurance Officer (EQAO) will be appointed for each centre to verify the centre's qualifications.

The appointed EQAO will visit the centre a minimum of once yearly for the purpose of both audit of procedures & documentation, and of sampling of portfolios (see sampling guidance below).

Centre visit may take place virtually. All of the information below will continue to be applied to virtual or face to face visits.

Assessment centres may also have a two step process visit, where an EQAO may assess portfolio's virtual and complete virtual observation with learners, assessors and IQA's. This may be followed up with an qualified IRRV representative visiting the assessment centre.

Where a centre has approved one or more satellite offices, the following policy will be implemented, in addition to the above:

The appointed EQAO will visit two of each centre's sites yearly; one visit will be to the "hub" centre, where documentation is held (and candidate assessment may take place), and one to a satellite, where candidate assessment takes place. This will enable the EQAO to conduct both verification and centre audit activities over the course of the year.

If the centre has more than two sites, satellite centres visited will be varied from year to year, on a rolling basis.

The EQAO will sample portfolios from a minimum of two satellite offices yearly, and from all satellite centres over time

Where a centre is causing concern, as evidenced from the centre monitoring and noted in the EV1 form, the EQAO will, in due consultation with the Awarding Organisation, increase the number of live visits per year for as long as is deemed necessary.

### **EQAO GUIDANCE ON SAMPLING OF PORTFOLIOS**

As part of their role EQAOs are required to conduct sampling of candidate portfolios on a regular basis to ensure that assessment evidence meets the requirements, to check the consistency of assessment decisions, and to monitor the centre's quality assurance arrangements.

The EQAO has the right to see their chosen sampled portfolios. They do not have to accept portfolios which the assessment centre thinks are convenient to them.

#### **The EQAO will use the IRRV sampling plan, which should be based on;**

- The number of portfolios to be verified per centre
- The age, gender and ethnic origin of candidates
- Any special assessment arrangements that have been agreed by the centre
- Whether assessors are qualified or working towards their assessing qualification
- Whether Quality Assurers are qualified or working towards their internal verification qualification
- Elements of the standards that are critical to competent performance
- The types of assessment used
- Where the candidates have been assessed.

If an assessment centre has satellite centres the EQAO must visit a range of sites and sampling/observations must be carried out at the different sites.

EQAO must record the precise sampling methods used and why each was chosen. This will help External Quality Assurance Officer to monitor selected samples over a period of time. This also allows the External Quality Assurance Officer to monitor the effectiveness of the sampling being carried out at the centre.

Where a centre has a large number of inexperienced assessors and/or internal quality assurer, the sampling strategy should focus on decisions made by these staff rather than those of more experienced assessors and Quality Assurers. The centre's Quality Assurer(s) should also be working to a sampling plan

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## Over a period of time, sampling should cover

- Use of assessment methods across a range of units
- A selection of units across the portfolios to be sampled
- A sample of units across all assessors

The IRRV recommends that the size of the sample per centre should be at least 10% of the assessments carried out by the centre, and may be as much as 100% according to the size and experience of the centre.

The EQAO should make the selection of portfolios to be sampled based on information provided by the centre. Centres should be informed of the portfolios to be sampled prior to the EQAO visit and should arrange for the relevant candidates and assessors to be available for interview by the EQAO on the day. EQAOs should try to use a green pen when signing off any paper-based portfolios. Quality Assurers should use a red pen when signing off an assessment decision. Assessors should use a blue pen when signing off an assessment decision. This will help the EQAO identify between the assessor and internal quality assurer signature.

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