IBCM ASSESSMENT & VERIFICATION POLICY

1. Introduction

IBCM is committed to excellence and a focus on quality in the provision of all programmes. We recognise therefore, that a robust Assessment & Verification strategy is essential to ensure that quality is maintained throughout the Organisation and that all those involved in the process are adopting the same reliable, fair and consistent methods of assessment and verification. This strategy applies to all programmes offered by IBCM.

2. Assessment

The Assessment process is the method by which the candidate's knowledge, understanding & competence is judged. Assessors are responsible for assessing the candidate against specified criteria, for example the Learning Outcomes and/or Evidence Requirements for each of the units being undertaken. Assessors will normally be the tutors delivering the learning programme for the relevant unit.

2.1   Lesson Planning

➤ The tutor/assessor should prepare lesson plans for each of the units they are delivering. The lesson plans should follow the scheme of work issued for each unit (although the order can be changed if/as required) and ensure all Learning Outcomes (and all unit requirements) are met. Lesson Plans should also indicate assessed activities, detailing the methods and processes used.

2.2   Delivery

➤ Can be via distance learning, classroom based or blended learning.

➤ In delivering learning the tutor/assessor should take into account the personalities and characteristics of each learner, together with their learning styles. Their level and understanding of the English language must also be considered and their own learning goals as detailed on their Individual Learning Plan. Regular assessment on a formative and interim basis should take place to confirm that information has been absorbed and understood.

➤ The tutor/assessor should provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment and provide regular guidance and feedback on progress.

2.3   Assessment methods

➤ Tutors/Assessors should use a variety of assessment methods to help capture the full picture of the learners knowledge and competence. Assessment methods include: observation of individual and group activities, presentations, discussions (these may be via webinar or Skype for distance learners), questioning, witness statements, formal examinations and written work which the learners will provide for each unit assignment. Assessment methods for specific units may be stipulated by the relevant awarding body.

2.4 Programme Assessment Plan

➢ A programme assessment plan will be prepared at the start of each term and will detail all the units currently being undertaken, timescales for achievement and details of the tutor/assessor and the internal verifier (IQA) for each unit. Information regarding the assessment methods to be used and dates for assignments to be issued/assessed (including formative/interim and summative assessments) and examinations to be taken will all form part of this plan, along with details of scheduled assessment/marking/verification and feedback timescales. Resubmission dates and the timing of Assessment Boards will also be referred to on the plan. The plan will be checked on a regular basis by the Lead Internal Verifier

2.5 Assignments/Assessments

➢ The tutor/assessor will be responsible for producing an assignment(s) or assessment form except where it is required to use the Awarding Body's assignment or assessment (such as set examinations). Reports, activities and questions should be designed to ensure that candidates are able to meet all the required Learning Outcomes/Evidence Requirements. Assessors should refer to any awarding body instructions and guidance when preparing their assignments/assessments and also ensure that these go through the internal quality assurance process.

➢ The assignments should follow the house style, complete with front sheet.

➢ In setting the assignments the tutor/assessor should be encouraged to use a variety of assessment methods (see 2.3 above) to best meet learner needs and ensure that no learner is disadvantaged.

➢ Assignments/assessment sheets should be issued in line with the timetable on the Programme Assessment Plan (see 2.4) and students informed of review and completion, or examination, dates.

➢ Students are to be made aware of the assessment process for their assignment tasks including the formative/interim and summative assessment arrangements. They should be made aware of the process for the marking (and, where applicable, grading) of assignments/examination and the procedure for referrals and resubmission/examination resits. Students must also be advised about internal verification arrangements, standardisation and Assessment Boards. They must be made aware of the appeals procedure should there be any dispute about an assessment decision

2.6 Documentation

➢ Assessors will be issued with documentation to use throughout the programme. This will include the Assignment/assessment front sheets and feedback sheets. They will also have templates for all appropriate documentation including observation records, discussion record sheets etc and examination mark sheets. Assessors will also have feedback sheets to provide for students to help them build up their own personal portfolio with a record of their learning and development throughout the programme.

➢ As in 2.3 and 2.5 above, assessors are to provide written feedback at the time of formative/interim and summative assessment. Assessor forms are provided for this purpose.

➢ Documentation is to be signed by both the learner and the assessor (and the Internal Verifier/Lead IV where appropriate)

- Relevant documentation is to be stored in agreed location and passed to the Internal Verifier when requested and according to the IV sampling plan.

- All documentation will be retained in line with the relevant awarding bodies requirements.

2.7   Undertaking Assessment

- All assessment activities should be carefully planned, taking into account the individual needs of each student, the unit specifications and any specific requirements of the Awarding Body.

- The tutor/assessor must ensure that the student/learner understands how the assessment will happen, when & where it will take place, the assessment methods to be used and how this relates to the requirements of the assignment/meets the Learning Outcomes/Evidence requirements.

- The tutor/assessor should document the assessment using relevant documentation outlined in 2.6 above (for example if observing a presentation or group exercise, an observation sheet would be completed) and indicating the criteria which is to be/has been covered. Learners can then store this along with all other evidence (written reports etc) towards meeting the criteria for each relevant unit.

- Holistic assessment is to be encouraged, for example, where an assessment can be planned to cover more than one Learning Outcome (or cross over more than one unit, in line with awarding body regulations).

- Assessors must ensure that they are satisfied that all work produced by the students is their own work. Signatures to confirm this must be obtained and written work passed through relevant software. Distance learning must include discussions and questioning to ensure and confirm understanding (see also Plagiarism policy and Distance Learning Policy)

- Confirmation of the results of assessment can only be passed to learners after verification by the IQA.

2.8   Liaison with Internal Verifier/Quality Manager

- Tutor/Assessors are responsible for providing feedback to the Internal Verifier in order to facilitate the quality assurance process.   They must comply with all requests made by the IV/IQA.

- Tutor/Assessors should attend regular meetings and standardisation activities with the Internal Verifier and relevant personnel. Samples of student work should be made available for sampling as requested and according to the IV/IQA sampling plan. All records should be available for both standardisation and Assessment Board meetings.

- Tutors/Assessors will be observed in teaching, learning and observation, by the Internal Verifier, by the responsible manager and using Peer Assessment (see Observation of Teaching and Learning plan).

- Tutors/Assessors will raise any issues in respect of candidate progress with the IV and appropriate personnel or any matters of concern in relation to Health & Safety or Equal Opportunities.

➢ Tutor/Assessors will be responsible for passing on any disputes or appeals to the IV/Quality Manager.

3. Internal Verification (Internal Quality Assurance - IQA)

- IBCM recognises that Internal Verification (or Internal Quality Assurance) is the key element in ensuring Quality Assurance across the programmes. Procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate quality assurance practice takes place and is documented. All Internal Verifiers and those involved in the Quality Assurance process have key responsibilities to drive forward quality as follows:

3.1   Monitoring and Supporting Assessors

- All new tutor/assessors are to be provided with an induction and copies of all relevant paperwork including the Appeals procedure and Equal Opportunities policy as well as any other relevant organisational policies and the staff handbook. The Induction will cover all relevant aspects of each particular programme.

- The Quality manager/IQA will review Tutor/Assessors and identify any training needs/requests.

- Assessors are to be updated on a regular basis (for example at the meetings mentioned in 2.8) and particularly when any changes to standards are introduced.

- IV and Quality Assurance observation of Assessment to take place on a regular basis with appropriate records kept (see Observation of Teaching, Learning & Assessment in 2.8)

- Tutors/assessors and Internal Verifiers will be trained and qualified in line with external quality assurance body requirements.

3.2   Ensuring Standardisation of Assessment practices

- Standardisation is an important key in effective quality driven Internal Quality Assurance processes. The purpose of standardisation is to ensure that each Tutor/Assessor is making consistent valid, evidence based decisions and that all Assessors are making the same informed decisions when presented with the evidence.

  - Standardisation activities can include study of assignments/assessments/examinations against the standards to ensure that all tutors/assessors are working to the same standards. Discussions around tasks, units, students, practice etc can all form part of standardisation and activities will be arranged as needed to ensure all members of the team are kept up to date and adopt the same high quality approach.

3.3   Sampling the work of Assessors

- It is essential that there is a clear audit trail of the assessment process and that the work of the Assessors is verified at regular intervals. Verifiers will undertake formative/interim sampling as well as summative sampling, to ensure that this happens, according to the IV sampling plan.

- Different methods of sampling can be used by the IV/IQA including studying assessors work, candidate interviews/discussion and assessor observation, along with monitoring of examination invigilation etc. IQA activities will also involve looking at feedback provided by Assessors to Candidates.

➢ Summative sampling will take place upon completion of assignments in order to ensure that the Assessor has reached the decision of competence having checked that the evidence is fully sufficient to meet all the Learning Outcomes/Evidence requirements and is at the standard and level required by the programme. An "assessment decisions" form must be completed for each summative sampling activity.

3.4   Plagiarism

➢ All allegations of plagiarism will be investigated and may result in action being taken. Full details can be found in the IBCM Plagiarism Policy.

3.5   Malpractice

➢ Any allegation of malpractice by candidates or by any member of IBCM staff will be taken seriously and fully investigated. IBCM will fully cooperate with the relevant awarding body in cases of investigation into centre practice. See IBCM Malpractice statement.

4.0 External Verification

➢ All requests made from external quality assurance bodies will be accommodated. Any feedback and/or recommendations will be disseminated to relevant staff and management. Any resultant actions will be logged and the responsibility for activity assigned appropriately. Progress and completion will be monitored through the standard management meetings.

Note: This Assessment and Verification Strategy will be subject to review every 12 months.