

IBCM Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Strategy

1. Purpose

We are committed to excellence and quality in the provision of all programmes delivered here at IBCM. We recognise that a robust Assessment & IQA strategy is essential to ensure that quality is maintained throughout the Organisation and that all those involved in Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance are adopting the same reliable, fair and consistent methods throughout the processes involved. This applies to all programmes offered by IBCM, whether they are externally accredited or are our own in-house courses. This document sets out our approach to assessment and IQA in order to ensure that this commitment is implemented into all aspects of assessment and verification at IBCM and that all those studying at IBCM can be confident in all the processes followed.

2. Scope

This policy covers all personnel and processes involved in assessment and Internal Quality Assurance, both directly and indirectly, including those involved in administration of assessments and examinations, invigilation, monitoring and marking and in liaison with awarding bodies and external agencies with respect to Assessment and IQA.

This policy covers all learners at IBCM who will be subject to the Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance process during the course of their programmes of study.

This policy covers all programmes offered at IBCM, including those delivered on a face to face basis at IBCM and those delivered via blended or online delivery.

3. Responsibilities*

Managing Director/Principal

- Overall accountability for the assessment and IQA activities which take place at IBCM.
- Monitoring and review of assessment and IQA feedback and reports
- Monitoring and review of feedback from External quality assurance visits
- Monitoring and review of student feedback and of any academic appeals which may be made

Academic & Quality Manager

- Operational responsibility for ensuring that internal quality assurance mechanisms are embedded into each IBCM programme
- Production of IQA activity schedules and relevant documentation
- Undertaking IQA activities including observation of assessment, teaching & learning, audits of assessment records and documentation
- Supporting the Programme Leads and the Assessment teams in all aspects of the assessment process
- Liaising with Programme Leaders in respect of observations and monitoring activities including student feedback reviews
- Monitoring the assessment and IQA processes across IBCM programmes
- Liaising with Awarding Bodies and external agencies
- Participating in standardisation activities and Assessment Boards
- Where examinations are involved, ensure that all staff involved in the examination understand their roles and responsibilities; conducting observations as required

Programme Lead

- Organising assessment and IQA activities for their programmes as required by the relevant awarding body or IBCM (in liaison with QM and assessor as appropriate)
- Ensuring that awarding body requirements are adhered to and any appropriate assessment/IQA documentation is forwarded as required
- Ensuring all assessors on their programmes are appropriately qualified and are kept up to date with all requirements for their programme
- Ensuring that records of assessment and IQA are retained for sampling by the EQA
- Ensuring that tutors produce assessment materials in line with awarding body requirements
- In conjunction with the QM undertake appropriate monitoring activities and observations
- Producing annual programme reviews
- Participating in standardisation activities and Assessment Boards
- Ensuring accurate details are kept of all students due to undertake examinations and ensuring that all entry and mark sheets are completed accurately and within required deadlines
- In conjunction with each tutor/assessor, ensuring all examination requirements are communicated to students in an accurate and timely manner
- Keeping all electronic databases and records up to date.
- Ensuring that all equipment used for online/blended delivery is fit for purpose and appropriate for the programme offered and meets awarding body and learner requirements

Assessor

- Producing assessment materials in line with Awarding Body/IBCM requirements

- Producing appropriate assessment plans for learners (in conjunction with Programme Lead)
- Ensuring he/she is up to date with current assessment guidelines and requirements for their programmes
- Undertaking assessment activities using relevant assessment methods as required by the awarding body
- Assessing student work in a timely manner and as detailed in the assessment plan
- Providing regular and timely feedback to students from the assessment which is related to the standards of the qualification and which is constructive and developmental as appropriate
- Keeping up to date records of assessment, both paper-based and electronic as appropriate/required
- Ensuring familiarity with all online systems and platforms to be used for teaching and assessment
- Providing feedback and records to the IQA/Quality manager of assessment decisions and of any concerns
- Where examinations/external assessment is concerned, providing the Centre Manager/Programme Lead with accurate details of all students to be entered for the exam

Internal Verifier

- Producing IQA sampling plan (in conjunction with QM)
- Using a variety of methods to sample assessor work (as appropriate to qualification and required by Awarding Body) including examination of both formative and summative work, study of marked examination papers, observation of assessor practice, learner interview etc.
- Providing accurate and timely records of IQA activity
- Ensuring familiarity with all online systems and platforms to be used for teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance
- Providing accurate and timely feedback to assessors
- Conducting standardisation activities which are scheduled into the school calendar
- Participating in Assessment Boards – having all required IQA records available
- Providing information for the Awarding Body as required

Principal (Centre Manager)/Administrative Staff

- Registration of learners with awarding body
- Liaison with assessment/IQA team in respect of any specific assessment requirements
- Entering learners for examinations and external assessments
- Entering results of assessments onto awarding body systems to record achievement and claim certificates
- Making appropriate changes and amends to awarding body and IBCM systems to ensure that all information is current and accurate
- Managing and monitoring the online platforms and equipment/systems used for online/blended programmes
- Receiving, checking and storing all examination papers

- Administering access arrangements for exams, including where special consideration is needed
- Dissemination of exam results to Programme Leader
- Participating in the Assessment Board

Exam Invigilator

- Assisting with the efficient running of examinations according to relevant guidelines
- setting out the examination room in the required manner (including displaying of required notices)
- completing the signed invigilation record and seating plan
- verification of student identity and monitoring of students during the examinations
- reporting any concerns to Quality Manger/Centre Manager
- Awareness of and adherence to all required awarding body procedures
- Collection of all examination papers and any other material required

*(*due to the small nature of IBCM and staffing, some of the roles above may be merged. For examinations, the invigilator must not be the same person as the tutor/assessor for the programme)*

4. Assessment

Assessment describes the process 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 for each of the units being undertaken. Assessors will normally be the tutors delivering the learning programme for the relevant unit.

4.1 Access to Assessment

- IBCM will ensure that all students are assessed fairly. This means that assessment will be a test of what the student knows, what they understand and what they are able to do. The students will all be assessed using the same criteria (as set by the awarding body). Assessments will be standardised across different tutors and classes to ensure that all students have been judged against the same standards. Processes for all of these are detailed below.
- IBCM will ensure that all students are able to access programmes, including learning, teaching and assessments. We will make all reasonable adjustments to ensure that no learners are disadvantaged due to disability or any other specific needs (*see reasonable adjustments*)
- Regular monitoring of all aspects of the assessment process will ensure that any issues which arise are identified and can be dealt with promptly.
- IBCM will ensure that any student with specific learning requirements is not disadvantaged within the assessment process. Arrangements will be adapted as appropriate to ensure that all students

can access the assessment process. Students should advise IBCM of any issues for which they may require special consideration.

4.2 Lessons (see also *IBCM Learning & Teaching Policy*)

- Those involved in delivering the lesson should prepare an initial Scheme of Work (SOW) for the module being studied as well as lesson plans for each lesson. The SOW will cover all relevant all Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria and ensure an appropriate range of teaching and assessment methods are used during the programme of study, taking into account the individual needs and learning styles of the learners on the course (as identified in their Individual Learning Plan)
- Lesson delivery can be via distance learning, classroom based or blended learning.
- All lessons must be delivered at the appropriate **level** of the course (for example HND level 5) in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) document.
- The tutor/assessor should provide a supportive and encouraging learning environment and provide regular guidance and feedback on progress.

4.3 Assessment Planning

- 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 internal verifier (IQA) for each unit. Information regarding the assessment methods and dates for assignments to be issued/assessed (including formative and summative assessments) and any examinations to be taken will form part of this plan, along with details of scheduled assessment /verification and feedback dates. Resubmission requirements 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
- Where a programme operates on a “roll on, roll off” basis, assessment plans will be produced on an Individual basis and will contain the same information as above.
- Assessment Plans will be reviewed at IBCM meetings and can be amended as needed, taking into account any unforeseen or mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- 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.
- All aspects of Assessment Planning apply to face to face programmes, online and blended delivery.

4.4 Assessment Methods

- Method of assessment may include internally set assignments, externally set assignments and examinations. Awarding Body requirements will usually dictate which of these is required for each programme and module.
- Where appropriate, Tutors/Assessors can integrate a variety of ways to assess learner knowledge and skills such as observation of group activities, presentations and discussions (these may be via webinar, zoom or teams for distance learners) as well as examination of completed assignments.
- Where appropriate and in line with Awarding Body requirements, holistic assessment is to be encouraged (for example where an assessment can be planned to cover more than one Learning Outcome)
- For **all** assessment, whether internally or externally assessed, appropriate mechanisms must be in place for the assessor to ensure that all work produced by the student is their own work. Signatures to confirm this must be in place and written work passed through appropriate software. Distance learning must include discussions and questioning to confirm understanding and authenticity.

4.5 Assignments

- Where assessment is by completion of an assignment, the tutor/assessor will be responsible for producing the assignment except where it is required to use the Awarding Body's assignment). The assignment must 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 above) to best meet learner needs and ensure that no learner is disadvantaged.
- Students are to be made aware of the assessment process for their assignment tasks including the formative and summative assessment deadlines. They should be made aware of the process for the marking (and, where applicable, grading) of assignments and the procedure for referrals and resubmission/repeats (as advised by each relevant awarding body). 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
- For **externally set assignments** tutors must ensure that all awarding body requirements are followed and that the assignments are completed under the stipulated conditions, with appropriate monitoring, and that learner work is checked prior to sending work to the awarding body. All timescales must be adhered to and records must be accurate and up to date.

4.6 Examinations

- Where an examination is required as part of the programme of study, to determine that a student has reached the required standard, this will be made clear to the student at the time of recruitment and again at induction and regular reviews. Their assessment plan will provide them with details of when the examinations will take place.
- Timing of examinations for internally set exams will be set by the Programme Leader. Externally set examinations will have predetermined dates set by the Awarding Body.
- Examinations will be conducted in line with awarding and regulatory body requirements. Appropriate signage will be in place and the examination room organised appropriately.
- Administration, invigilation and monitoring of examinations will be discussed at IBCM staff meetings in order to ensure consistency and currency in all aspects of examination management.
- An invigilator will be present for all examinations and he/she will confirm learner identity, organise the seating of the room and arrange for distribution and collection of exam papers. Monitoring of the invigilation process will take place in line with IQA arrangements as detailed below.

4.7 Assessment Feedback

- Regular, timely and constructive feedback is a key part of the assessment process.

All Assessors will be advised on the required arrangements for feedback for the programmes they are involved in.

- Feedback for assignment work will be provided at both formative and summative stages and recorded accordingly. Feedback on sample examination papers will be provided to learners and used by assessors to inform lesson planning and further assessment opportunities
- Feedback should be developmental and help the learner identify areas where work can be improved in the future
- Feedback must be objective and related to the specific learning outcomes/assessment criteria for the relevant programme being studied.
- Feedback records must be kept – electronic and/or paper-based as required and must be available for sampling by the IQA and External bodies.

- Formal feedback of official results of assessment can only be forwarded to learners after confirmation by the Assessment Board

4.8 Assessment Documentation

- Assessors will be issued with documentation to use throughout the programme. Standard IBCM documentation includes assessment feedback sheets (formative feedback) and specific mark sheets/front sheets for examination or assignment feedback, depending on Awarding Body requirements.
- Templates are also provided for assessment activities including observation records, discussion record sheets etc and examination mark sheets as well as for providing feedback as detailed above.
- Documentation is to be signed by both the learner and the assessor (and the IQA where appropriate)
- Relevant documentation is to be stored in agreed location and passed to the IQA when requested and according to the IV sampling plan and to the relevant awarding body for externally assessed examinations and assignments
- All documentation will be retained in line with the relevant awarding bodies requirements.

4.9 Participation in Internal Quality Assurance activities

- Tutor/Assessors are responsible for providing feedback to the IQA in order to facilitate the quality assurance process. They must comply with all requests made by the IQA.
- Tutor/Assessors should attend regular meetings and standardisation activities with the IQA and relevant personnel. Samples of student work should be made available for sampling as requested and according to the IQA sampling plan. All records should be available for both standardisation and Assessment Board meetings.
- Assessors are responsible for providing the IQA with all assessed learner work as detailed in the IQA sampling plan for each programme and to provide this in a timely manner.
- Assessors will also allow IQA to sample their assessment activities by observation, for example tutorials, learner feedback sessions, presentations and discussions.
- Tutors/Assessors will raise any issues in respect of candidate progress with the IQA and appropriate personnel or any matters of concern in relation to Health & Safety or Equal Opportunities.

4.10 **Assessment Appeals**

- All Assessors will be made aware of the Appeals procedure at their induction and of the processes to follow should a learner have occasion to dispute the judgement given.
- Assessors must advise the IQA of any appeals lodged by learners and follow the process detailed in the Appeals procedure

5. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

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

5.1 Monitoring and Supporting Assessors

- All new 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 staff handbook. Induction will also cover all relevant aspects of each specific programme that the assessor will be involved with.
- The Lead IQA/Quality manager will review Tutor/Assessors and identify any training needs/requests in relation to assessment practice.
- Assessors are to be updated on a regular basis (for example at the meetings mentioned in 4.9) and particularly when any changes to standards are introduced.
- IQA records must be completed of all IQA activities including observations, examination of completed assignments and examination mark sheets and monitoring of invigilation of exams.
- Both assessors and Internal Verifiers will be trained and qualified in line with external quality assurance body requirements.

5.2 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/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.

5.3 Sampling the work of Assessors

- As detailed above, IQA sampling plans will be provided in order to ensure that regular monitoring of assessment practice is undertaken. This assists with the production of a clear audit trail of the assessment and Internal quality assurance processes.
- As indicated above, the IQA can adopt different methods to sample assessor work. As well as looking at the assessment process and marking of learner work, IQA activities can also include discussions with learners, assessor observation and monitoring of examination invigilation etc. This can be done whilst physically present or remotely depending on the nature of the programme.
- Summative sampling will take place upon completion of the assessment process for a full programme or individual module (as per IQA sampling plan). This is to ensure that the Assessor has reached their decision in relation to learner 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.
- The IQA will complete all appropriate documentation required by the Awarding Body together with an IBCM “assessment decisions” form for each summative sampling activity.

6.0 Plagiarism and Malpractice

- All allegations of plagiarism will be investigated and may result in action being taken. Full details can be found in the IBCM Disciplinary Policy.
- Any allegation of malpractice by candidates will be taken seriously and fully investigated. Full details can be found in the IBCM Disciplinary Policy.

7.0 Assessment Boards

- Assessment Boards will be convened at intervals appropriate to programmes running at IBCM. These will be chaired by a staff member independent to the programmes being discussed and will comply with all requirements of the appropriate awarding body. As indicated above, confirmation of results can only be provided to learners following agreement at the Assessment Board (and subject to any required external monitoring processes)

7.0 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 to Management/Governing Body. Any resultant actions will be logged and the responsibility for activity assigned appropriately. Progress and completion will be monitored through the Governing Body, Management and IBCM staff meetings.

9.0 Reference Points

The following policy and procedure documents support the information in this policy:

IBCM Learning and Teaching Policy
IBCM Appeals Procedure
IBCM Disciplinary Policy
IBCM Reasonable Adjustments policy

10.0 Version History

Version	1.0
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