

Assessment Guidance

For Learners

Who will be involved in the process of achieving my qualification?

There are several important roles within the process of undertaking your qualification, these include:

Learner

The learner is the person who is undertaking the qualification. They are responsible for:

- Identifying prior achievement and providing evidence of this e.g. certificates
- Planning how the assessment will take place alongside the Assessor
- Collecting and creating evidence
- Ensuring evidence fully meets the criteria and requirements of the qualification
- Ensuring all work presented is genuine and authentic
- Ensuring all targets set by the Assessor are met within the specified timescale

Assessor

The Assessor is the person who supports and guides the learner throughout the process of achieving their qualification. They are responsible for:

- Planning how the assessment will take place alongside the learner
- Setting regular action plans that include specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound targets (SMART)
- Making assessment judgments of all submitted evidence, against the qualification criteria
- Providing regular and detailed feedback following each assessment

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

The IQA is the person who ensures that all qualification guidance is adhered to. They are responsible for:

- Ensuring the requirements of the qualification are met by the Assessor
- Confirming they agree with the judgements made by the Assessor
- Ensuring the process of assessment has been fair
- Signing off a learner's qualification and claiming the certificate

External Quality Assurer (EQA)

The EQA is a representative of the awarding body and ensures all assessments meet the qualification requirements. They are responsible for:

- Undertaking centre visits and sampling learner's work to ensure it meeting the awarding body's quality standards
- Checking that the centre has appropriately qualified and experienced staff to deliver qualifications
- Enabling centres to claim achieved qualification certificated
- Advising and supporting centres regarding best practice

How will my qualification be assessed?

Learners will build up a portfolio of evidence over a period of time in order to provide a record of how the whole qualification was achieved. This will include evidence of either criteria you understand (knowledge) or evidence of criteria you have undertaken (performance). Some qualifications will include a combination of both of these. Examples of evidence are:

Knowledge

- Written questions
- Assignments
- Oral questioning
- Professional discussion
- Externally set tests

Performance

- Observation
- Witness testimony
- Reflective accounts
- Work products
- Professional discussion

Portfolio of Evidence

In most cases, your portfolio of evidence will be contained on an e-portfolio system. This is a secure, web based system which can be accessed on any internet device using a user name and password. The learner is responsible for uploading evidence to the e-portfolio system and notifying their Assessor each time an upload is made.

Some qualifications do not use an e-portfolio system, but instead use a set of standard documents to evidence the qualification.

However the portfolio is evidenced, it is the responsibility of the learner to ensure that evidence is kept securely and stored in the appropriate format.

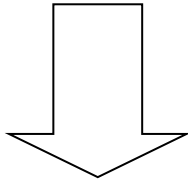
Awarding Body

The awarding body for your qualification (e.g. City & Guilds, NCFE, Cache etc) can request access to your portfolio of evidence at any time throughout your qualification and for up to **3 years** following certification. This is to ensure that the process of the achievement of your qualification has met with their quality assurance requirements.

What is involved in the process of assessment?

Planning

The Assessor and learner will plan which aspect of the qualification they will work on. They will agree a plan which explains the types of evidence that needs to be produced, which aspects of the qualification it will cover and a target date for this to be completed.



Collecting Evidence

The learner will then gather the required evidence as detailed in the plan and submit it to the Assessor. The learner needs to ensure that all evidence is:

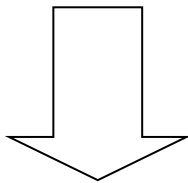
Valid - relates to the requirements of the qualification

Authentic - the genuine work of the learner

Current - recent enough to show that the learner still possesses the skills at the time of the assessment

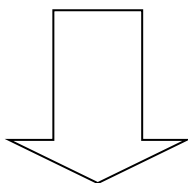
Reliable - from an appropriate and reliable source

Sufficient - demonstrating that the learner can perform competently at all times and under all conditions specified by the standards.



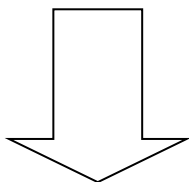
Assessment

Once the learner has completed the tasks on their action plan, they send the evidence to the Assessor. The Assessor will then assess the evidence against the qualification criteria. Following this process, the Assessor will either accept the criteria as complete or return the evidence to the learner with an action plan of amendments that are needed in order to meet the criteria.



Internal Verification

Once the Assessor has accepted a unit as fully evidenced and complete, the unit is then sent to the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) for sampling. The IQA will check that the Assessor has made the correct judgments of the learner's evidence and that the qualification requirements have been met. The IQA will then mark the unit as achieved.



Certification

When the IQA has marked all units within the qualification as achieved, they will submit a certificate claim to the awarding body, indicating that the learner has achieved all the required units within the qualification.

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements allow learners with support requirements, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment, with prior agreement with the Assessor. Access arrangements allow learners to show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. Examples could include: readers, scribes, word processors and Braille question papers.

Confidentiality

Learners need to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout their evidence collection. This means not using photographs or real names of any children, young people or vulnerable adults within their evidence. Although it is acceptable to use real work examples within the evidence, steps must be taken to protect the identity of those within the workplace. This could include referring to individuals as 'child A', 'service user B' or 'colleague C'.

Malpractice and Plagiarism

Malpractice and plagiarism in relation to evidence gathering will not be tolerated. Researched material for use in the learner's portfolio, which cannot be evidenced as the genuine work of the learner (authentic) would result in the Disciplinary Procedure being followed, in line with the SS&L Examination and Assessment Policy.

Some examples of malpractice and plagiarism include:

- Copying directly from a text, word-for-word
- Using an attractive phrase or sentence you have found somewhere
- Using text downloaded from the Internet
- Paraphrasing the words of a text very closely
- Borrowing statistics from another source or person
- Copying from the essays or the notes of another learner
- Downloading or copying pictures, photographs, or diagrams without acknowledging your sources
- Deliberate submission of false or fraudulent evidence

Any incident of malpractice or plagiarism identified within a learner's work will follow the process below.

First incident identified

The Assessor will issue the learner with a verbal warning, indicating where plagiarism or malpractice has been identified and offer support. New evidence will then need to be submitted by the learner. The Quality Assurance Manager will be notified, who will record the incident.

Second incident identified

The Assessor will issue the learner with a written warning indicating where plagiarism or malpractice has been identified. The Assessor will pause all assessment for the learner's qualification. The Quality Assurance Manager will be notified, who will report the incident to the awarding body. The awarding body will inform the Quality Assurance Manager of the next steps. This may include:

- A formal warning being issued
- Disqualification of the qualification
- Removal from the course

Third incident identified

A formal investigation will be conducted and the learner will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing. The incident will be reported to the awarding body and may result in:

- A final formal warning being issued
- Disqualification of the qualification
- Removal from the course

Right to appeal

Should the learner wish to appeal the decision, an appeal hearing conducted by a manager within SS&L with no prior direct involvement in the case should be set up in order to hear the appeal.

The decision on the outcome of an appeal hearing is final.

The Assessment Centre Appeals Procedure

If the complaint is related to the assessment process, learners should use the Appeals Procedure.

Learners may only appeal on the grounds that they do not agree with the assessment decision made by the Assessor or that the assessment procedures have not been carried out properly if:

1. during the assessment process, the learner feels that they have been discriminated against on the grounds of gender, marital status, social class, colour, race, ethnic origin, creed, disability, HIV status or disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to performance
2. plans for collecting the evidence are not within the assessment plan/action plan
3. the assessment plan/action plan had not been discussed and signed by the learner and Assessor
4. the interpretation of the standards had not been discussed and documented by the learner and the Assessor before the assessment
5. the Assessor intervened in the gathering of evidence, other than on grounds of health and safety or malpractice
6. the Assessor used evidence not required for meeting the standards during the assessment process
7. arrangements to meet the learner's individual needs, as agreed, were not met
8. feedbacks is not given according to the assessment agreement
9. in the event of being deemed 'not yet competent' the learner is not informed, verbally or in writing, of the further evidence required
10. the Assessor's assessment decision is based on inadequately recorded evidence.

The Appeals Process

If a learner considers that they have grounds for appeal they should:

- a) Contact their Assessor expressing their concerns and the reasons why they wish to appeal. The learner is entitled to be accompanied by a supporter at this meeting. This meeting should be recorded and the minutes signed and dated by the learner and Assessor
- b) If the concerns cannot be resolved at this meeting and the learner still considers they have a legitimate case for appeal, the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) must be notified in writing enclosing a copy of the minutes of the meeting
- c) The Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) shall organise a meeting with the learner and Assessor within 14 days of receiving the notification of appeal. The IQA / Course Lead shall inform the Quality Assurance Co-ordinator that they (IQA / Course Lead) are dealing with an appeal. The learner is entitled to be accompanied by a supporter. The meeting shall be recorded and the minutes signed by all parties

- d) If the appeal cannot be resolved at this meeting, the IQA / Course Lead shall refer the case to the Quality Assurance Co-ordinator.
- e) The Quality Assurance Co-ordinator shall organise a meeting within 21 days of receiving the notification of appeal. The appeal will be considered after receiving written/verbal evidence from the learner, workplace Assessor and Internal Quality Assurer (it may be appropriate for the IQA / Course Lead to also be involved). The learner is entitled to bring a supporter to this meeting
- f) If the appeal is upheld:
 - i. The Assessor shall be invited to reconsider the original assessment process
 - ii. Provision shall be made for the learner to be assessed again by another Assessor.

If, once the Assessment Appeals procedure has been completed, the learner continues to be dissatisfied, they have the right to contact the Awarding Body directly.

General Complaints Procedure for Learners

If learners are dissatisfied with any aspect of service provided by Somerset Skills & Learning, please contact your Assessor. If the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, your Assessor will follow SS&L's Complaints Procedure.

Equal Opportunities and Anti Discriminatory Policy

Somerset Skills & Learning's Assessment Centre will be referred to as 'the Centre'

Principles that underline the policy

- Discrimination of any kind works to undermine people's dignity and sense of value
- The Centre's task is to ensure that Internal Quality Assurers (IQA) and Assessors actively work to empower learners to take responsibility in the assessment process
- Everyone involved in SS&L programmes should be working towards good anti-discriminatory practice; i.e. the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, nationality, skin colour, religion, culture, age, disability, gender, class, sexual identity, marital status, HIV status or disadvantaged by the conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant to the Performance Criteria
- The Centre through its record keeping systems, and through those of Somerset Skills & Learning, will monitor anti-discriminatory practice

Equal Opportunities

An equal opportunities policy is about ensuring that no employee, job applicant or service user receives less favourable treatment for any reason

Discrimination

- Discrimination is based on prejudice that can be defined as a negative attitude or action towards a group or individual
- Discrimination is the use of power by people in an advantaged position to impose restrictions and deprivations on people in a less advantaged position, in order to maintain a situation of privilege and inequality
- There can be two forms of discrimination:
Institutional Discrimination, which is part of the structure and systems of society or an organisation
Individual Discrimination where an individual uses their position to discriminate against another person
- Legislation (Equality Act 2010) refers to:
Direct discrimination as treating a person less favourable than another in the same or similar circumstances
Indirect discrimination as applying an unjustifiable condition or requirement that in practice can be met by significantly more people from one group than another
- Discrimination also includes racism that can be described as a combination of prejudice and power used by organisations and individuals with the effect of systematically oppressing people on the grounds of their skin colour or ethnic origin

Statement of Intent

The Centre is committed to ensuring that all groups have equality of opportunity and will not be disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be relevant to the Performance Criteria

The Centre Requires That:

- Internal Quality Assurers (IQA) and Assessors demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to anti-discriminatory practice
- Processes for the selection of Learners do not discriminate on any area
- The Assessor does not disadvantage any Learner by imposing conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be relevant to the Performance Criteria
- Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers (IQA) must be aware of the power invested in them and not abuse that power
- Any allegation of discrimination within the Centre will be investigated under the Appeals Procedure

Learner Appeal Form

Centre Name:	
Learner Name:	
Assessor Name:	
Internal Quality Assurer Name:	
Date of Assessment:	
Unit(s) Assessed:	
Learner reason for appeal:	
Learners Signature:	
Date:	

Assessor's Comments

Assessment Details:	
Assessor Signature:	
Date:	

Internal Quality Assurer Decision

Date Appeal Received:	
Date of Reply:	
Name:	
Signature:	
Registration No:	
Decision	