



Quality Assurance Policy

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Policy Approval

Approval Required:	Please Check		Annual Review Required:	Please Check	
	Yes ☒	No ☐		Yes ☒	No ☐
Approval Panel:	Shane Carter				
Approved By:	Name		Signature		Date
	Shane Carter				01/08/2026
Policy Review Date:	August 2027				
Policy Writer/s:	Shane Carter				

Overview

Shape Academy vision is to be an outstanding provider of vocational training within the work-based learning sector. Internal Quality Assurance is the process to ensure the quality of all programmes delivered by Shape Academy and that our standards meet or exceed national standards through regular monitoring. This will enable all learners to have access to fair and reliable assessment that is of a consistent quality. Shape Academy seek to continuously improve the quality of all aspects of its work, both internally and with Associates to ensure learners achieve their highest possible standard and perform to the best of their abilities.

This document provides guidance to support the delivery of all qualifications carried out at Shape Academy.

This policy is intended to provide guidance to all staff involved in the administration, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications delivered at Shape Academy, in addition to this document, all staff must familiarise themselves with the contents of all related policies and procedures and used in conjunction alongside other pertinent qualification specifications, assurance guidance and scheme rules created directly by our Awarding Organisations.

This is an evolving policy worked in conjunction with relevant Sector skills councils per qualification as listed in Cinders Training referenced table below:

Qualification	Sector Skills Council
Construction	Construction Skills & CITB
Hairdressing and Beauty	HABIA, Skills Active
Business	Skills CFA
Finance, Accountancy Services	Financial Skills Partnership (FSP)
Engineering and Manufacturing	Semta
Retail Motor Industry	IMI
Security	Skills for Security

Policy Statement

Shape Academy is committed to providing the best quality education and training for all its learners. An environment will be provided to allow all learners to achieve their full potential and achieve the highest standards possible.

This policy applies to all staff associated with Shape Academy and its Associates, along with all activities undertaken. The management of the process described within the policy will be through the existing organisational management structure and applied to all areas, quality of the training provision is seen as integral to our success and is one of our core values. As our structure grows quality will continue to be embedded at all levels. Quality improvement will be based on a process of regular self-assessment, we will also seek the views and perceptions of learners, employers and sub-contractors (when applicable) through periodic surveys. This policy will ensure that standard Internal quality improvement procedures apply that meet the requirements of the Award organisation Code of Practice and/or Occupational Standards.

This policy is made based on our commitment to provide equality of opportunity irrespective of:

- Age
- Gender

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- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment/ Gender Identity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Disability
- Pregnancy and Maternity

We Are Committed To

- Being responsive and accountable to all its learners, employers, partners and any external bodies that fund, validate or collaborate with the Centre.
- The on-going enhancement of a Centre which is self-critical, honest, transparent, and responsive.
- Maintaining a quality assurance system which, through continual monitoring and review, evaluates the Centre's strengths and weaknesses and responds to opportunities for improvement, in the learner experience.
- Developing and setting standards and targets based on internal or external benchmarks for excellence in all areas.
- Providing a variety of means for learners, employers, and partners to express their views on the company's provision, and to be involved in the process of critical self-evaluation and continuous improvement. The SAR will enable us to identify our strengths and successes, and areas for improvement against the current OFSTED Common Inspection Framework. Reviewed quarterly, the SAR ensures quality is maintained and improved where required identified areas for improvement are entered onto the QIP which will be reviewed regularly.

Responsibilities

Employees and tutors involved in induction of students are responsible for checking the identity of the student, ensuring all paperwork is fully and accurately completed. That students are inducted into their chosen programme in a way that meets their needs.

Assessors and/or tutors are responsible for, making learners aware of their responsibilities in the collection, authentication, and presentation of evidence. Ensuring learners are fully supported throughout the term of their qualification. This should include, effective management evidence gathering, assessing and attainment. Agreeing and recording assessment and visit plans for each person; Completing regular reviews with the learner and/or their employer to review progress and agree new targets; Providing the learner with prompt, accurate, formative, and summative feedback; compliance with company policies including but not exclusive to: Access to Fair Assessment, Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and Data Protection. Observing learners' performance through formative assessment and/or in simulated situations, and/or conduct other forms of assessment in accordance with the qualification, unit standards and requirements of the awarding body. Ensuring validity, authenticity, currency, and sufficiency of evidence; Maintaining appropriate, accurate and verifiable records; Confirming that learners have demonstrated competence/knowledge and have completed the required documentation.

Internal Quality Assurers are responsible for advising and supporting assessors and tutors through continuing professional development. Ensuring adherence to company policies regarding assessment. Sampling of assessment activities and supporting with complaints and appeals.

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Continual Professional Development is an essential part of all staff's roles. This should be regularly documented. The company will support staff in their personal development.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Timely completion of apprenticeship framework
- Destinations and retention rates
- Comments & Complaints
- Quality Assurance Reports

Stakeholder Feedback will include:

- Learner Engagement
- Employer Engagement
- Apprentice Reviews
- Contract partnership meetings / Audits – collaborative meeting and actions
- Staff Meetings
- Employer Engagement
- Awarding Organisations

Internal Quality Assurance Sampling and Plans Strategy

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is a system of quality checks on all Centre-devised practical and theoretical activities and their delivery in preparation for the awarding organisation assessments.

To ensure that theory end tests and end practical assessments are accurate and embed the required support mechanisms to record discussions and feedback and incorporate accuracy, fairness, consistency and quality of assessment decisions.

IQA checks that the standards set by the awarding organisation are being maintained.

IQA checks are in place to audit centre documentation ensuring learners work is accurately recorded, maintained and developed.

The Strategy

The Quality Assurance Strategy is designed to support team members, providing a consistent approach to training and assessment and ensuring regular communication and an awareness of the centres' structure and documentation. In addition to this it provides a basis for further development of resources by collaboratively working and sharing best practice to enrich the learning journey of our students.

Shape Academy sampling strategy is based on the CAMERA rationale and the sample being representative. There is no overall fixed percentage ratio of sampling across qualifications; the sampling ratio will be based on individual risk. The risk assessment that will be carried out on each assessor will clarify the percentage of sampling relevant and plans will be adjusted accordingly. Risk will be managed overall by the Head of Education & Quality who will review the sampling strategy in line with internal and external changes to ensure the quality of assessment is maintained. CAMERA will be used as a basis for sampling. The risk rating will be used as part of the performance management to help assessors understand which level they are working at.

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C	Candidates	Ethnic origin, gender employed full time /part time, special requirements
A	Assessors	Experience, qualifications, workload, occupational experience, location, CPD, evidence of countersigning unqualified TAQA/CAVA assessors
M	Methods of assessment	Questioning, observation, the evidence is RPL, product evidence, Professional discussions assignments, projects, product evidence Written Reflective reviews, oral presentations
E	Evidence types	Written confirmation that the evidence is valid, authentic, current and enough, problem areas, special requirements
R	Records	Reports from assessors, correct assessment practice, internal quality assurance records, learner portfolios and files
A	Assessment locations	Workplace assessments, other assessment locations

How the strategy works

The IQA will discuss with the team members to provide support on how the sampling plan has been created. All plans to include all stages of assessment journeys.

The IQA will liaise with the team members to discuss the following:

1. Sampling

Evidence must be confirmed by assessor/trainers as:

Valid – relevant to the standards for which competence is claimed

Authentic – Produced by the learner

Current – Sufficiently recent for assessors to be confident that the same level of skills, understanding or knowledge exists at the time of claim

Sufficient – meets in full all the requirements of the standards Factors IQAs need to consider:

Learners: Ethnic origin, age, gender, other factors, particular assessment requirements etc. Every learner portfolio must be sampled.

Assessor: Experience and qualifications, workload, occupational experience, CPD, evidence of countersigning assessors supporting unqualified assessors.

Methods of assessment: Observation, testimony, professional discussion, RPL, product evidence, assignments, projects and tests, use of simulation.

Evidence/LO' within the qualification/programme Records: Problem areas, particular requirements. Reports from assessors, correct assessment practices, internal quality assurance records, assessor records and learner portfolios and files.

Assessment locations: Workplace and other assessment locations

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2. Sample Plan

The IQA must complete a sampling plan at the beginning of the learner's assessment programme and must record, on the plan, any variations made to it. Each sampling plan applies to all learners registered within Funding & Awarding Organisation requirements.

The IQA must sample the full range of assessment methods used for any one qualification e.g., observation, witness testimony, professional discussion, reflective accounts, questioning, products, RPL, simulation etc. It is imperative that the IQA knows the qualification thoroughly and the likely range of assessment methods and evidence sources that could be used.

The IQA must sample the full range of the assessment process from the Assessor/Learner Agreement, through planning, review, feedback and documentation and must include at least one assessor observation each year.

The IQA sample planning schedules will be kept centrally in the secure on the company shared drive with limited access. IQA and assessment records should be kept in line with current awarding organisation requirements.

3. Sampling Risk Levels

Assessors/Trainers			
	0-6 Months	7-9 Months	10-12 Months
Trainee	100% Sampling	100% Sampling	100% Sampling
Newly Qualified	75% Sampling	50% Sampling	30% Sampling
New to Cinders Training	75% Sampling	50% Sampling	20-30% Sampling
Existing Staff	10-30% Sampling		
Qualifications/Programmes			
New	100% Sampling	75% Sampling	50% Sampling
Updated	50% Sampling	40% Sampling	10-30% Sampling
Long Running	10-30% Sampling		
All sampling is down to each Individual IQA, the above are guidelines to follow. Any Lowered Sampling % must be agreed with the Head of Quality, Compliance & Curriculum.			

4. IQA Observation

Used to support and standardise staff observations and to provide a point of refence for feedback and support of staff members.

Observation Outcome	Sampling Reference	Observation reference
Blue (1)	10%-30% Sampling	Yearly Observation & 1 Learning Walk
Green (2)		
Amber (3)	30-60% Sampling	2 Observation & 2 Learning Walks
Red (4)	100% Sampling	Support Assessor/Trainer until risk rating improves.

5. Learner Interview Record

Use to standardise and record responses from candidates to ensure details of learner feedback can be reviewed to improve practices and to ensure procedures are being following in the interests of our Equality, Diversion and Inclusion policy.

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Technical Trainers/ Tutors/ Assessors and Internal Quality Assurance

The delivery team is responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of the qualification. The team members should:

- Create and agree a plan of assessment activities, with timescales
- Ensure the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team.

Technical Trainers should be qualified D32/33 or A1 or hold the appropriate qualification or working towards Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement.

The role includes:

- Initial assessment, complete enrolment process and register learner
- Carry out induction ensuring that learners are aware of own responsibilities
- Assess the work submitted and or built by learners over a period of time
- Accurately record all assessment decisions
- Provide feedback to learners during the training process identifying achievements and giving opportunities for improvement.
- Regularly review learner progress in line with apprenticeship/16-18 Funding guidelines
- Maintain assessor records of the learner's progress and achievements
- Meet regularly with the centre team and attend standardisation meetings
- Meet with the quality team as requested to discuss assessment decisions
- Maintain knowledge of programme through continuous professional development
- Unqualified/ trainee assessors – should we employ any unqualified team members; they would need to commit to undertaking the appropriate qualifications within timeframes required- these targets will be reviewed, and employment will be a condition of achievement.
- All assessment decisions taken by unqualified assessors, must be countersigned by a qualified assessor prior to being subject to the IQA process. Supporting documentation to be completed and support sessions to be provided to encourage professional CPD throughout the process.

Internal Quality Assurance Staff

Should be qualified D34, V1 or Level 4 Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment & Practice Award or be working towards this qualification.

IQA's should ensure that:

- Assessment is consistent across the programme
- Assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- Assessment decisions accurately match learner work to the unit assessment criteria
- Standardisation of assessors takes place.
- Ensure an effective system of recording learner achievement is in place

IQA's should:

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- Keep accurate and up to date records of the internal verification process
- Advise on the appropriateness of assessment evidence with regard to levels and consistency
- Use their subject specialism to sample assessments to verify assessors' judgements, ensuring that they are consistent, fair and reliable
- Ensure their own assessment decisions are sampled when teaching / training on the programme
- Ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken where necessary
- Take part in the formal stages of any appeal.

Quality checks or audits cannot internally quality assure their own assess carry out documented checks on their own work. If an IQA has had any other input relating to that qualification, they should not carry out any quality assurance activities. IQA activities should also not be carried out on friends or family members work- more details can be found by referring to 'Conflict of Interest Policy' (COI03). Where there is a team of assessors, it is good practice for all assessors to be involved in internally verifying each other's work or carrying out a panel/ standardisation to share best practice.

Staff Training

Copies of all staff certificates should be taken prior to employment, originals should be seen by a senior member of the recruitment panel, copied and signed to confirm the original documents were viewed (including date copies were taken). Copies of certificates to be held on their staff file with restricted access following Cinders Training GDPR policy (CODE) Staff who join the business on the condition of working towards a qualification should include this on their Personal Development Plan (PDP) and have incremental meetings every 4 weeks to discuss the support and development progress. All activities carried out in the business including reading of documents and support should be recorded on the Cinders Training Continual Professional Development Record (CPD). This is detailed in the Professional Development Policy.

All new staff join the business as high risk following this QA strategy until a time the reduction of risk can be reduced through verified justification.

Feedback

Feedback to be collected from stakeholders at any and all opportunities through informal discussions. We pride ourselves on listening to our customers and acting upon feedback to continually improve our services. We will as a minimum, carry out formal feedback requests on exit of any program. This feedback to be reviewed at 3 monthly intervals as a minimal and shared with the wider team through the Cinders Training team meeting. Feedback will be documented and actioned with details shared with customers to evidence how their feedback impacts our services. Feedback to be sought that is specific to the learning aim of the customer to ensure we are utilising customer interactions to improve our service delivery.

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