



INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE STRATEGY

SCCU LIMITED
VERSION 1.0

Version Control

VERSION	REVIEWER NAME	DATE	NEXT REVIEW	COMMENTS
1.0	Katrina Greenshields	February 2022	03/07/2023	New Policy

IQA Induction

This strategy outlines the requirements of the IQA team in reference to quality assessments and interventions. The Quality Manager must ensure that all IQA's have a copy of this document and understand the procedures and record keeping requirements described. All unqualified IQA's will have their IQA decisions overseen and countersigned by a qualified IQA.

IQA Implementation

The IQA is reminded that when using the minimum IQA processes allowable, the activities must be carried out throughout the period of assessment. Under no circumstances must IQA only take place towards, or at the end of learner assessment. For unqualified assessors who are working towards the relevant qualification, all assessments will be 100% sampled by the allocated countersigner. The qualified assessor supporting an unqualified assessor judgement must countersign all the relevant areas.

- For assessors who are qualified but new to SCCU, sampling a minimum of three times at different points in each learner's period of learning and assessment is required covering 100% of the qualification.
- For qualified assessors who have current experience of assessing within the organisation a minimum of three samples still must be completed at different points in each learner's period of learning and assessment. These samples will be carried out in reference to the RAG rating currently issued for the programme/tutor.
- In all instances, the IQA will also need to focus on all additional areas of internal quality assurance responsibility, e.g., monitoring practice by carrying out observations and checking of embedded themes such as Safeguarding, British Values, Prevent, Equality and Diversity, Health & Safety, Health & Wellbeing and Sustainability and Climate Change Issues (as per new ESFA guidance Feb 2022).
- All learner portfolios will be sampled for key delivery areas, learner progress, tutor assessment practice and current review procedures.
- The IQA may increase/decrease the extent of the sampling beyond the above if there are concerns about practice and the RAG rating for the tutor has changed. Sampling and observation planning can be amended based on the previous results of sampling and quality assurance activities carried out.
- The sampling rationale identified in line with the RAG rating will be reviewed at least every 12 months.
- The sampling plan must be updated to record sampling activity after each sample has taken place within the google drive folder.

- All IQA checklists must be uploaded to the sampling record on Bud and uploaded within the associated google drive folder.
- The IQA sampling plan and checklist ensures that all aspects of the learning and assessment process are sampled. Keeping records will allow the IQA, the Quality Manager and any external bodies to ensure that the agreed process is being applied.
- Where it is necessary to vary from the sampling plan, the reasons should be recorded, and the variations added to the IQA sampling plan comments section.

Overall Implementation

This policy is integrated within SCCU's Quality Policy. It is, therefore, one component part of the wider quality assurance and improvement processes, SCCU is committed to implementing. It is based on the belief that SCCU wishes to provide the best possible experience for learners and tutors and that it will contribute to the promotion of a self-evaluation culture within the business.

Support documentation has been developed for completion during observations, sampling, standardisation, and tutor support sessions to summarise key strengths / areas for improvement that have a clear focus on developmental and informative feedback. This documentation is to be used to share good practice and identify development needs for individuals, programmes, and the overall delivery across the business.

Process

This policy directs a sustained approach to the recording of all aspects of learner journeys including, sign-up, induction, group training, one-to-one visits, reviews and remote, distance and blended-learning processes.

IQA Reporting

Quality reports will be created on a monthly basis and discussed with the IQA team meetings to agree findings and actions required on the following levels:

1. Operational
2. Programme
3. Tutor

Interventions will be planned accordingly and implemented to support overall embedding of best practice and development requirements at all stages e.g.

1. Operational – to be delivered across the delivery team via whole standardisations or education meetings (please see further details on standardisations below)
2. Programme – to be carried out within programme specific standardisations

(please see further details on standardisations below)

3. Tutor – to be carried out via one-to-one support sessions (please see further details on the tutor support record below)

Quarterly Quality Reports will be completed and fed back to the SLT to ensure overall progress and adherence to the quality standards required (as set out within the Quality Policy)

IQA Sampling Process

The IQA sampling process will be carried out using the functionality within the Bud platform and further support via the relevant IQA Checklist for the programme/sample. These will be used to sample the key areas outlined above and must be stored in accordance with this strategy. Samples to be carried out at a minimum of 3 times across a learner's programme. These should occur as a minimum at 12 weeks, 28 weeks, 52 weeks/final. Level of sampling must be judged using the RAG rating spreadsheet following the guidance above and the suggested sample level below:

Red – 100% Sample

Amber – 50% Sample

Green – 25% Sample

RAG ratings to be amended as a result of samples undertaken for the tutor against each programme. This will occur during IQA meetings each month following the results of the monthly IQA quality report.

Standardisation

Standardisation is an important part of IQA. Standardisation activities are undertaken with all tutors and IQA's on a regular basis. All standardisation activities must be recorded in sufficient detail so that third parties can see evidence of what has been carried out alongside the outcome.

The IQA team will hold regular meetings with tutors for training and standardisation purposes and will have support of all management to ensure attendance. The IQA team will also meet regularly to standardise quality assurance activities, share best practice and to feedback on current and planned activity. Regular observations completed by the IQA team are required on all tutors carrying out their roles. These are planned and recorded on the OTLA Planner. Tutors who are supported, will receive feedback on their practice and further investment in their development.

For internally marked assignments, SCCU will conduct internal standardisation to ensure that all work has been marked to the same standard.

Standardisation activities

An example of a standardisation activity would be to copy pieces of learner work or access their work through the online portfolio, for example, looking at one learning outcome or one element and ask tutors to make an assessment decision for this work. It is also helpful to ask them to record what actions they would give the learner resulting from this assessment. In addition, it is helpful to ask tutors to record what feedback they would give the learner if they were the actual tutor for this piece of work. This enables the IQA to check that assessors are:

- Asking the right questions
- Forward planning with learners
- Making accurate assessment decisions
- Providing suitably detailed and specific developmental feedback
- Fully recording the outcome of the assessment process

The frequency and type of standardisation activity should depend on a range of considerations such as:

- Feedback from the EQA or IQA sampling and monitoring
- EPA results and common issues
- Any new requirements in the qualifications
- Changes within the qualification delivery
- Team outcomes of external audits
- Previous standardisation activities and findings
- The need for continuous improvement.

OTLA Procedure

This function ensures that Support is in place for all tutors and will assist in developing reflective practice and individual self-assessment of teaching and learning. This will be carried out to continually improve practice and enrich the learner experience including the positive impact on outcomes. This must be carried out professionally and objectively, evaluating the quality of teaching and learning provided by SCCU and the impact this has on learners. The OTLA procedures will:

- Provide accurate and developmental feedback to all tutors to ensure continual improvement is achieved
- Provide confirmation of the standard of teaching and learning being delivered
- Confirm that SCCU learners receive high quality learning experiences throughout each stage of the learner journey

This procedure applies to all tutors including freelance staff engaged in all aspects of teaching and learning delivery. The first and most important requirement is to continue to further improve the standard of the learner related experience to inspire learners to achieve

their full potential and, improve achievement, engagement, and overall satisfaction. This strategy aims to improve tutor skills, confidence, and morale through the use of a professional, developmental and a supportive observation model. It will identify good practice and ensure success is celebrated and shared. Any areas for development, are quickly identified and a supportive improvement process empowers staff to be the best that they can be. The Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers is a useful reference in this regard.

The value of an observation is in the feedback, and the value of the feedback is in the actions for improvement which result from it. If nothing changes as a result of an observation then an opportunity has been missed to identify good practice, discuss, and address issues and raise delivery standards for learners, and employers.

The second requirement is to enable SCCU to demonstrate to Ofsted, and other external stakeholders, including partner organisations and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA/DFE), the high quality of learning that learners achieve from our programmes. Our customised observation of key learner processes exemplifies SCCU's robust, self-critical culture and comprehensive documentation that is able to withstand external scrutiny and judgement. This supports SCCU with providing accurate self-assessment evidence alongside tailored support and challenge to our tutors.

The focus is firmly on continuous improvement in all learner related processes. Collaboration between the observer and observe is essential to developing a meaningful level of growth and a shared professional experience. The role of the IQA's is to drive and improve standards by providing support and coaching where required, demonstrating leadership, and holding high expectations in search of excellence. SCCU aims to ensure that teaching and learning observations alongside support and coaching, contributes to the creation of reflective and developmental practice and a culture supporting a continual commitment to ongoing professional development. This will result in improved learner experience, achievement, and overall impact.

OTLA Process

The observation and coaching process will:

- Support tutors to explore and improve approaches to the delivery of learning to meet learners' needs
- Identify and enable the sharing of good practice and celebrate excellence
- Provide evaluative information regarding the quality of each individual aspect of the learner journey
- Drive the improvement of learner experience, achievement, and key learner processes

- Inform self-assessment to identify any areas requiring improvement and areas of best practice.

The aim of this assessment is to ensure all tutors are able to achieve a teaching and learning pathway (as outlined further below). Any tutor who is falling below this internal benchmark will receive timely targeted individual support and coaching to ensure they are supported towards re-observation (that should take place no later than 12- weeks from the original observation). IQA's must raise tutor awareness of the strengths and areas for improvement within the learner journey and continually develop tutors in-line with identified themes and professional standards for teachers tutors and trainers. The aim is to improve learner overall and timely achievement to better than the national average and support meeting learners' individual needs with measurable impacts/outcomes.

It will monitor key learner processes incorporating four parallel developmental processes as follows:

Formal Observations

All tutors are entitled to, and should expect, a minimum of one formal observation and coaching visit each year (depending on prior pathway achievement) to support developmental teaching methods, reflective practice, identification of strengths and development planning. 48 hours' notice must be given to inform staff of their forthcoming observation.

- A formal observation will last a minimum of 60 minutes and may extend to over 90 minutes
- The observer should be introduced to the learner(s) and their role explained
- Observers should be as unobtrusive as possible and display neutral body language
- Observers must take no part in the process under observation unless they need to intervene as a result of a health and safety or safeguarding issue
- The observer will, whenever possible, take the opportunity to talk to learner(s), gather their opinions and look at the quality of their work at appropriate times during or after the session
- Wherever practicable, observers will also speak to employers to gauge employer input, satisfaction, and the impact the training is having on their business
- Following the observation, observers will facilitate a two-way developmental conversation which is initiated by the observee's reflection of the event and should explore how strengths can be used more widely and agree any actions to improve less effective practice. This should take place immediately following the observation whenever possible
- A written report, including the agreed action plan will be sent to the member of staff, their programme lead and the Quality Manager within one week following the observation.

Programme Leads are encouraged to collaborate in the process to share and contextualise findings and assist in the setting of developmental goals. Formal observations will be undertaken throughout the contract year by the SCCU IQA Team. All new tutors will be observed at least twice during their first six-months of employment, with the first

observation taking place within 8-10 weeks of their start date, irrespective of whether they are already professionally qualified and / or experienced tutors.

Formal observations will be captured using an approved SCCU template and will concentrate on strengths, areas for development, and the resulting action plan. The actions will be monitored closely by the observer, the observees' programme lead and any other person providing the required coaching and support (see *Tutor Development section*).

Cancelled observations may occasionally occur due to unforeseen circumstances. In this event, an alternative date must be arranged within a three-week period and an observation carried out within this timescale where practicable.

Buzz Observations

Buzz observations compliment the system of formal observations. SCCU views buzz observations as a useful activity to enable an informed understanding of the quality of learner related processes. A buzz observation will take place within a period no longer than three months from the original observation date to ensure that the areas identified for improvement have been developed to the required standard.

Buzz observations will primarily be undertaken where this has been agreed as part of the action plan following a formal observation. Normally, the date of the buzz observation is agreed in advance and specified on the action plan; however, this does not have to be. Buzz observations can be unannounced. The purpose of these observations is to assess progress with the areas of development identified in the formal observation. This process will assist with actively engaging in monitoring the quality of the learner journey, discussing delivery approaches with tutors / learners/ employers and quickly identifying good practice or concerns. The IQA will support tutor's experiencing difficulties by providing appropriate guidance and support.

There is no development pathway attributed to buzz observations and these must be conducted by trained observers (not peer to peer).

The duration of buzz observations will vary; some will be brief at around 20 minutes, others longer and may on occasion extend to a similar length to formal observations.

Peer Observations

Peer observations are an opportunity for tutors to help each other collect information that would be useful to them and which they could not obtain on their own. The observation process is an evaluative one; however, the use of peer observations encourage staff to collaborate, challenge and explore in each other's interest, for mutual benefit.

Prior to each peer observation, the two tutors will meet briefly to discuss the nature of the process to be observed, review the session aims and objectives, the profile of the learner(s) and any differentiated learning methods and resources. During the briefing meeting, the tutors will agree an observation goal e.g., questioning techniques or differentiated learning approaches. The goal will be an area of proven strength for one of the tutors. The person wishing to develop in this area may choose to observe the good practice or ask to be observed for developmental feedback and advise on how they could improve. This goal provides a focus for the observation so that the nominated observer can evaluate these specific aspects within the session to inform development in this area. The nominated observer will then reflect on the effectiveness of the specific goals assigned and report on

the information that has been observed. The nominated observer will record the resulting key points on the observation record form. No development pathway will be attributed to individuals from these observations they are purely to aid peer to peer learning and support. This process can be arranged via the IQA team where they feel a specific benefit will arise from this.

Learning Walks

Where multiple sessions on the same qualification/standard are taking place at the same time for different groups or individuals, learning walks may be utilised to carry out brief observations of teaching and learning practice as a whole across a range of tutors for the same standard. This allows observers to sample sessions for short periods of time, talk to learners and scrutinise learners' work. Observations for each tutor will last between 15 and 30 minutes and brief individual verbal feedback will be provided to all tutors based on overall findings. Written reports will identify trends observed within the programme/qualification and will not identify individual staff members. This process is in addition to the formal observation process and no development pathway will be attributed to individuals from this. This can be carried out effectively for remote sessions occurring on the same day ensuring the tutors are able to follow the SCCU remote delivery process effectively.

Post IQA Sampling Development

IQA's will make an assessment on development needs on the basis of the findings from IQA samples and OTLA's. Each observation, IQA checklist and Tutor support record will document an individual action plan based on development needs. The following categories of 'development pathway' will be applied:

- Green Status - Independent and Contributing.
- Amber Status - Supported Development.
- Red Status - Intensive Development.

Observation and Samples based on development pathway achieved	Observation due (maximum)	Sample Percentage
Independent and contributing development pathway	12 months	25%
Supported development pathway	6 months	50%
Intensive development pathway	3 months	100%

Independent (and Contributing) Development

Tutors have demonstrated exceptional teaching and learning practice with significant impact on learner(s). They will independently manage their own development through seeking and accessing development opportunities sourced either internally or externally. Tutors facilitate and contribute to the development of others through leading areas of standardisation, workshops, team meetings or other methods of sharing good practice, including allowing others to peer observe. They will be re-observed within 12-months of the original observation. IQA's will continue to offer one-to-one coaching, support, and training as required and will promote attendance at internal training / CPD events. These tutors should be utilised within the business to support shadowing activities for other tutors and can support IQA's with informal support observations.

Supported Development

Tutors achieving this development pathway will be assessed by the observer or a member of the IQA team and their programme lead to monitor action plan progress. A buzz observation should be carried out within three months (by the same observer who conducted the original formal observation) to assess progress being made with identified areas of development. Action plan development will be assessed regularly by the programme lead and IQA. If it is felt that the member of staff requires further intervention in order to address their development needs, then this must be recorded on the action plan and agreed between the IQA, their programme lead and the tutor. These actions may include:

- Co-tutoring sessions with support from the IQA team
- Participation in peer observations.
- Support with a variety of teaching methods and styles
- Planning and structuring of sessions support
- Tutor support meetings for specific needs
- Attendance within Standardisations and Education Meetings

IQA's should continue to monitor learner progress and support the tutor with specific subject knowledge, teaching and assessment procedures including the embedding of skills as required.

Intensive Development

This development pathway will normally be invoked if the member of staff has a significant development need in at least one area. Staff achieving this development pathway will be assessed by the observer, IQA and programme lead to monitor action plan progress. IQA records, sampling results and learner outcomes will also be reviewed to identify any additional areas of concern, impact on learners and additional tutor support needs. Additional support from the quality manager can be obtained and a personal development plan (PDP) may be developed. Regular weekly intensive support and coaching will be received by the tutor for a minimum of four weeks, thereafter re-observation/sampling can

take place. In any event, the re-observation for anyone on an intensive development pathway will take place within 3 months of the original observation.

Should a further intensive development pathway be required then this may result in the capability procedure being invoked as part of the SCCU teaching learning and assessment policy. Staff within their probationary period may have their probation extended or employment terminated.

Record Keeping

The following documentation will be stored in the relevant IQA folder within google drive with restricted access:

- Observations Reports
- Sampling Checklists
- Sampling Plan
- RAG rating spreadsheet
- OTLA Sampling Plan
- Tutor Support Records
- Standardisation activities/minutes

A central record and monthly IQA report will be maintained by the Quality Manager which summarises for each individual and team:

- strengths and areas for development
- summary judgements and development pathways

The purpose of the monthly IQA Report is:

- To enable analysis of strengths and areas for development
- To provide tutor/programme feedback and feed into the organisational self-assessment
- To track progress and identify emerging trends

Confidentiality

All IQA documentation records are treated as confidential. Completed records will only be made available to:

- The Tutor concerned
- The Programme Lead for the Tutor
- The IQA Team
- The Quality Manager
- Senior Management (as required)

The observation documentation and any adjustments made to the tutor's action plan will be a key focus in all monthly one-to-one caseload review meetings including probationary meetings.

Quality Standards Required

To undertake quality activities all IQA's must have a proven track record of outstanding teaching practice. In addition to this, they must have at least five years practitioner experience and / or hold a recognised qualification.

All observers must have undertaken relevant IQA training and are subject to on-going quality assurance and standardisation. IQA's should ensure they are well prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to make an informed and objective, evidence-based, judgement about the work of a tutor. The tutor should expect to receive fair and constructive feedback that is objective and evidenced. Tutor development needs, resource implications and other issues arising out of IQA activities will be reported to the programme lead and quality manager.

The IQA Strategy shall at all times be a constructive, positive and a developmental feature of our quality provision. All staff involved in the IQA process and coaching of key learner processes must attend internal SCCU standardisation to ensure professional standards and consistency. As well as the initial training for IQA's, there will be on-going training, linked to the identification and understanding of standards related to the learner journey. Training will also focus on developing IQA skills in coaching and support, providing developmental feedback and supporting effective improvement planning.

Training for Tutors

Development days, external CPD, webinars, internal communications, an internal CPD programme and other opportunities will be used to promote best practice and ensure that delivery staff are supported in their self-evaluation and personal development. Standardisations, education meetings and tutor support meetings should be used to promote development, maintain quality, and ensure standardisation of approaches. Moderation activities will further enhance consistency and quality.

Moderation

All IQA documentation will be moderated by the quality manager and used as an evaluation tool to produce the monthly IQA reports. This will allow for comparisons to be made of the key judgements to ensure consistency of approach.

How to raise concerns about the IQA Process/Findings

Tutors should raise any urgent concerns they may have relating to the IQA process or any observed practice immediately to their programme lead. In the event that the programme lead is unable to support, they can seek additional guidance from other IQA's or Sector Specialists. If concerns continue to exist, a formal concern should be put in writing and

addressed to the Quality Manager. A response will be received within 10 working days clearly identifying actions that will be taken within defined timelines.

Tutors who have a concern about the observation process, the development pathway awarded, or the feedback received, may raise this informally with the IQA in the first instance. Tutors should discuss this with their programme lead and if issues remain unresolved, a formal appeal can be made in writing to the Quality Manager. Any formal concerns must be made by the tutor within 10 working days of the post-observation feedback taking place.