

Quality Assurance Policy

Introduction

BSL First recognises the importance of a well-managed assessment, internal verification and moderation process to the student's learning. The following policy is to be applied to all courses offered by BSL First.

The aim of this policy is to enable BSL First to use internal and external moderation reports to demonstrate the centre's capacity to maintain and improve upon high standards; to recognise the value of internal and external moderation to support teachers, assessors and trainee assessors; and to ensure that proper systems of assessment, quality assurance and moderation are in place and that all assessors and/or trainee assessors are using them consistently.

Assessors

All internal assessments must follow the assessment standards/guidelines laid down by the awarding body. The role of the assessor is to assess students against agreed standards of competence using a range of innovative assessment methods.

Assessors must have sufficient occupational competence to ensure an up-to-date working knowledge and experience of the principles and practice specified in the standards they are assessing. All assessors must hold a relevant assessor qualification and it is the responsibility of the Centre Manager to keep records of certificates and other evidence of occupational competence.

Assessors are responsible for:

- Following all regulatory guidance set out by the awarding body.
- Attending standardisation meetings to ensure consistency in the interpretation of the national standards.
- Assessments are sampled systematically to confirm the quality and consistency of decisions and feedback to assessors recorded.
- Assignment briefs are checked regularly to ensure they enable students to meet identified units/elements.
- Student's achievement records, unit and tracking records meet all award body requirements.
- Evidence of plagiarism is reported to the awarding body.

Internal verification/moderation

BSL First recognises that internal verification is at the heart of the internal quality assurance process. It is also recognised that internal verification is key in ensuring that the assessment credibility has been maintained throughout the process and that assessors are supported and monitored.

For RQF programmes, assessors carrying out internal verification or moderation of internal assessments no longer require an Internal Quality Assurance qualification. All assessors must hold a relevant assessor qualification.

Sampling Strategy

All internally assessed programmes will require a sampling plan, which reflects the needs of assessors and is agreed with the awarding body, if necessary.

Sampling is the reviewing of assignments/assessments and assessor's judgements at a point in time through observation or diverse evidence. In determining the strategy, assessors carrying out internal moderation will need to consider the following aspects:

- Current awarding body requirements
- Overall risk factor of assessor
- The assessor's experience - new assessors will require a higher level of sampling to ensure accuracy of assessment
- Assessment/satellite centres
- Cohorts of students
- Problem areas identified through previous sampling and EV reports
- Training needs
- Assessor workload

Sampling of assessments

Internal moderation for all internally assessed programmes must be on going. Sampling must not be based exclusively on portfolio evidence alone. An annual internal verification schedule will be produced identifying which assessors, students, units, types of evidence and locations will be verified.

Assessments should be:

- Valid: evidence is relevant to standards and assessment or grading criteria
- Authentic: produced by the student
- Current: evidence reflects the student's current skills and knowledge
- Sufficient: enough evidence to meet the standards
- Reliable: consistent reflection of student's performance over time

The basic requirement is that the work of all students should be sampled before his or her certificate is requested. Best practice is that the internal moderation achieves this thorough planning, which must at least in part include observing assessor/student assessments.

Internal verification should sample an assessor's decisions over a range of units, assessors and all assessment methods within the qualification undertaken over an agreed time period.

Standardisation Activity

It is recommended that at least one standardisation meeting per annum be carried out and recorded with programme teams.

The standardisation activity can take different forms but must involve students' evidence – either products or portfolios being reviewed by different assessors, or the assessors could compare the evidence they have collected for a particular unit.

Supporting New Assessors

All assessments carried out by unqualified assessment staff must be counter-signed by a competent qualified assessor during the interim period.

It is vital that a new assessor must have a clear action plan for completion in the shortest possible time scales. This should be recorded and carried out as part of the appraisal process after the first four weeks of employment at the latest.

New assessors should be given a coherent and structured induction that should involve BSL First management.

It is essential that any new assessor is enrolled/registered on an accredited Assessor course, if the relevant qualifications are not held.

The trainee assessor's assessment decisions are included in the standardisation activities

Continuous Professional Development

BSL First requires that assessors provide evidence of continuous professional development. Examples of CPD activities include:

- Work placement
- Job shadowing
- Technical skill update training
- Attending relevant courses
- Studying for Learning and Development Units
- Study related to job role
- Collaborative working with awarding bodies
- Examining
- Qualification development work
- Other appropriate activity agreed with the awarding body

Record Keeping

Centre management is responsible for ensuring that the following records are kept:

- Assessor CVs
- Relevant qualifications
- Records of assessor workloads (if applicable)
- Accurate registered student numbers
- Student application forms
- Student Awarding Body registration details
- Locations of satellite centres with current list of assessors and IVs
- Candidate application forms

Portfolio Retention

The awarding body requires portfolios and evidence of students' assessments must be kept for 1 year.

BSL First's policy is all portfolios and evidence of students' work will be retained for 12 months and then archived for up to 3 years. After the 3 years, the evidence will be deleted.

All assessment materials, evidence and portfolios will be kept secure in the Cloud, in line with our Data Protection Policy.