QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

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1. Statement of Intent

ELA are committed to ensuring robust Internal Quality Assurance is in place within the organisation. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) is the process of monitoring, teaching, learning, coaching and assessment practice in order to ensure that assessment decisions and standards of work meet internal, regulatory and national standards. ELA will ensure that the process provides a continuous check on the consistency, quality, and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of learners' work and feedback.

★ To ensure that all learners are fairly, accurately, and regularly assessed in a consistent manner.

★ To meet and exceed the requirements placed upon us by the awarding bodies, and organisational policies.

★ To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all our learners and that external requirements are fully met.

★ To support Assessors in their assessment activities by affording them the opportunity to receive critically supportive comment on the assessment decisions reached.

★ To monitor assessment practice by completing interim IQA of portfolio qualifications and final IQA of Functional Skills

★ To ensure Learning and Development Practitioners are delivering teaching, learning, and coaching to the apprenticeship standard and assessment plan requirements.

★ To ensure that apprentices are gateway and EPA ready.

2. Aim

The strategy aims to:

★ Ensure that internal quality assurance is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and programme activity.
★ Ensure that the internal quality assurance procedure is open, fair, and free from bias.
★ Ensure that there is accurate recording of verification decisions.
★ Ensure there is accurate tracking and recoding of IQA sampling and feedback.

3.   Responsibilities

All delivery and administration support staff have a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring the policy is known, understood, and implemented. It is the responsibility of the IQA to ensure that internal quality assurance/moderation is carried out in a timely and correct manner, meeting both awarding body and specified requirements of ELA.

The role of an IQA:

★   Monitor, review and evaluate the quality of assessment processes and practice.

★   Plan and prepare monitoring activities according to the requirements of own role.

★   Ensure interim and final IQA activity is embedded into sampling plans.

★   Agree and prioritise Assessor learning needs and produce individual development plans with Assessors to reflect these.

★   Check that assessment decisions are made using specified criteria.

★   Ensure English, Maths and Digital skills are embedded throughout assessments and included in TLAPs

★   Compare Assessor decisions to ensure they are consistent and work with Assessors, trainers, employers, and learners to ensure the standardisation of assessment practice and outcomes.

4.   Conflict of interest in Assessment

Where there is a potential conflict of interest involving learners, members of staff, and/or internal quality assurers the matter should be referred to the IQA in the first instance and in the failure of an agreement being reached, to the Quality Manager who will ensure that appropriate actions are taken to manage and mitigate any actual conflict of interest, including exclusion from further involvement in managing or monitoring the assessment of materials where a conflict has been identified.

5.   Quality RAG

Each Assessor will be allocated to a risk band, this will be based on performance, qualification, and best practice. Risk bands this will be rated on timely achievements and referral rates, this will vary dependant on experience and sector.

RED	AMBER	GREEN
50%	20%	10%
Trainee assessors or newly qualified Assessors.	Assessors with some experience in the role	Experienced
Assessors new to an assessment scheme, qualification, or level.	May be returning to the role after a leave of absence	Fully qualified
Assessors requiring	Some	Very little
additional support due to development needs	development needs	development needs
No up to date CPD	CPD up to date	CPD up to date

6.   Rationale for Banding

All sampling plans and bands will be reviewed regularly and led from changes showing on the management information system. As sampling will be planned per Assessor, this will cover candidates across all contracts, age groups, vocational and geographical areas.

★   100% Sample of all units
★   Focusing on specific units that may show some competency concerns.

7.   Caseloads

Caseloads will be allocated to Assessors to meet the organisation requirements. Each learner will be allocated to the Assessor who is occupationally competent to deliver the full framework or assessment standard. Assessor who are not familiar to the specifications will have training time allocated from another Assessor or IQA.

8.   Assessor Feedback

Activity feedback must be completed for every internal quality assurance activity. This feedback must be sent to the relevant Assessor, and this will be available from a centre monitor.

The feedback must be directed to each Assessor and should address their assessment practice. The IQA should avoid generalised statements.

★   Precise, focused comments on the assessment undertaken, support Assessor development and evidence the rigour of verification activity.

★   Depending on the experience and qualifications of Assessors, the IQA may be reviewing more than one unit during a verification session.

★   In addition to the sampling of evidence, the IQA will also record the method of assessment used, the assessment focus and whether the evidence is valid, authentic, current, and sufficient, and that there is evidence of consistent practice.

★   If a standardisation issue is identified, the IQA will need to record and discuss this at the quality assurer meeting with Assessors.

★   On completion of the qualification, the portfolio should be sent to the IQA who will undertake summative internal quality assurance by sampling and completing the IQA final portfolio/qualification report form. If the IQA agrees that the award is complete the award summary sheet should be signed and dated.

★   The portfolio is then sent to the centre for claiming of the award and potential external quality assurance sampling.

9.   Feedback and Judgements

The IQA must remain objective when making judgements as to whether the Assessor's assessment is appropriate. Feedback to the Assessor should be clear and concise, outlining areas for improvement. Judgements must be made entirely on the basis of the criteria. IQA feedback will be available to Assessors.

10.   Action from Feedback

★   On action plans for Assessors, the IQA will record what action is required by when and, at a later date, whether the action was completed.

★   The Assessor continuing professional development (CPD) record should be completed after each internal verification activity where development is identified, and it is essential that CPD is completed during the yearly cycle, and that it complies with relevant organisational requirements.

★   When observation of Assessor practice is undertaken during the quality assurance, the outcomes should be recorded on the IQA observation report.

★   Occasionally the IQA may have, or have been acquainted with, serious concerns, unsafe or incompetent practice in the workplace, which needs to be brought to the attention of the management group. The IQA concerns form should be completed and passed on to the Quality Manager.

11.   Standardisation

The appropriate member of the IQA team will chair standardisation meetings as per the agreed plan, minutes and actions will be available of all standardisation meeting and documentation of work sampled. Frequency of standardisation will vary, however as a minimum all delivery areas will have two meetings a year.

Agendas will change to suit the needs of the meetings and may include looking at Assessors' work to set best practice to standardise the assessment processes and procedures. Minutes will be produced for all standardisations, and these will be stored on shared drive along with all meeting notes, information, and feedback sheets.

12.   Record Keeping

In addition to updating the sampling plan, the IQA should document their findings on the approved template (IQA Report Template) which should be uploaded to One File, attached to the learner's portfolio. The report will be accessible to the Assessor to review and action as required. The IQA activity will be deemed as completed once the report has been returned (via One File) to the IQA with any actions completed, feedback and comments from the Assessor enclosed.

All lQA-related documents will be made available to the EQA as requested for external sampling and quality assurance.

13.   Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually by Quality Manager and through established quality audit procedures.

14.   Observation and Deep Dive

ELA is committed to the continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning and ensuring learners receive a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum.

ELA will continue to use its observation of teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) process as an established quality indicator to assess the quality of delivery practice.

ELA will further develop the internal quality review process to mirror the Deep Dive model. This will be taking a vertical slice through the learner's journey within a curriculum area (specific subject, level, or discipline). It will be used to explore the '**curriculum intent, implementation,** and **impact** through a curriculum lens of particular subjects or provision types. (EIF 2019).

The Deep Dive will review the quality of the learner experience and will include a range of internal quality activities, this will include observations. It will also facilitate continual development of tutor practice which will continue to have a positive impact on improving TLA.

The information collected during the observation (if used independent of the Deep Dive) and/or Deep Dive will also inform CPD activities, the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and will be evaluated in the annual Self-Assessment Review (SAR).

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Observation

The primary aim of lesson observation is to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This could be classroom based or online/blended delivery.

Observers will expect to see:

★   Evidence of planning which is shared with the learners (careful planning and sequencing of activities that support learners to fully engage, and which have a positive impact on their progression)

★   Aims and objectives for the session.

★   Attendance and attendance trends (as stated online observation session information- attached)

★   Reference to homework or pre-set private study.

★   Recap from previous lesson (to evidence recall of previous knowledge skills and behaviours i.e.: long term memory or 'sticky' learning)

★   Regular, timely checking of individual learning against plan to ensure learning has taken place, and that learners have committed their new skills, behaviours, attitudes, knowledge and understanding to their long-term memory (reviewed throughout session to test understanding)

★   crisp start/consolidation of the session including advising on what will be covered in next week's session.

★   Use of different assessment types initial, formative assessment and where appropriate summative

★   Recording and tracking of learner progress

For new staff the first observation will be completed within the probationary period of the role. This will be an ungraded observation in line with the EIF criteria for TLA.
If unsatisfactory the probationary period will be extended, and development and support will be put in place. If the member of staff is unable to improve their performance to the required standard within the timescales agreed, further action will be taken.

Observation Outcome	Process for first Observation
Outstanding or Good	★ Successful observation – address agreed set targets as identified in action plan.
Requires Improvement or concern	★ An individual support plan will be put into place to support the identified areas for further development. ★ A re-observation will take at the end of the 2 weeks to monitor improvement(s).

Observation Grade	Process following first re-observation
Outstanding or Good	★ Successful observation – address agreed set targets as identified in your action plan.
Requires Improvement	★ An individual action plan will be put into place to support the identified areas for further development for a further 2 weeks.
Continuing concern	★ Formal capability. ★ All observations taking place under this procedure will be undertaken as a joint lesson observation. ★ This will take place 2 weeks after first re-observation.

All existing staff will be expected to obtain at least Good and will undergo at least one formal observation per academic year either as a stand-alone observation, probationary review or as part of a Deep Dive.

Those who are judged as Requires Improvement or of concern will be re-observed at the end of 2 weeks. A robust action plan will be agreed. If the member of staff is unable to demonstrate an improvement in their performance, further action will be taken.

Staff will receive reasonable notice prior to the week in which they are to be observed, with a minimum notice period of 48 hours.

Ungraded observations will be unannounced and will take the form of a 'drop in'. All observations will be developmental, and feedback will be given in a timely manner.

Procedure for remote observations

The procedure for observing remote sessions will follow the principles set out above and will include:

★ Notification a minimum of 24 hours before the session
★ To be sent to observer prior to session:

- link to online session
- Online observation session information (attached)
- Scheme of Work
- 5-minute lesson plan
- Learner profile of the group (inc additional learning needs and adjustments made)
- Learner contact details
- Clarity of additional staff/tutors in the session if applicable
- Copies of learning materials being used.

★ There may be a productive dialogue between tutors and observers and between learners and observers to inform the overall Deep Dive outcomes where appropriate.

★ The post observation meeting is focused on a constructive developmental dialogue.

★ Action plans identify actions required.

★ Greater focus on follow-up support

Protocols for remote delivery:

NB: Assessors must be available throughout the session and not just set a task for the learners to do on their own. In most sessions using Microsoft Teams (or similar) the tutor should be visible on screen unless they are sharing a document or PowerPoint presentation in which case learners should be able to hear them. Sessions should be interactive exactly the same as a face-to-face session.

Tutors should check learners are taking notes or are using the handouts provided to enable the learners to revisit any learning that has taken place after the session.

It is expected that **all learners** will be visible on screen with microphones muted and ready to work. In exceptional cases permission to have non-visual participation may be given. This should be added to the online observation session information to ensure the observer is aware. It is expected that this request will be rare.

It is important that tutors develop learner's confidence and resilience and an agreed phased approach to full visual participation should be determined.

Feedback

Feedback must be given as soon as possible after the observation, in most instances within the same working day. Feedback will be recorded on the Observation report form and an action plan will be agreed and implemented.

Appeals

The Appeals should be made in writing to the Quality Manager within 48 hours of the observation.

Deep Dives

Deep Dive methodology will be used to gather evidence from a range of quality activities to assess the quality of education. The Deep Dive is designed to gain a greater understanding of how the curriculum is planned and sequenced. The Deep Dive will look at how the learners learn and how the efficacy of learning is judged. Observation provides an mportant evidence base for the 'deep dives' carried out by the quality team. Deep Dives will include joint scrutiny of work and where possible will be carried out with learner and/or tutor.

Deep dives will include observations including talking to tutors and learners and looking at learner work. These may be in addition to the established observation model. Observers will be exploring how learners starting points re being used to develop curriculum, how assessment is used and tracking progress in knowledge and skills. They will also comment of resources and how these are used to support learning.

The Deep Dive will measure the impact of the curriculum on the individuals' learning experience whilst identifying tutor training needs and support. This will be achieved through:

★ Evaluating curriculum intent, implementation, and impact
★ Developing appreciation and recognition of high-quality teaching, learning and assessment
★ Attention to the quality of learning and a focus on individual learner progress.
★ Establishing high expectations for all learners
★ Monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
★ Identification and sharing of good practice and where improvement is needed.
★ Observation outcomes considered with other internal quality activities such as attendance, punctuality, learner reviews and efficacy of starting points, scrutiny of learner work, articulation of curriculum sequencing, retention, achievement, distance travelled, and learner voice.
★ will inform appraisals of all staff.

Activity	√ or x
Introductory email sent to Delivery Head confirming the focussed Curriculum Review (Deep Dive), the activities to be conducted and information needed	
A schedule of classroom/virtual activities to be collated	
Learning activities confirmed	
Learners selected for portfolio deep dive	
Learners selected for telephone interview (using agreed question template)	
Employers selected for telephone interview (using agreed question template)	
Team to confirm all activities are planned and on track	
Work Scrutiny/analysis of learner portfolios	
Learner reviews to be observed	
Observations of classroom/virtual teaching sessions (report to be completed using observation report)	
Team leads to collate evidence and draft report using deep Dive report template	

Work Scrutiny

Work Scrutiny will assess how learning is taking place across the curriculum and the impact. A range of evidence will be examined, and this will be looked at holistically across the programme and will include a proportionate sample of portfolios to provide a balanced sample.

Progress Reviews

Progress Reviews are vital points throughout the learner journey where reflection and timely action is put into place to support the learner in achieving their desired outcomes. The learner Review should capture all aspects of the curriculum and include analysis of learner starting points and the monitoring progress in developing knowledge and skills. Effective questioning will allow learning progress to be further demonstrated with questions around individualised role/ workplace, progress, how learners collect and complete work, stretch and challenge activities and use feedback.

Employer engagement in the Progress Review should be evident with their feedback captured to fully triangulate their learning in the workplace and how they are mplementing new knowledge and skills within their workplace.

Learner Telephone Interviews

Conversations with a relative sample of learners about what they are learning will further develop the overall understanding of the quality of education. This activity will provide the opportunity to build a clearer understanding of the curriculum offer and how well the content is learned, and information/ new learning is retained.

Questions should be asked which cover the entire learning journey as this supports progression and sequencing including wider learning. Learners involved in this stage should include those who have had their work scrutinised within the Deep Dive.

Employer Telephone Interviews

Conversations with employers about the learner and their learning will support the Deep Dive process. This activity will act as a check against their knowledge and understanding of the programme and their responsibilities to the learner. It will broaden knowledge of learning and of the learner to life as questions can be asked around how new knowledge and skills have been applied in the workplace/ real world.

Roles and responsibilities

The head of quality has overall responsibility for the overall implementation of this policy and is responsible for planning and coordinating the activities of the team. The quality team will lead on the Deep Dive process and will gain an overview of the Quality of Education aspect through for example: work scrutiny, visits to learning environments, learner discussion and developing understanding of planned curriculum sequencing. Visits to learning may include – online, classroom, tutorials, functional skills, work-based assessments including visits to employers.

The members of the team (observers) are:

★   Quality Manager
★   Quality team
★   Director

A number of observations may be joint observations which will facilitate moderation of observation stands and validation of judgements.