

Sampling Framework for Internal and/or External Verification purposes

1 Introduction

1.1 In order to ensure accuracy and equity in learner achievement it is vital that checks are applied to the outcomes of the assessment process. Checks must also be made to confirm that reasonable adjustments are appropriate and that the form and level of assessment is as rigorous, and the outcomes as secure, as those for other learners assessed via the strategy agreed for the unit or course or qualification. These checks are applied via the internal and external verification processes.

1.2 It is inappropriate to internally or externally verify the work of every learner but a sufficiently large sample must be taken to ensure rigour and accuracy of outcomes. The sample must ensure that issues such as the experience and ability of the assessors, the overall group size, the range of levels being assessed and the methods of assessments in use and number of assessors are covered. Assessments offered through Welsh and English must be covered in the sample.

Guidance on Implementation

2 Internal Verification

2.1 It is the responsibility of the Internal Verifier to consult with course tutors to determine which learners' work should be included within the sample that they will review in line with the centre policy and Agored Cymru sampling framework. **The sample is not selected at random, neither is it selected by the tutor/assessor, the internal verifier makes the final decision.**

2.2 Normally a sample of approximately the square root of the number of learners within the group should be selected; however a centre may wish to sample at a higher rate than this. Where the work of an experienced tutor with a good 'track record' of assessment decisions is being reviewed, the sample may be reduced as long as it remains within the Agored Cymru sampling framework. Conversely, in the case of tutors new to OCN assessment, or with those where there have been problems in the past, a larger sample may be decided upon. Where it is necessary to accommodate a group with diverse assessment needs, ie reasonable adjustments, it may be necessary to increase the sample size. The minimum number for any IV process should be 3 pieces of work – in small groups this may exceed the square root and may be all the learners (left) in the group.

2.3 The actual sample should be assessed learners' work that is border line in achievement, average in achievement for the group and above average. It may be that the requirement to review all borderline cases increases the number beyond that indicated by the 'square root rule'. Where different methods of assessment are used within a unit or course, to respond to

individual learner needs i.e. reasonable adjustments and/or special considerations examples of all methods of assessments should be included in the sample.

2.4 It may not be possible for an internal verifier to make decisions on a sample unaided. The course tutor will be able to provide the necessary background information on the context of each piece of work and any specific learner requirements. Using this information the internal verifier will make the final decision on which work to review.

2.5 The internal verification plan for the cycle, which may be 2 or 3 years, or an academic year, should ensure that the work of all assessors is reviewed. Where assessors work in more than one centre, work from all centres should be included in the sample.

2.6 Where assessors are working at more than one level, the sample should include work from all levels covered.

2.7 All verifiers should advise assessors that they reserve the right to sample at random in addition to the structured sample described above.

2.8 Internal verification should be planned in advance and the IV programme should be communicated to assessors and OCN staff as part of the annual quality review. Evidence from internal verification activities should be properly recorded so that it is available for the external verifier to review. If this process is not rigorous it could lead to a delay in the signing of Recommendations for Award of Credit (RAC) and therefore the award of credits.

3 External Verification

3.1 The external verifier will produce a 'sampling plan' and communicate that to Agored Cymru and the centres and work to similar guidelines to the internal verifier when choosing a sample. Only the work that has been through IV will be presented to the EV and from this the sample will be selected.

3.2 The EV is required to report on all aspects of the internal verification process to the Head of the Centre or Principal using the standard benchmark reporting form for Internal Verification, and should clearly identify good practice and any sanctions, conditions or recommendations. This will inform the annual quality review and the risk rating and sanctions, conditions and recommendations will be monitored as part of the annual quality review.

4 Summary:

4.1 The final decision on whose work should be internally or externally verified should be made only by the verifier.

4.2 The sample should comprise:

- approximately the square root of the number of learners involved, but not less than 3 learners per cohort;
- work assessed by all assessors working on that programme/pathway/course/unit;
- all borderline work, plus examples of average and excellent work;
- samples from all centres involved in the delivery of the programme/pathway or course;
- all levels of credit involved;
- any work using RPL or e-portfolios;
- any work that was not assessed in the same way as the rest of the group, ie from learners requiring special considerations or reasonable adjustments;
- work assessed by different methods;
- examples of work where assessment has been carried out in Welsh and English or bi-lingually.