Assessment Guidance Handbook

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Version 8

Contents

1. Introduction

The Assessment Guidance Handbook is designed to give guidance and support to centres on assessing VTCT qualifications. Additional guidance and support can be found in qualification specifications and/or record of assessment books for the qualification.

2. Learner support

An important part of the assessment and quality assurance process is to allow learners to take ownership of their qualification. This can be achieved if learners are given the necessary support and access to resources, starting from their induction. The learner needs to be given the record of assessment book and/or qualification specification for their qualification. This will ensure that the learner:

- knows what has to be done;
- agrees on any shortfalls in competence;
- is a willing partner in taking action and making improvements.

Additionally, an overview of the assessment and quality assurance process should be explained to the learners.

It is of vital importance that learners are given the full facts regarding what is involved in the qualification before committing to it. It is the centre's responsibility to assess the learner and make the decision whether to accept them on a particular course of training for a VTCT qualification.

The centre should provide learners requiring reasonable adjustments appropriate advice and guidance, and encourage learners to pursue qualifications which they have a reasonable expectation of reaching the required standard.

As part of the induction process, the centre must make learners aware that if selected for sampling by an EQA they may be required to attend the centre on a day and/or time that is different to their normal attendance. All learners selected for sampling must attend the EQA visit, other than in extenuating circumstances. The centre must ensure that the learner understands that the EQA is monitoring the centre's assessment and quality assurance process, rather than the learners, to allow VTCT to trust the centre's judgement and enable the processing of certification.

3. Formative and summative assessment

VTCT strongly advises centres to use 'holistic assessment', where the assessment covers the whole service that the learner is performing, not just a small segment or task. Assessments are used to judge learner competence and progress, as such learners must be informed in advance of the type of assessment. The centre must ensure that they maintain accurate records detailing assessments undertaken and outcomes/achievement, including, if appropriate, in the learner's record of assessment book.

3.1. Formative assessment

Formative assessment is used to monitor learner competence and progression. Formative assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning and involves the assessor providing informal feedback to enable learners to improve their work to achieve a higher grade. It is important to consider the scheduling of formative assessment to allow learners sufficient time to take action and improve. VTCT does not prescribe the number of formative assessments that the centre should undertake, however, formative assessment should be recorded and made available to the IQA and EQA when necessary.

3.2. Summative assessment

Summative assessment is used to evaluate learner competence and progression at the end of a unit or component. Summative assessment should take place when the assessor deems that the learner is at a stage where competence can be demonstrated.

The qualification specification and/or Record of Assessment book will provide the number of summative assessments that are required. Learners are required to be registered before any summative assessments are completed.

4. Assessment methods

Methods of assessment are detailed in the qualification specification and/or record of assessment book. Internal assessment is set marked and internally quality assured by the centre to clearly demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes. During EQA visits, the EQA will sample internal assessments. All internal assessments must be signed and dated by the assessor and/or IQA to ensure authenticity.

5. IQA sampling guidance

As part of the Internal Quality Assurance process, the centre is required to devise a sampling strategy to ensure that assessment decisions are accurate and consistent and that the assessor(s) are interpreting and applying qualification criteria correctly.

IQAs are responsible for sampling assessment decisions and need to take a sufficient sample to satisfy the quality assurance of assessment decisions. VTCT does not prescribe a number of learners or percentage that must be sampled but offers the following guidance for centres. Therefore the centre's sampling strategy should:

- increase the level of sampling for qualifications being delivered for the first time;
- increase the level of sampling for unqualified assessors and new assessors;
- ensure that all, or the majority of learners are sampled across the units of a qualification;
- not restrict sampling to certain learners;
- plan for sampling to allow for sufficient review;
- include all assessors for a particular qualification;
- reduce the level of sampling, where consistency and accuracy have been reliably demonstrated by assessors.

The centre must record and maintain the details and outcomes of all sampling activity and make these records available to the EQA on request. IQAs will maintain a substantially higher level of sampling than EQAs.

If a centre is in doubt about their sampling plan, they can contact their EQA for guidance.

6. Language of the assessment

6.1. English, Welsh, Irish, British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language

All learners taking VTCT qualifications will normally be assessed in English, however where required VTCT will make qualifications available to be assessed in British Sign Language, Welsh in Wales, or Irish or Irish Sign Language in Northern Ireland. Any centre wishing to assess in any of these languages must make a request in writing to VTCT.

6.2. Other languages

VTCT is not obliged to offer any qualification, or assessment materials, in languages other than those listed in section 6.1. However, VTCT may make qualifications available in other languages, where appropriate. A charge may be made for providing this service, but this will be discussed and agreed with the centre beforehand. Centres in the UK should, first consider alternative support mechanisms for their learners, before selecting translation especially if the learner is seeking employment within the UK.

The centre needs to request an assessment in other languages, from VTCT, at the earliest possible opportunity as there is a time lapse from a decision to agree to the assessment being conducted in that language and the translation of any test papers.

6.3. Additional requirements

At the point of registration, the centre is required to indicate the assessment language for each learner, where a language is not identified, the assessment language will be recorded as English.

Where a qualification is taken in a language other than English, VTCT will clearly identify an assessment material as being written in those languages. Further, any certificates will be endorsed 'The assessment for this qualifications has been undertaken in the language of XX'.

If you have any questions or want more information, please contact exams@vtct.org.uk

Document amendment history page

Version	Document Owner	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v1		01/07/2015	First published	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v2		01/09/2015	Updated and simplified information, incorporated sampling strategy guidance (replacing VTCT sampling strategy). Added new information related to synoptic assessment roles and responsibilities of assessors, IQAs and EQAs. Increased information on examined qualifications and clarified information on language of assessment.	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v3		13/04/2017	Updated with new branding	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v4		13/06/2017	Added appendix for revisions to this document	Quality and Processing Supervisor
v5		21/02/2018	Proofread, updated formatting to new branding guidelines	Qualifications Manager
v6		05/03/2019	Formatting update	Compliance Manager
v7		18/06/2019	Minor wording change to 6.2	Assessment Manager
v8		01/03/2021	Minor wording change to 6.3. Title change in document ownership.	Head of Assessment

Document Review

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Head of Assessment	Reviewed

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Document Sign-off

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Executive Director of Awarding	21/02/2018