





Meeting Title Quality Assurance Committee (1 September 2017)
Date of Issue 8 September 2017

Attendance

Dame Asha Khemka	Committee Chair, IfA Board member
Paul Cadman	Committee member, IfA Board member
Isabel Sutcliffe	Independent Committee member, Director of Isabel Sutcliffe Consultancy Ltd
Professor Jim Iley	Independent Committee member, Professor of Medicinal Chemistry, The Open University
Ben Blackledge	Independent Committee member, Director of Education and Skills Competitions at WorldSkills UK
Richard Guy	Deputy Director, Quality, IfA
Nikki Christie	Deputy Director, Assessment & Quality Assurance, IfA
Ana Osbourne	Deputy Director, Approvals, IfA
Alex Morris	Head of Assessment & Quality Assurance, IfA
	

Apologies

None

1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed members of the Quality Assurance Committee to its second meeting. The Chair then invited Isabel Sutcliffe, who was not present at the last meeting to introduce herself to the Committee. Committee members then introduced themselves in turn to Isabel.

2. Minutes and actions from the last meeting

- 2.1. The Chair asked for updates on the five actions that were agreed at the last meeting.
- 2.2. Action 1 – The Deputy Director for Quality confirmed that he would be able to provide information on research based measures as part of the work on indicators for the Quality Statement for the next Committee meeting. The Board have asked for a minimum number of indicators to be included in the statement.
- 2.3. Actions 2, 3 and 4 are items on the agenda for discussion later.
- 2.4. Action 5 – The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance confirmed that the Terms of Reference for the Committee will be an organic document that can be updated at regular intervals going forward. Nikki agreed to provide Committee members with the latest version of the Terms of Reference in due course.
- 2.5. The Committee confirmed that they were happy to approve the minutes.

Action 1 – The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance to provide Committee members with the latest version of the Terms of Reference once it has been updated.

3. Areas of responsibility flowchart

- 3.1. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance presented her paper to the Committee on the areas of responsibility for ensuring quality in apprenticeships. She explained to Committee members that quality in apprenticeships is assured by a number of different stakeholders at five different stages in the process. She explained each of the five stages to the Committee and highlighted that the Institute has an important role to play at stages 1-4. She also explained Ofqual's role in the development of standards and assessment plans (stage 1) and how the Institute works with them on this.
- 3.2. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance then talked through the diagram that set out the various stages in the External Quality Assurance (EQA) process, and how they differ for each EQA option.
- 3.3. Committee members raised several questions about the EQA stages of the flowchart. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance informed them that the IfA is monitoring the quality of EQA providers and that our main focus is on ensuring their independence and that there are no conflicts of

interest. She also explained that our “How to” guidelines set out what we think the percentage split of EQA providers should be.

- 3.4. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance also confirmed for the Committee that a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is being developed with Ofqual for their role in the EQA process. The MoU outlines how Ofqual are a distinct regulatory organisation with various levers at their disposal. She confirmed that the MoU is still being worked on and the Committee asked that each of the 4 options should be required to submit the same report to the Institute through the Committee. She agreed to revise the MoU with the views of the Committee and offered for Ofqual to present to the Committee on the work they do on EQA.

Action 2 – The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance to work on the Ofqual MOU with the views of Committee members.

4. Overview of the Approvals process

- 4.1. The Deputy Director for Approvals provided the Committee with an overview of the Approvals process and talked them through the accompanying flowchart. The flowchart outlined the various steps that a proposal, standard or assessment plan has to go through over a 6 week period from submission to notification of outcome. She explained how both her team and the Assessment and Quality Assurance team constantly check quality throughout the Approvals process and in line with our legislative requirements.
- 4.2. The Deputy Director for Approvals confirmed for Committee members that the Approvals team will go out to external stakeholders to gain their feedback and comments at the proposal stage, but would not do this for the standards stage.
- 4.3. The Deputy Director for Approvals explained that both the Approvals and Assessment teams have introduced a triage system to look at proposals to ensure that they align with policy. This system identifies those proposals that are fit to go forward to the route panel and those that need to go back to trailblazers with comments in order to improve their quality.
- 4.4. The Deputy Director for Approvals outlined how proposals, standards and assessment plans that go forward are reviewed by the route panels who apply their own occupational experience and expertise and reach a recommendation on whether to approve, approve with conditions or reject. These then go forward

to the Approvals and Funding Committee, who review the recommendations of the route panels and apply their strategic perspective. Following this trailblazers are then informed of the outcome.

- 4.5. The Deputy Director for Approvals provided the Committee with the latest statistics on the numbers of standards, assessment plans and proposals that are being considered by the route panels on average each month and roughly how long these meetings last for.
- 4.6. The Chair felt that some of these key points and statistics about the Approvals process should be communicated more widely across the Institute to ensure others are aware of the input on quality.
- 4.7. Committee members raised several questions about the role and expertise of the route panels. The Deputy Director for Approvals reassured the Committee that the 15 route panels and their chairs have the necessary expertise they need in order to make effective decisions on whether to approve, approve with conditions or reject a proposal, standard or assessment plan. The Institute is currently in the process of recruiting more members and expertise to the route panels in order to bolster this.
- 4.8. The Deputy Director for Approvals confirmed for Committee members that each month they will receive copies of the latest final decisions that have been made on approvals and funding including copies of the packs that will have been discussed by the Approvals and Funding Committee. The Deputy Director for Quality also agreed to provide Committee members with the full set of criteria from the Quality Statement to support this.
- 4.9. Members of the Committee confirmed that going forward they will need to ensure that decisions that are being made on approvals and funding are based on expertise, sound knowledge and judgement, and that learning from this Committee is also shared with the Approvals and Funding Committee to ensure consistency going forward. The Committee also agreed to think about how this can be reflected in the Terms of Reference as well.

Action 3 – The Deputy Director for Quality to provide Committee members with the criteria from the Quality Statement.

5. Quality Data Report

- 5.1. The Head of Assessment & Quality Assurance presented his Quality Data Report to the Committee, which provides statistics and information of the approvals of assessment plans, End Point Assessment (EPA) and the register of apprentice assessment organisations (ROAAO), and EQA.
- 5.2. [REDACTED]
- 5.3. The Head of Assessment & Quality Assurance explained that the system that the IfA has put in place – whereby standards are approved for delivery and then made available for AAOs to bid to deliver assessment against them – means that there is a lag and consequently there will always be some approved standards with no AAO registered. This only really becomes a problem when apprentices on that standard are approaching assessment. At the moment that number is very small. [REDACTED]. As more standards are approved for delivery ESFA’s approach (working with specific standards) may not be tenable so it is helpful for the Institute to identify if standards without AAOs in place share any characteristics. We could then pre-emptively work with those standards on securing AAOs. The Committee confirmed that they had concerns about this issue and that the length of time it takes to get an AAO registered should be defined.
- 5.4. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance explained that going forward her team will look at what progress AAO’s have made in the first 3 months and first 6 months of being on the register.
- 5.5. The Chair asked for the Quality Data Report to be made available again at the next Committee meeting.

Action 4 – The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance and The Head of Assessment & Quality Assurance to provide an updated version of the Quality Data Report for the next Quality Assurance Committee meeting in October.

6. Update on External Quality Assurance (EQA)

- 6.1. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance updated the Committee on work to date with the EQA process. IfA officials have been out and about over the summer to observe and witness EQA in progress. So far they have visited 5 standards and done a series of desk reviews on these.
- 6.2. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance informed the Committee that a first draft of an EQA report is now available and agreed to circulate this with Committee members electronically following the meeting. She invited Committee members to provide her with any comments on the report, particularly in relation to its usefulness to them in fulfilling their role on the Committee, by Friday 8 September 2017.
- 6.3. The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance informed the Committee that so far her team are generally happy with the standard of EQA that they have seen, and that an EQA provider is now in place to undertake EQA on behalf of the Institute. She confirmed that her team will start bringing EQA reports to the Committee as soon as they are available.
- 6.4. Isabel Sutcliffe informed the Committee that she has a conflict of interest with the Procurement and Supply standard and asked for this to be officially recorded by the secretariat. It was agreed that any papers that are due to come to the Committee regarding this standard should not be shared with Isabel and considered in isolation by the Committee.

Action 5 – The Deputy Director for Assessment and Quality Assurance to circulate the first draft of her EQA report to Committee members. Committee members to provide her with any comments on the report by Friday 8 September 2017.

7. Update on the Quality Statement

- 7.1. The Deputy Director for Quality informed the Committee that the Quality Statement is now in its final draft version and will be submitted to the IfA Board for their sign-off on Monday 11 September 2017. The statement will then go out to consultation with stakeholders, groups and route panels.
- 7.2. The Deputy Director for Quality agreed to circulate that latest draft version of the Quality Statement to Committee members in the next few days and welcomed any comments from them that could be included in the next version.

Action 6 – The Deputy Director for Quality to circulate latest version of Quality Statement to Committee members inviting any further comments.

8. Future meetings and next steps

8.1. The next meeting of the Quality Assurance Committee will be on Wednesday 4 October 2017 from 09:00-10:30am at 151 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1 9SZ. Papers and reports for the next meeting should be circulated to the Committee one week in advance.

9. AOB

9.1. None.



Date created 6 September 2017

Version Cleared by Deputy Director, Assessment & Quality Assurance, IFA
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Agreed Actions

Action	Owner	Completed (Y/N/ In progress)	Date updated
1 – Nikki Christie to provide Committee members with the latest version of the Terms of Reference once it has been updated.	Nikki Christie	In progress (for October Quality Assurance Committee)	8 September
2 – Nikki Christie to revise the Ofqual MOU with the views of Committee members and to explore the possibility of Ofqual presenting to a future Committee meeting on the work they do on EQA.	Nikki Christie	In progress (for October Quality Assurance Committee)	8 September
3 - Richard Guy to provide Committee members with the criteria from the Quality Statement.	Completed	Completed	8 September
4 – Nikki Christie and Alex Morris to provide an updated version of the Quality Data Report for the next Quality Assurance Committee meeting in October.	Nikki Christie / Alex Morris	In progress (for October Quality Assurance Committee)	8 September
5 – Nikki Christie to circulate the first draft of her EQA report to Committee members. Committee members to	Nikki Christie	Completed	8 September

provide Nikki with any comments on the report by Friday 8 September 2017.			
6 – Richard Guy to circulate latest version of Quality Statement to Committee members inviting any further comments.	Richard Guy	Completed	8 September