Quality Assurance Policy and Strategy

Policy statement

We are committed to delivering high-quality courses, qualifications, and programmes that meet the requirements of awarding bodies, funding agencies, regulators, and our own internal standards. Quality assurance (QA) is integral to ensuring that delivery, assessment, and learner experience are consistently robust, fair, valid and effective.

Quality Assurance Background

Definitions:

- Quality Assurance: The overarching process to ensure educational delivery and assessment meet all required standards.
- Quality Assurance interventions: targeted activities to review and monitor delivery, assessment, learner experience, and compliance.
- Quality Assurers: Central staff responsible for developing, managing, and overseeing the organisation's quality assurance (QA) strategy and ensuring it is effectively implemented across delivery and assessment.
- Verifiers: Qualified professionals who carry out quality assurance checks by sampling assessment decisions. This may include observations, learner interviews, and/or desk-based reviews. They provide feedback to assessors and centres to ensure consistency, accuracy, and compliance with standards.

Purpose and scope

This policy applies to all individuals involved in delivery, assessment, administration, quality assurance, and moderation of regulated and non-regulated programmes. Quality assurance practices will be adapted to suit the nature and scale of each programme, but a common baseline policy will apply across all activity.

Responsibilities

The Directors have an overall accountability for the quality of delivery.

Sarina Haddock, Quality and Training Manager, holds overall responsibility for the implementation of QA across the company.

- Email: Sarina.Haddock@sportstructures.com
- Address: Sport Structures, Suite 8, The Cloisters, 12 George Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 1NP
- Phone: 0121 455 8270 (**Ext.** 0219)

Operational responsibility will be delegated to relevant managers and staff across service areas, based on programme-specific needs.

Aims of Quality Assurance

The primary purpose of internal quality assurance is to:

- Ensure the delivery of high-quality, compliant training and assessment.

- Safeguard the integrity and credibility of our qualifications and programmes.

- Monitor teaching, learning, and assessment practices to ensure they meet our standards, as well as those of partners and regulators.

- Promote a consistent, fair, and learner-focused experience across all provisions.

Quality Assurance Objectives

Our overall objectives are to:

- deliver learning experiences that are engaging, supportive, and accessible to all.
- meet and exceed the quality standards set by our organisation, partners, and relevant regulatory bodies.

Assessment

- Ensure assessment is **Valid**, **Authentic**, **Current**, **Sufficient**, and **Reliable** (VACSR).
- Maintain consistent and accurate assessment processes and records.

Tutoring

- Tutors are qualified, supported, and aligned to our teaching philosophy.
- Delivery is inclusive, learner-centred, and aligned to a professional code of conduct.

Invigilation

- Invigilation practices are observed and reviewed.

Administration

- Learners receive timely, accessible information and support.
- Tutors and assessors are supported to meet their responsibilities.

Learner experience

- Learners receive support and are encouraged to provide feedback.
- Feedback informs continuous improvement.

Quality Assurance Strategy Commitments

We commit to:

- A transparent and risk-based QA strategy for all programmes.

- Clear sampling plans aligned with programme complexity and risk.

- Engagement with an independent Quality and Governance Group.

- Employment of qualified, current tutors, assessors, and verifiers.

- Continuous CPD and standardisation.

- Communication with learners and stakeholders.

- Ethical QA practices that uphold equality, diversity, and safety.

- Consistent and accurate documentation of all QA activity.

Roles and responsibilities

The following roles exist as part of our Quality Assurance strategy:

Title	Role overview	Sport Structures staff member?
Quality and Training Manager	Has responsibility for our overall performance as a training provider Coordinates the overall quality assurance strategy and implementation of sampling plans across the company. Ensures intervention paperwork is relevant to the needs of the Awarding or regulatory body. Oversees CPD for Apprenticeship tutors, assessors and verifiers.	Yes
Head of centre	Coordinates quality assurance in coach education delivery and liaison with appropriate Awarding bodies and oversees CPD for Coach education tutors and assessors	Yes
Project Officers	Coordinate and administer training programmes, communicating with learners and the workforce.	Yes
Verifiers	Verify and propose Improvements in the quality of delivery across programmes, ensuring high-quality teaching, learning and assessment for all learners.	Yes, and associates
Internal Assessor	Assesses competence of the learner(s) on a particular programme. This can be the tutor.	Yes
Independent Assessor	Has not been involved in the delivery of the programme and assesses the competence of the learner(s) in a programme.	Yes, and associates
Tutor	Provides learners with a programme of learning which will enable them to meet the learning	Yes

	and assessment outcomes of a particular programme.	
Assessors	Responsible for overseeing the internal or independent assessments.	Yes
Quality and governance group	Provides independent feedback and proposes improvements to delivery and assessment of Apprenticeship delivery	Four independent members with Skills and experiences from OFSTED, apprenticeship delivery, sector knowledge

Role of the Verifier

- Observe practice, sample learner work and assessment decisions.
- Facilitate standardisation, orientation and development planning.
- Are not involved in delivery or assessment unless for safety reasons.

Verifier Responsibilities before the course (if attending a course)

The verifier must be clear about the intervention(s) they are sampling and ensure they have the appropriate reporting paperwork. In addition, they must ensure that they are aware of all resources associated with the course (i.e., learning programme, delivery guidance etc). We encourage verifiers to liaise with members of our staff to confirm course details i.e., venue or delivery platform, timings etc.

Prior to any visit the verifier should liaise with the tutor or assessor they are verifying to ensure clarity of what the intervention will cover and the outcomes.

Verifier responsibilities during the course (virtual or face-to-face)

During the visit the verifier must:

- Introduce themselves to learners and the workforce and explain the purpose of their visit
- Record quality assurance findings by using the templates provided.
- Sample intervention(s) as per the sampling plan.
- Communicate with the external quality assurer to share practice and arrangements (if applicable)
- Seek self-evaluation from the tutor/assessor.
- Give feedback based on the competency framework.
- With the tutor/assessor identify areas of development.

Verifier responsibilities after the course

The verifier must:

- Complete the relevant quality assurance documentation provided and return these to Sport Structures electronically.
- Liaise with our staff to ensure effective reporting and any areas of concern are identified to enable action to be taken.

- Liaise with the external quality assurer to share findings (if necessary)

Pre-requisites of a Verifier

- Hold or be working towards an appropriate IQA qualification (e.g. Level 4 Award or V1/D34)
- Have relevant subject knowledge and industry experience.

Quality Assurance Strategy

- The Education Quality Assurance Strategy can be found in Appendix 1.
- The Apprenticeships Quality Assurance Strategy can be found in Appendix 2.

Standardisation

Standardisation or training events will be conducted for programmes. This will involve policy and procedure updates, training and the sharing of good practices. Standardisation will be related to the nature of the programme of study delivered.

Monitoring/evaluation

Monitoring and evaluating is an important aspect of the quality assurance policy. All programmes are monitored.

Any quality assurance points identified will be fed back to the relevant workforce and these actions will be monitored until completed. Training, CPD and standardisation will be used to share best practices and key themes identified in the quality assurance process, with further detail included in our Standardisation sessions or tutor updates.

Partner feedback

We will regularly review feedback from our delivery partners, including those who licence us to offer their courses, qualifications, or workshops, to continuously enhance the quality of our provision.

We will also respond proactively to feedback from awarding and regulatory bodies to strengthen the learner experience and ensure full compliance with their requirements.

Other policies

We recognise that our Quality Assurance strategy can link to other policies including:

- Malpractice and maladministration
- Enquiries and Appeals
- Complaints
- Safeguarding and Prevent
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Data Retention and Management
- Health and Safety

Details of these policies can be found in the 'About us' section on our website.

Guidance to tutors, assessors and verifiers can be found in our workforce section: https://www.sportstructures.com/workforce-section/

Appendix 1: Education IQA Strategy

Sampling approach for courses and associate workforce

Purpose

This strategy should be seen in the context of the overall company quality assurance policy. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure consistent quality and compliance in the delivery and assessment of qualifications and courses, delivered through our Commercial Directorate.

Scope and quality assurance interventions

Quality assurance will be conducted and will consider the following sampling methods;

1. **Tutor observation:** Direct observation of tutors delivering sessions, focusing on teaching practice and learner engagement.

2. **Assessor observation:** Observation of tutors/assessors during assessment activities against the set criteria.

3. **Learner products of work:** Sampling learner portfolios, assessments and tasks for quality, consistency, and compliance

4. **Learner experience:** Collection and analysis of feedback through surveys and structured interviews to gain insights into the overall learner journey and identify areas for improvement.

5. **Tutor and assessor experience:** We will regularly seek feedback from our tutors and assessors through quantitative surveys and informal conversations to better understand their experiences of delivering, assessing, and working with us.

6. **Course administration:** Review of course-related documentation including communications, attendance registers, assessment tracking records, and tutor performance logs to ensure effective administration and regulatory compliance.

Special consideration should be given to areas of risk including:

- All newly appointed tutors or assessors
- New qualifications/courses
- Existing qualifications/courses
- Existing qualifications/courses with new material

- Outcomes from the interventions above related to tutor, assessor, learner experience or administrative performance.

Tutor and/or Assessor RAGG Ratings

Tutors will be assigned a **RAGG (Red, Amber, Green, Gold)** rating based on IQA outcomes and learner feedback. If the tutor/assessor delivers across a range of courses they should be sampled based on their regularity of delivery and not per course.

RAG rating	Criteria	Sampling requirements	Support that might be needed
Red – High risk	- New tutor/assessor - History of poor IQA outcomes - Gaps in delivery experience - No recent delivery (inactive for 12 months or more) - Regular admin/compliance issues	- Observed **every course.** - Learner products of work sampling – minimum sampling per course	- Formal feedback and support plan - Shadowing, mentoring or additional training
Amber – Medium risk	- Tutors that are newly experienced - Inconsistent performance - Development areas identified. - No recent delivery (8-12 months) - Occasional admin/compliance issues	**Observed every second course.** - Learner products of work sampling – minimum sampling per course	- Targeted feedback and development - Peer support/observation
Green – Low risk	- Tutors that are experienced and consistently meet expectations. - Good IQA history and positive learner feedback - Strong admin and compliance	- Observed **every fourth course.** - Learner products of work sampling – minimum sampling per course	Opportunities for CPD for sharing with peers
Gold - consistently great practice	- Consistently exceeds expectations. - Excellent observation/IQA outcomes - Positively contributes to improving the course/learner experience	- Observed **every fifth course.** - Learner products of work sampling – minimum sampling per course	- Opportunities for CPD - Consider mentoring and peer support.

Tutors and assessors may move between RAGG ratings based on performance and feedback. **RAGG ratings should be reviewed bi-annually.** Tutors/assessors who deliver across a number of courses should have a consolidated rating not ratings per course.

Sampling frequency & focus

- **New courses:** All new courses must be sampled during the first delivery. This should include all sampling methods, where relevant. Sampling should cover delivery and assessment,

- **Existing courses**: Courses that have been running for at least 6 months are classed as existing. Qualifications should be sampled each time they are delivered and must include at minimum, learner products of work and rate my course surveys*. Course administration and learner interviews should be sampled once per quarter.

- **Existing courses with new material**: This should follow the 'new courses' sampling guidance.

- **For any course delivered**, sampling must include **learner feedback** through the **rate my course survey** and **learner products of work**. Please see below table for guidance:

Learner products of work – minimum sampling per course	
Cohort size	**Minimum sampling**
5-10 learners	Sample a minimum of 2 learners
11-14 learners	Sample a minimum of 3 learners
15-20 learners	Sample a minimum of 4 learners

- For RAGG Red-rated tutors or assessors, if there are issues with products of work, increase the sample to 30% minimum, regardless of cohort size.

- Sampling must cover a range of units, modules, or tasks. For example, across a cohort, this may mean reviewing all portfolio tasks but only selecting a few tasks for each individual learner. Normally sampling will be desk-based unless otherwise identified.

- All regulated qualifications must meet awarding organisation requirements.

It is important to note that:

- **No course or tutor** should be left unsampled across a quarter (unless the course or qualification has not been delivered)

- A risk-based approach means that sampling frequency can be modified where issues come to light.

Orientation and standardisation

- All tutors and assessors MUST be orientated into the delivery programme prior to delivering or assessing a course.
- Each course should have a yearly standardisation CPD session to include consolidated quality assurance feedback from the interventions identified above and proposed improvements.
- An associate CPD programme should be used to develop the associate workforce.

Reporting and recording

- The course lead should consolidate quality assurance feedback on a quarterly basis and feed into the overall company reporting. The lead IQA may support this process. The course will then be benchmarked against the overall quality assurance consolidated report.
- Qualitative comments from the quality assurance should be fed into the qualitative feedback.
- Trends from the quality assurance feedback should be consolidated and fed into standardisation planning.

Review and improvement.

- IQA planning is reviewed monthly to respond to new courses, tutors, or risks.
- Sampling planning should be carried out when a course is confirmed.
- Sampling plans should be flexible and risk-based, increasing sampling percentage for courses or tutors rated Red or Amber in RAGG status.
- All courses should aim to have at least one standardisation session with tutors and assessors per year.
- Trends will inform future workforce CPD, support, and RAGG status updates.

Sampling approach for Apprenticeship and associate workforce

Purpose

This strategy should be seen in the context of the overall company quality assurance policy. The purpose of this strategy is to ensure consistent quality and compliance in the delivery and assessment of apprenticeships delivered within the apprenticeship department.

Scope and quality assurance interventions

Quality assurance will be conducted and will consider the following sampling methods.

- **Apprenticeship Tutor/Assessor observation:** Direct observation of tutors delivering sessions, focusing on teaching practice and learner engagement. (Observation of Teaching, Learning & Assessment - **OTLA**)

- **Learner products of work:** Sampling learner portfolios, assessments and tasks for quality, consistency, and compliance (Desk Based Sampling – **DBS**)

- **Learner experience:** Quantitative surveys and structured interviews will be used to understand employer perspectives on programme effectiveness, learner preparedness, and the relevance of training to workplace needs.

- **Employer experience:** Quantitative surveys and informal conversations with learners to better understand the learner experience.

- **Apprenticeship administration:** Review of apprenticeship communications, system tracking & compliance documentation (Desk Based Sampling – **DBS**)

Note

The above interventions apply to Functional Skills as required for the apprenticeship and in line with any tutor/assessor allocated to functional skills activities.

We will regularly seek feedback from our tutors to gain insight into their experience of delivering training and working in partnership with us.

Use of the sampling plan (SP)

The sample plan is used to plan, track and monitor QA activity over a quarterly basis. It collates all information relating to the QA activity undertaken and is used to identify, plan and undertake CPD/PDP as required by tutor/assessor staff on a regular basis.

The SP should be updated at the start of each quarter with "expected" Desk Based Samples (**DBS**) allocated, this will include observation of teaching, learning &

assessment (**OTLA**). The SP is a live document and sample sizes/frequencies may change throughout the year.

Note – This action should be completed by the 1ˢᵗ of each month quarter – April-June / July-Sept/ October-Dec / Jan-March.

Special consideration should be given to areas of risk including:

- Implementation of a new standard
- Existing standards
- Existing standards with new material
- Outcomes from the interventions above related to tutor/assessor, learner or employer feedback or administrative performance.

Tutor RAGG Ratings

Tutor/assessors will be assigned a **RAGG (Red, Amber, Green, Gold)** rating based on IQA outcomes and learner feedback. If the tutor/assessor delivers across a range apprenticeships, they should be sampled on each apprenticeship.

RAG rating	Criteria	Sampling requirements	Support that might be needed
Red – High risk	• New tutor/assessor • History of poor IQA outcomes • Gaps in delivery experience • No recent delivery (inactive for 12 months or more) • Compliance issues that may affect funding	• **OTLA** Observation monthly (until minimum green grade achieved) • 100% IQA of **DBS** directed at funding compliance & system administration.	• Formal feedback and support plan • Shadowing, mentoring or additional training
Amber – Medium risk	• Tutors that are newly experienced • Inconsistent performance • Development areas identified. • No recent delivery (8-12 months) • Occasional admin/compliance issues • Regular admin/compliance issues	• **OTLA** Observation quarterly (until minimum green grade achieved) • Previous quarter **DBS** reviewed + sample % as identified on the **SP**	• Targeted feedback and development • Peer support/observation
Green – Low risk	• Tutors that are experienced and consistently meet expectations. • Good IQA history and positive learner feedback • Strong admin and compliance	• **OTLA** Observation twice annually • Sample % as identified on **SP**	• Opportunities for CPD for sharing with peers
Gold - consistently great practice	• Consistently exceeds expectations. • Excellent observation/IQA outcomes • Positively contributes to improving the apprenticeship/learner experience	• **OTLA** Observation twice annually • Sample % as identified on **SP**	• Opportunities for CPD • Consider mentoring and peer support.

Tutors may move between RAGG ratings based on performance and feedback. **RAGG ratings should be reviewed annually in December.** Tutor/assessors who deliver across a number of apprenticeships should have a consolidated rating not ratings per apprenticeship.

- **New apprenticeship standards:** All new apprenticeships must be sampled during the first delivery. This should include all 5 sampling methods, where relevant. Sampling should cover delivery and assessment and be clearly stated on the risk rational tab of the **SP.**

- **Existing apprenticeship standards**: Apprenticeships that have been running for at least 6 months are classed as existing. Sample should be completed quarterly in line with **SP** % identified at the start of each quarter.

- **Existing apprenticeship Standards with new material**: This should follow the 'new apprenticeships' sampling guidance.

- **For any apprenticeship standard delivered**, sampling must include **learner and employer feedback** through the **start/mid/end point surveys** and **learner assessment/compliance**.

- For RAGG Red-rated tutors or assessors, if there are issues with assessment/compliance the sample size will increase to include previous quarter review & next quarter % - this will be recorded on the **SP**.

- Sampling must cover a range of **KSBs, learner tasks, teaching/support sessions** and **compliance documentation**. For example, across an apprentice, this will mean reviewing portfolio activity completed in the given quarter for that individual learner ensuring each area identified has been reviewed in the quarter. Normally sampling will be desk-based unless otherwise identified.

- All regulated qualifications must meet awarding organisation requirements.

It is important to note that:

- **No tutor/assessor** should be left unsampled across a quarter (unless the apprenticeship or qualification has not been delivered)

- A risk-based approach means that sampling frequency can be modified where issues come to light.

Orientation and standardisation

- All tutor/assessors MUST be orientated into the delivery programme prior to delivering or assessing an apprenticeship standard.

- Each apprenticeship standard should have a yearly standardisation CPD session to include consolidated quality assurance feedback from the interventions identified above and proposed improvements.
- A CPD programme should be used to develop the salaried and associate workforce.

Reporting and recording

- The apprenticeship lead should consolidate quality assurance feedback on a quarterly basis and feed into the overall company reporting. The lead IQA may support this process. The apprenticeship standard will then be benchmarked against the overall quality assurance consolidated report.
- Qualitative comments from the quality assurance should be fed into the qualitative feedback.
- Trends from the quality assurance feedback should be consolidated and fed into standardisation planning.

Review and improvement.

- IQA planning is reviewed monthly to respond to new apprenticeship standards, tutors, or risks.
- Sampling planning should be carried out when an apprenticeship standard is confirmed.
- Sampling plans should be flexible and risk-based, increasing sampling percentage for standards or tutors rated Red or Amber in RAGG status.
- All apprenticeship standards should aim to have at least one standardisation session with tutors and assessors per year.
- Trends will inform future workforce CPD, support, and RAGG status updates.

Governance and Quality Group

The Governance and Quality group independently support, advise, monitor and challenge the work of the IQA team. This includes interviews with learners and employers to ensure assessment & apprenticeship process and system are being met throughout the learner journey.

Each quarter the governors should be requested to arrange independent learner and employer interviews and return these to the apprenticeship department to be included in the quarterly IQA report.

The outcome of interview is tracked on the **SP** and monitored by Q&T Manager for any CPD required.