

Sampling Strategy

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Version 4



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1. Introduction

VTCT requires all centres to ensure the quality assurance and quality control of all learner assessment including validity, authenticity and sufficiency. VTCT supports this by providing external quality assurance to centres, which includes the sampling of internal and external assessment and internal quality assurance conducted by the centre.

The sampling strategy applies to internal and external assessment that is assessed or marked by the centre. External assessment completed via VTCT's e-testing system (Linx2Achieve) fall outside of this strategy, as exams are automatically marked through the system. External assessment that is externally moderated by VTCT falls outside of this strategy; VTCT will inform the centre of the sampling requirement for any such assessment within a qualification (e.g. Principal Learning, Project, AM20530 VTCT Level 2 Certificate in Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy (VRQ)).

2. Centre 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 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 a 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 has 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, the centre can contact their EQA.

3. EQA Sampling Strategy

As part of an EQA visit, the EQA will require access to assessments and records to satisfy them that all learners are being appropriately assessed and internally quality assured. The EQA will inform the centre, when arranging a visit, of the learners selected for sampling. This will allow the centre sufficient time to inform learners of the requirement to attend for the purpose of sampling. The EQA will also randomly sample learners being assessed on the day; this could include observing practical assessment and reviewing portfolio evidence.

Sampling will allow the EQA to check that the centre's assessment and internal quality assurance processes are effective and sufficient, and therefore will be satisfied to agree the centres recommendation for the certification of learners. The EQAs sample selection and size will be derived using the following criteria.

3.1. Sample selection

Over a number of visits, the EQA will select a random sample covering:

- assessment decisions of assessors;
- assessment methods;
- assessment locations;
- learners at different stages of their award;
- internal quality assurance decision of IQAs;
- assessment records;
- internal quality assurance records.

3.2. Sample size

The level of sampling will be influenced by a number of factors including:

- risk rating of the centre;
- size of the centre;
- number of assessors;
- number and range of sites for assessment;
- number and characteristics of Learners (e.g. access arrangements);
- range of assessment methods used by assessors.

3.3. Sampling internal assessment

EQA sampling may include observing assessment, reviewing project and assignments, oral questioning or reviewing other supplementary evidence included in a learner's portfolio of evidence. The EQA will need to hold discussions with Assessors, IQAs and Learners.

3.4. Sampling external assessment

Where the centre is administering paper-based multiple-choice question papers, the EQA will sample a number of assessment papers sufficient to ensure that marking is consistent and accurate. Where e-testing (Linx2Achieve), marking is completed by the system, therefore a sample is not required.

Where applicable the EQA will check how the centre is additionally assessing learners to demonstrated 100% achievement of the learning outcomes (e.g. oral questions) and how the IQA monitors this.

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