RM Training (UK) Limited

The Stepping Stones to Your Success

Ofsted Good Provider

EVALUATING QUALITY AND TRAINING OUTCOMES

Document Authorised and Checked by:

David MacGregor – Operations Director 22/08/2024

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Contents

Section 1 – RM Training Company Structure

(See attachment)

Section 2: The Training Assessor

2.1 Introduction to the Assessors' Role

A Training Assessor must know and work in line with the following procedures from the regulatory and awarding bodies, or those that may in future supersede them:

- QCF Code of Practice:
- Awarding Body assessment practice: all Assessors' must have Joint Awarding Body guidelines (JAB) and specific qualification assessment strategy.

Assessors are line managed by the Operations Manager

2.2 The Role of a Training Assessor in the RM Training Quality Assurance Process

The Training Assessor is required to play an active role in the internal quality assurance process. This means they must ensure that:

- Learners being assessed for an award are registered before any assessment is conducted.
- There is a correctly and fully completed audit trail of evidence for each Learner. A Learner is someone working towards a qualification and a candidate is registered with the Awarding Body for that qualification.
- They actively contribute to the quality assurance process by following all procedures.
- They actively contribute to the standardisation arrangements.
- They make accurate and timely assessment decisions on an on-going basis.
- They promote unit certification for all Candidates.
- They provide continuous professional development updates to their Manager at standardisation meetings.

In addition to this Assessors should understand the roles of the Internal and External Verifiers.

2.3 Registration Procedure – Apprenticeship Frameworks

The Administration Manager and the IQA responsible for the qualification will need to know the following details for each candidate to enable a registration or a certificate to be requested:

- Candidate Name
- Sex
- DOB
- Qualification
- Level
- Units being Submitted

Candidates need to be registered for the NVQ at least ten weeks before a full qualification certificate can be requested, however this is not the case for individual units

- QCF Vocational Qualifications
- Technical Certificates and Diplomas
- Functional Skills
- e-assessment tests

Certification Procedure – Apprenticeship Frameworks

Upon receipt of a candidate's certificate and released portfolio it is the responsibility of the assessor to ensure that these are returned to the candidate and a signature obtained on the Tracking Form.

2.4 - Training Assessor Competence

All Training Assessors' must have sufficient evidence of occupational competence to ensure an up-to-date working knowledge and experience of the principles and practices specified in the industry and standards they are assessing. This must be documented on their CPD record. This competence must be shown for each unit of all standards an Assessor wishes to assess. This information must be supplied to your respective IQA and is held in central files. They must also hold or work towards the assessment qualification TAQA or hold its predecessors A1 or D32 and D33

All Assessors competence must be current and must show evidence of up to date activity, updating knowledge and ability. Where competence is not current an action plan to obtain current competence must meet the External Quality Assurers approval and competence must be reached before assessment of candidates can be started for units this affects.

All Assessors' must have a working knowledge of the environment that the Candidate is working in. If the Assessor does not have current occupational knowledge of the premises and the role to be carried out by the Candidate, the Assessor must carry out a period of work experience sufficient to obtain the required knowledge to enable them to assess their candidate's performance.

For further information on Competence see the respective National Occupational Standards designated by the respective Sector Skills Council where there are clear guidelines of what constitutes sufficient occupational competence. This is recorded in their respective awards and must be checked. If you require further information or support, please see your respective IQA.

If an assessor does not have their TAQA, A1 or D32/D33 units, their assessment decisions must be countersigned by an occupationally competent and TAQA/A1 qualified assessor.

2.5 Principles of Assessment

Assessment is the process by which the Training Assessor judges' evidence of a candidate's performance and knowledge against the national standards and decides whether the candidate is competent.

The quality of assessment is the key to the value of any qualification.

Assessment of a qualification must be:

- Based entirely on the standards as specified by the awarding body candidates must not be subjected to proving competence at a level higher/lower than the standard specified.
- Conducted using the assessment methods specified in the awarding body assessment strategy for the qualification being undertaken.
- Fair and in line with RM Training (UK) Limited's Equality Policy and Fair Assessment Policy
- Free from any unnecessary barriers restricting access and progression and available to all those who can reach the required standard.
- Carried out only at those assessment sites and by those Training Assessors approved by the Awarding Body.

Collecting and Recording Evidence:

In order for evidence to be accepted towards the qualification it must be:

- Relevant and Valid – it should relate to the requirements of the standards
- Authentic and Reliable – it must be genuine and provide evidence of the candidate's competence.

- Current – it must demonstrate that the candidate was competent at the time of the assessment. The evidence must also meet the currency requirements of the standards being assessed.
- Sufficient – there must be enough evidence to meet the requirements and prove competence over time.

Judging Evidence:

Each time a training assessor carries out an assessment they are assessing the candidate's competence against the national standards.

When assessing the evidence produced on any occasion the Assessor can only make one of two decisions – either the candidate is competent or not yet competent.

Assessment decisions must:

- Be made on each occasion that evidence is presented.
- Clearly identify whether the candidate demonstrated competence on that occasion.
- Be based solely on the evidence presented on that occasion.
- Be made solely against the national standards.
- Be recorded in line with the Awarding Body requirements.
- Allow for feedback to the candidate as soon as practicable.

Making an Assessment Decision:

If the Training Assessor is satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate the candidates' competence in line with the evidence requirements of the standards, and the candidate is in agreement, then the Training Assessor and Learner will sign off that element/unit. The Training assessor should make an unequivocal statement as to how they decided the candidate was competent. In line with the requirements of QCF and the Awarding Body for the qualification they are assessing.

If the Training Assessor is not satisfied that sufficient evidence has been provided the Training Assessor and candidate must discuss what additional evidence is required and agree a plan for the collection of that evidence.

Fair and Equal Access to Assessment

Access to assessment is the requirement that assessments must be available to everyone who has the potential to achieve the standard. This is fundamental to all assessed qualifications.

Assessment must be based on the outcomes of learning achieved independently of any particular mode, duration or location of learning. It is important that competence is proven to meet the requirements of the qualification however the evidence has been generated or recorded.

Access to assessment should be equal and fair for all and therefore it is the IQA's and AQA/IQA's responsibility to ensure that access to a range of assessment opportunities and methods is available to all and can be adapted to meet the needs of the individual, and their work/shift patterns where applicable.

Awarding Body guidance must be followed to ensure that every opportunity is taken to meet the candidate's needs.

Requirements for Access to Fair and Reliable Assessment

Every candidate starting a qualification will have had different experiences and therefore this will place him or her at different starting points, though always in relation to the same standards.

The assessment of a qualification must be free from any barriers, which restrict access unnecessarily:

The assessment must:

- Be free from any discrimination, subject to DBS checks where applicable.
- Give due regard to the particular assessment requirements of individuals.
- Be free from age restrictions (exception may apply to certain qualifications) – QCF.
- Be equally accessible to those in paid and unpaid work, employed or unemployed.
- Be independent of the mode or location of learning.

The awarding body issues guidelines with regards to candidates with particular assessment requirements.

Assessment of Recognised Prior Learning

Any evidence gained prior to the date of learner registration and assessment planning must be considered as RPL evidence and treated as such by the Training Assessor.

It is not possible to give a categorical answer to the question of currency of RPL evidence because the rules of evidence apply to RPL as well as all other evidence types, i.e. if the evidence provides proof of the learner's competence then it is acceptable.

However, given the considerable changes in theory and practice within all occupational sectors it is vital that the issue of currency of RPL evidence is clearly established by the Training Assessor. Assessors must record how they have checked the retention of knowledge, skills and behaviours presented through RPL evidence. It will be noted that some Standard Setting Bodies have definitive rules for RPL that will be documented in the assessment guidance for the qualification.

The use of such evidence will should be agreed with the IQA, with advice and guidance from their EQA to ensure that the issue of currency is addressed.

Any evidence gained prior to the assessment planning carried out by the centre and before registration, must be considered as recognition of prior learning (RPL) evidence and treated as such by the Assessor. If a learner is on an assessment programme with the company working towards a qualification, but is not registered with the awarding body, the awarding body will not have a responsibility for the learner. The EQA will not be required to externally quality assure the learner's evidence. This may disadvantage the learner who could be misled into thinking that the awarding body has some responsibility for them.

Once the learner is registered with the awarding body, the Company's quality assurance regime i.e. the assessment and internal quality assurance procedures will need to ensure that the learner's evidence is valid, authentic and sufficient before it can contribute as evidence towards, the assessment for the standard.

All learners who are enrolling onto an apprenticeship with RM Training go through an initial assessment process.

A signed LRS privacy notice allows us to view and scrutinise their personal learning record. The PLR is checked against the standard for any previous technical qualifications, that have components of knowledge skills and behaviours that are transferable, potentially individual units or modules or entire qualifications. A checked copy of this then resides in the learner's evidence pack and is noted as prior attainment.

Learners complete a standard specific skills scan for them to be able to conduct a self-assessment of any prior knowledge, relevant education, behaviours, and skills they have through previous qualifications or work experiences, that are transferable.

A professional discussion is held with the learner and conducted by their subject specific tutor who has the level of occupational expertise needed to assess and discuss their previous competencies and be able to map these against the knowledge skills and behaviours required by the standard criteria to their job role. Any prior knowledge and experience that has been accounted for will result in a negotiated price and duration and adjustment in the training content this will be reflected in the learning plan and on the ILR.

Once a learner's starting point has been established a meeting between the employer, apprentice and RM Training allows us to triangulate the results and address any skills gaps that are identified and not use apprenticeship funding to pay for training and skills the apprentice already has on the standard selected.

In cases where the standard is deemed unsuitable then a higher or different standard will be put forward as an alternative.

Real working Environment

Where required by the Awarding Body the standards assessment will take place in a Realistic Working environment and not a simulated or inadequate environment that does not meet the assessment guidance for the qualification.

2.6 Assessor Induction

A new member of staff will undertake the company induction into the business.

In addition to this new Training Assessors will undertake an induction with their IQA or TAQA/IQA on the procedures and standards within the qualification(s) they will be delivering.

2.7 Training and Development

When a qualified Assessor starts with RM Training they will receive:

- Support and guidance on their role.
- Allocated to their respective IQA(s).
- Allocated a mentor, wherever possible, that the assessor can work with and shadow.
- Regular monitoring of their progress from their IQA, who in turn will liaise with the QAC as and when necessary.
- Approval to assess from the Awarding Body after submission of original certificates and details of occupational competency.

In addition to the above, when a non-qualified Assessor starts the IQA will:

- Arrange training and development in TAQA units
- Target the Assessor to complete their TAQA Award within 12 months of commencement of employment.
- Arrange for all work assessed to be countersigned.

2.8 Programme Delivery

Initial Visit

The initial visit to the site/Learner is the most important for the following reasons:

- First impressions count.
- Confirmation that the Learner, Site and Site Manager have the required skills to carry out the programme of study.
- Obtaining commitment for the programme and its requirements from both the Site Manager and Learner to ease the route of study, this to be documented onto Progress Review and Individual Learning Plan
- Learner receives a full induction onto their qualification.
- Learner will complete a skills scan. This will ensure that each learner is on the correct standard and milestones will be discussed, adapted and put in place for each employer/learner. The skills scan will also determine any specific training needed and establish where we can apply stretch targets

Prior to your initial visit to meet your new Learner you should have:

- Checked that a Site Health and Safety Pre-Vet has been completed
- Received a copy of the Learners details on Smart Assessor Individual Learning Plan.

At this initial visit the Site Manager should be left with: –

- The Training Assessors' phone number.
- Copy of the standard assessment plan, outline of the programme with an agreed plan of the milestones that will be achieved.

The Candidate should be left with: –

- A copy of the RM Training Learner Induction and Individual Learning Plan.
- Login details from Smart assessor via their Email or mobile for security.
- Their qualification portfolio/packs if an induction has been carried out.
- Safer Learning Handout
- A copy of the Apprentikit
- The Training Assessors' phone number.

Learner Induction

This should be conducted at your initial visit, or at a prior pre-arranged induction session. The Learner should be given a complete induction onto the programme and their required apprenticeship qualification

This induction should cover information on:

- Assessor.
- IQA.
- Knowledge, skills and behaviour expectations
- An outline of the assessment plan for that standard/framework
- EPA
- Equality Policy.
- Health and Safety Policy.
- Safeguarding Policy
- Prevent Policy
- British Values
- Standards to be covered on the programme.
- How Standards will be delivered and assessed.
- Qualification Portfolio including use of Smart Assessor E-portfolio
- What is expected of the Learner, Site Manager and the Assessor?
- Outline of visits/cancelling appointments/illness/injury/holidays.
- Appeals procedure and appeals form
- Visit Report and Progress Review

Contact Report and Progress Review

To be completed at each visit on an on-going basis for QCF/Apprenticeship Learners. The assessor should upload the Contact Report to Smart Assessor

- An Assessment and Learning Plan showing the actions planned each visit, allowing both to be prepared to make the best use of any opportunities to collect evidence for the knowledge, skills and behaviours. This can be paper based but can also be created in Smart Assessor E-portfolio
- An Assessment and Learning Plan showing activities carried out during the visit and recording achievements the candidate has made.

- An Assessment and Learning Plan record showing the actions planned each visit, allowing both to be prepared to make the best use of any opportunities to collect evidence of competence
- Records all activities taking place, along with progression made through the training programme.
- An Assessment and Learning Plan showing activities carried out during the visit and recording achievements the candidate has made.
- Informing Learner, Office and Site Manager of progress to date.
- Record of any training taking place or required before the Learner can be assessed.
- IQA and EQA audit document, allowing a picture to be formed throughout the portfolio confirming the assessment decisions, which could be used to accredit competence in exceptional circumstances.
- An action plan detailing what is expected of the Learner so that they can work towards their qualification effectively.
- Evidence that the placement or workplace is involved in the Learner's assessment process.
- Informs the office and Site Manager of concerns or issues that need to be addressed.

This record should show a visit-by-visit account of the Learners' progress through the standard and should be used to track progress and achievement. It must include specific details of what knowledge, skills and behaviours have been met, detailed feedback to the candidate and a record of all activities that have taken place at the visit.

They will form part of the archive records for the standard and may be required by auditing bodies such as OFSTED, Job centre Plus, Skills Funding Agency and the Awarding Bodies.

Outline of On-going Visits

Your visit to the candidate should be to carry out the activity previously planned for, which should consist of a mixture of some or all of the activities detailed below in line with the Awarding Body requirements:

- Inspection of location - is it appropriate for the assessment-taking place.
- Assessment of evidence provided by the candidate.
- Observation of performance.
- Questioning.
- Professional Discussion.
- Portfolio building.
- Assessment of confidential records.

Completion of Progress Review /Contact Report

The Progress Review must be completed during the visit (whether the Learner attends or not) to show progress reviewed, activities taken place, action required and an action plan of what will take place at the next visit and what the candidate is expected to do before the next visit.

When completing this, the assessor should note that these records should mirror the candidates' actions and progress throughout their programme. In the event of the EQA, IQA or Training Assessor querying evidence or where there are concerns with evidence this record should be used as further evidence to support claims to competence.

Summary of Objectives Achieved

Review the action plan set at the end of the last visit, including achievements to date, Learner actions before this visit and a review of the evidence to be assessed at this visit. If there are any reasons why all or part of the plans will not be completed today, ensure these are stated and actions to complete at a later date are agreed with the candidate and logged.

Detail of Discussions and Activities

Agree a revised plan for the current visit based on the activities the candidate is involved in and the evidence requirements for their standard. This revised plan must be written down prior to assessment commencing.

Outline of the visit, which knowledge, skills and behaviours have been covered, details of criteria where competence has been demonstrated and actions for criteria where competence has not yet been demonstrated or further evidence is required.

Learner/Employer Issues, Concerns or Additional Support Needs and Action Taken

Detail of any comments made by Training Assessor/Learner/site, identification of training needs or where further training/experience is required to meet competency or where barriers/concerns regarding the Site Manager or Learner have been identified which could hinder progress on the programme or qualification. This section should also detail any action to be taken, dates or timeframes and who is responsible.

Organisation's Health and Safety Monitoring

Monitoring of the Site/Learner Health and Safety must be completed in line with contractual obligations.

Equality, Diversity, Health and Safety and IAG

Questions are to be asked by the assessor to establish the candidates understanding of the terms used and for identifying issues. Examples of questions to be asked:

Equality and Diversity

- What is equality?
- What would constitute unfair dismissal?
- What is paternity/maternity leave?
- What is meant by bullying and what is meant by harassment?
- What constitutes sexual harassment?
- Can you give examples of victimisation?
- What does diversity mean with regards to equal opportunities?

Health and Safety

- What is your obligation under the law to comply with Health and Safety?
- What information can you find out from the H & S Law Poster?
- What effect does alcohol and drug abuse have on a business?
- What is the procedure if you have an accident?
- What action can a company take to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled person is not discriminated against?

Safeguarding

- Do you understand what the term safeguarding means?
- Who would you contact if you or anyone you know had a safeguarding concern?
- What are some of the signs that someone might display if there was a potential safeguarding concern?
- Where can you find a list of support organisations for any concerns you might have

Prevent

- Do you understand what Prevent is?
- Who could you report any concerns to?
- What does the term radicalisation mean?
- What are some sign that someone might show if they were being radicalised?

- Through what channels can someone be radicalised?

British Values

- What are the British values?
- What is meant by democracy?
- What is the rule of law?
- What is mutual respect and tolerance for others
- How do you promote British values?

2.9 Feedback from Employers and Apprentices

Feedback for the Learner should be specific, relevant and constructive. The feedback should reflect the progress/achievement/standards/consistency of the Learner and must not be used for vague and general comments.

The Dedicated Account Manager will have regular meetings with the employer to discuss progress, taking into account learner progress, off the job training and employer satisfaction on the apprentice delivery. Feedback from these meetings is used as part of our continuous improvement cycle. Any negative feedback will be addressed at this point where possible. If the Account Manager is unable to deal with the any issues directly these will be taken back and discussed with the Managing Director. Feedback forms are used extensively across our business and both learners and employers will be asked to complete a feedback from at each key stage of the apprenticeship.

2.10 Continuous Improvement

RM Training aim to get better all the time and as such we have adopted a cycle of continuous improvement. Our Continuous Improvement Cycle is based on the following six guiding principles which we apply to individual staff and our business as a whole

- Improvements are based on small changes
- Our Staff are key to our improvement cycle
- We understand that improvements are Incremental
- Our staff take ownership and are fully involved in improvement
- Improvement is reflective
- Improvement must be measurable and repeatable

Based on the above each member of staff is encouraged to share best practice as well as discuss any aspect of delivery that could have been improved. The forum for this is our monthly Strategic and Operational meetings where all staff take part.

2.11 Underperformance

To identify and address underperformance, it is essential that leaners progressed is measured against an agreed set of milestones. We agree these at the start of the learning process and each milestone is signed off during progress meetings with the trainer. In this way any underperformance can be identified quickly and addressed. However, there can be many reasons for underperformance and the trainer will seek to understand from the apprentice if there are any external issues that may affect learning, if this is the case then these will be discussed and alternate plans put in place to allow the apprentice to get back on track.

Sometimes the learning style is the reason for underperformance. If this is the case the trainer will discuss different learning options and seek to find a learning style that better fits the learner.

Where applicable additional support will be offered

Action Plan for Next Review

Specific activities meeting elements/units should be detailed and this should be discussed and agreed with the Candidate and Site Manager. This is to ensure that both parties are fully aware of what will be carried out and what is expected of them.

Date and Time of Next Visit

Should be specific detailing the actual date and time of the visit and must never be left blank.

Signatures

Must be signed by both the Assessor and the Learner. The form is invalid if either the Assessor or Candidate does not sign it, or electronic signatures are submitted via Smart Assessor.

At the end of the visit the Training Assessor must feedback the session to the Learner's Site Manager so that they are aware of what activities are planned to take place, the Learner's achievement and progress and any action to be taken between visits. Once this has been done the Site Manager should sign to show that this has taken place.

Learners Appeals Procedure

The Training Assessor should go through the procedure contained within the portfolio pack with the learner and ensure that they understand what it is for and how it works before asking them to sign stating they have understood.

Individual Learning and Personal Development Training Plan (ILP)

The Training Assessor must create the Learners ILP in Smart Assessor and go through, assess and amend accordingly the training and knowledge, skills and behaviours sections with the Learner and the Site Manager. Access to Smart Assessor and the Learner's ILP must be available to the Learner.

With the ILP the Training Assessor must ensure that: -

- The standard and level are suitable to the Learner, placement and programme and can be achieved within the targets set.
- The timescales chosen for individual units meets the needs of the standard and Learner.

This should be done throughout the programme to reflect any changes or updates.

Section 3 – The Tutor

3.1 Tutor Procedures

Tutor Standards Required

- The Tutor must have a good working knowledge of all elements within the standard delivered and must continue to update their skills as required.
- The Tutor must maintain a high standard of professionalism and maintain quality procedures.

Tutor Responsibilities:

The tutor is responsible for:

- Learner learning Plan
- Lesson plans
- Test procedures
- Test Papers (if applicable)
- Invigilation (see section 5.8)

- Marking and feedback
- Maintain systems and records available for internal audit.

The secure keeping of:

- Tests
- Tutor copies
- Source files
- Learner's evidence
- Hard copy and soft copies i.e. data sticks

(Must be in a locked steel filing cabinet.)

Ensure Learner Induction Pack contains:

- Learner front cover
- Moderation Procedure
- Appeals Procedure

The Tutor must also:

- Complete Progress Review and visit report (one to be completed per learner and updated upon completion of test) – see section 2.7.4.
- Ensure delivery and content quality to high standards
- Ensure teaching materials to highest standards for course
- Conduct Learner Initial Assessment
- Complete Awarding Body requirements or other update forms
- Agree and follow a Personal Development Plan

Section 4 – The IQA

4.1 The Role of IQA in the Quality Assurance Process

The IQA role is to ensure the quality of the assessment process within their occupational area(s) by ensuring that the assessor role is carried out competently.

In doing so the IQA will:

- Ensure that Training Assessors' meet the Awarding Body's criteria for becoming an Assessor and that this is kept up to date.
- Induct, train and develop all Training Assessors to ensure current compliance.
- Identifying any development needs the Training Assessors' may have and ensuring these requirements are met.
- Check that Assessors' work in line with current Awarding Body standards.
- Check that Training Assessors provide timely and accurate assessment decisions.
- Feedback to Training Assessors and other IQA's on Awarding Body information.
- Provide sufficient information, feedback and support to ensure that the Training Assessor carries out their role in line with all requirements.
- Hold regular standardisation meetings with Training Assessors'.
- Observe Training Assessor practice a minimum of twice per year in line with Awarding Body practices and ensure that all sampling strategies are covered.
- Monitor assessment practice to ensure that it meets with Awarding Body requirements.

- Check a representative sample of assessment decisions to ensure that they are made only against the national occupational standards and are fair and accurate.
- Give constructive, positive feedback to Assessors on their assessment practice
- Deal with appeals fairly and in line with Awarding Body requirements and RM Training procedures.
- Organise External Quality Assurance visits.
- Liaise with external bodies to ensure up to date accurate information is maintained.
- Monitor Quality Assurance arrangements to check that they meet Awarding Body requirements.
- Ensure that assessment and Internal Quality Assurance meets with QCF and Awarding Body requirements.
- Maintain accurate records of planned and completed quality monitoring and Internal Quality Assurance.
- Authorise certification requests if authorised to do so by the Awarding Body.
- Monitor equal access to assessment.
- Promote holistic assessment.
- All Training Assessor CV's and Certificates are kept centrally, and their continuous professional development and competence log must be updated annually with evidence of their current competence.
- Ensure on-going monitoring of competence is maintained.
- Will ensure non-qualified Training Assessors are action planned to achieve the Qualification within 12 months of commencing employment.
- To ensure a qualified assessor will countersign all non-qualified assessor work until their CAVA certificate is received.
- The Training Assessors' original certificate/s are presented to the External Quality Assurer for validation.

Ensuring that –

- The Learner is assessed fairly and reliably and has equal access to assessment.
- Learners with assessment requirements have access to appropriate support.
- Assessments are carried out in line with QCF and Awarding Body requirements.
- Assessors are practising in line with QCF and Awarding Body requirements.
- Applications for certificates are based on consistently meeting the national standards.
- Standardisation meetings and Internal Verification requirements are met.

Competence

The IQA must:

- Demonstrate competence in Internal Verification/Moderation practices.
- All IQA's must hold TAQA IQA, Training and Development (T & D) unit D34 or Learning and Development (L & D) unit V1 or be working towards the TAQA IQA qualification.
- Possess up to date and relevant occupational competence as defined by the relevant Awarding Bodies/Sector Skills Council. Be "sufficiently familiar" with the requirements of the standards that they are verifying to enable them to make accurate judgements, support and advise the Assessor and resolve queries about the interpretation and maintenance of those standards. This will be evidenced via their CV and competence log.
- Be able to ensure compliance, make accurate judgements and be able to support and advise assessors. In order to do this, they must have a thorough understanding of RM Training Ltd and Awarding Bodies systems and how these provide an audit trail for Inspectors, Auditors and IQA's.

The IQA will give their original certificates (as applicable) to their Operations Manager for presenting to the EQA, who will authenticate copies that will be stored at RM Training (UK) Limited. The Operations Manager will also ensure that qualified staff are working to current IQA standards.

The Awarding Body will need to be advised immediately of all new members of the assessment/verification team. They must also be informed when someone ceases to be a member of the assessment team.

Induction

Induction checklist

Each new member of staff will undertake RM Training (UK) Limited's induction programme.

In addition to this the IQA will go through an induction with their Operations Manager on the standards and procedures in their role. This induction must be completed within 4 weeks of starting with RM Training. (Where the IQA is also an Assessor, two inductions will take place, one for each role).

Internal Verification Procedures

It is IMPERATIVE that all portfolios within the company are stored securely at one location. if paper based or electronically on Smart Assessor. Access will be restricted to a nominated person or persons in the organisation. The nominated person will advise if there should be any changes to the nominated location.

The IQA will be responsible for checking that candidates are registered prior to internal verification taking place.

The IQA is responsible for completing the Monthly IQA Visit Planner detailing:

Portfolios requested for sample, as per sampling strategy

Direct IQA's planned

Candidate and Assessor interviews planned.

This Quality Calendar needs to be sent to the relevant Training Assessor, line manager and Operations Manager, as appropriate, at the beginning of the month. This allows the Operations Manager to see the IQA plans for the month.

Interim IQA

Portfolios for interim IQA will be selected as per the sampling strategy. The purpose of the Interim IQA is not only to sample the work carried out, but also to sample the whole assessment process from candidate induction to final IQA of work submitted. The results of this sampling will be recorded on the Monthly IQA Quality Calendar and Sampling Plan,

Constructive feedback in the form of actions and guidance will be given to the assessor and again recorded.

Direct Observation of Assessment, Teaching and Learning

The IQA will plan direct Observations as necessary; taking into consideration the Learner's programmes and placements covered in order to select a cross section. This will enable them to best judge the Training Assessors' overall practices.

As the Training Assessor receives a copy of the IQA's Quality Calendar they are aware of the learner(s) and placement(s) they wish to visit in sufficient time for the Training Assessor to plan the assessment with the candidate and work placement.

Direct observation of Assessment, Teaching and Learning practice must be carried out with each Training Assessor at least twice per year and must be recorded on the Observation of Teaching and Learning Report and graded accordingly in line with the Observation Summary

NB note that planning is done to ensure a minimum number of direct observations. This method of internal verification is the best way of supporting both Training Assessors' and learner and gives the IQA sound information from which to verify the Training Assessors' assessment decisions. Therefore, if it is possible to

undertake more than the planned number of directs, without compromising the sampling strategy, the opportunity should be taken.

When carrying out a direct assessment the Learner and Training Assessor should be interviewed using the Assessor and Learner Interview Question sheets.

Immediately at the end of the direct IQA visit the Training Assessor must be given feedback, a Support log completed, and any required actions detailed. It is then the responsibility of the Training Assessor and IQA to ensure that these actions are successfully completed.

Suspending an Assessment

Sound assessment planning will eliminate the need to suspend an assessment in most cases. However, the Training Assessor or the IQA must suspend the assessment if:

- There are any Health and Safety concerns. If these are apparent at the start the assessment must not be started, i.e. if the learner is not wearing appropriate protective clothing etc.
- If it is clear that the learner is so nervous that a fair and reliable assessment could not be achieved
- It becomes clear that the learner is not competent
- The Training Assessor is called away from the assessment location. (The assessment may be restarted on the Training Assessors' return if suitable conditions prevail).

Additionally, the IQA must suspend an assessment if it becomes clear that the training assessor, or anyone else involved, is leading the Learner.

Following the suspension of an assessment the assessor must agree an action plan for further training or re-assessment of the candidate at another time. Where the IQA has stopped the assessment because of the actions of the assessor the IQA must plan support or training for the training assessor to ensure the safety of their future assessment decisions.

Final Verification/Moderation

This takes place when the Training Assessor and Learner have agreed all the evidence required to show competence has been collected and they have signed off the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours.

At this time the portfolio is presented to the awarding body for EPA. Ideally this should be at a scheduled IQA visit so that the Training Assessor is available for the IQA to discuss any issues that may arise or to obtain clarification of evidence or decisions.

This situation can often prevent the need for a portfolio being referred for simple oversights, such as paperwork not being properly prepared or a missing signature etc. However, with the agreement of the IQA the portfolio may be sent to the IQA and verified at any agreed location if there is a valid reason to do this.

The IQA will then:

- Confirm the learners' registration details against the award submitted.
- Check any previous interim IQA and ensure that any action points have been dealt with correctly.
- Using the ILP in conjunction with Progress Reviews and Visit reports the IQA will assess the audit trail, assessor planning and feedback.
- Once the portfolio has been verified the verification record should be completed stating the units accepted or referred clearly. The learner will then be ready to be put forward for Gateway and EPA.

4.2 Portfolio Status

Accepted Portfolios

Once the portfolio has been accepted the IQA is responsible for giving the appropriate feedback to the training assessor, and initiate Gateway and arrange for EPA with the relevant awarding body.

Referred Portfolio

If referred the IQA must inform the Training Assessor giving constructive comments and further advice. The IQA and the Training Assessor must agree the Action Plan and both signs to say this has been done.

If the portfolio is referred when the Training Assessor is not present the IQA must contact the Training Assessor as soon as possible to discuss the shortfalls and review the criteria. An action plan and target date should then be agreed for re-submission.

Re-IV

When a referred portfolio has been internally quality assured again (re-iqa) and is accepted, copies of both the original and current IQA record must be forwarded to the Administration Manager along with the other documentation as listed above.

End point assessment

The EPA is designed to test that the leaner has gained the skills, knowledge and behaviour's that is outlined in the standard, and grade each learner according to their performance

Portfolios Released

Once an EQA releases portfolios it is the responsibility of the IQA to check the Portfolio Pack – Portfolio Index Sheet and either to release these portfolios back to the candidates, or to arrange storage until the disposal date has been reached. Release paperwork will be collated and given to the IQA for filing with the administrator at Head Office.

The Original verification report will stay in the portfolio until removed by the assessor when returning the portfolio to the candidate. The learner does not need to see this as it may contain confidential or sensitive advice and guidance for the assessor.

Sampling Strategy and Procedures

RM Training (UK) Limited is required to have an Internal Quality Assurance/Moderation Sampling Strategy. This will be devised as detailed below:

- The strategy should be specific to the occupational area covered for the timescale of the programme.
- Each IQA is responsible for developing a strategy and sampling plan for each occupational area they are responsible for each year.

The percentage of sampling within an occupational area will be determined by the qualification(s) and experience of the team, the following should be observed:

- Unqualified and inexperience assessor = 100% sampling
- Qualified assessor new to the company = 100% sampling (until the IQA is confident of compliance)
- Qualified and experienced = 20% - 50%
- Change of standards = 100% (until confident of compliance)

The percentage sampling should be updated each month to reflect the team's progress within the qualification.

Characteristics	Features

The number and type of candidates.	Age, gender, ethnic origin. With/without a disability, special assessment needs, full time, part time, and shifts.
The number of Assessors' and their experience.	Experienced, inexperienced, qualified, unqualified, work-based assessor, assessment loading, and peripatetic, occupational background.
The elements and units within the qualification.	Those that occur frequently/rarely, those that are critical to the role, problematic units or units that are difficult to assess.
The range of assessment methods used.	Observation of work practice, questioning, witness testimony, prior achievements, products of work, simulations, written tests, projects, assignments.
The number and range of assessment locations.	On/off job, offices, areas of the country.
The type of records of assessment.	Assessor reports, candidates' range of evidence.

Sampling Strategy Procedure

The Operations Manager will support the IQA's in developing a minimum sampling plan.

The IQA will be encouraged to ensure that the requirements of QCF and JAB Guidelines are met:

'Interim sampling: It is important that the IQA "dips in to" the assessment process undertaken with the learner at different stages in that process. This includes reviewing learner work perhaps (a) before decisions have been made on any unit and (b) looking at portfolios with one or two completed units.

It will entail checking the progress review report given to candidates by Training Assessors; this will enable the Internal Verifier to evaluate the quality of formative guidance on assessment and the effectiveness of assessment planning. Interim verification will enable the IQA to pick up problems at an early stage and so avoid the situation of turning down final decisions. It will also highlight individual Assessor needs for support or training which in turn may be used to develop the assessment team as a whole. Similarly, it provides an opportunity to identify and so share good practice within the Centre, particularly where one or more of the Assessors have wider experience.

The Verification Process – Sampling IQA Decisions

The Lead IQA makes arrangements with the IQA to carry out sampling of their IV decisions. IQA's should be contacted to arrange the visit. The Lead IQA will request access to the IQA's records and a selection of current and completed portfolios, which contain the IQA's decisions.

It is imperative to the maintenance of quality that this sampling process takes place and is directed by the Lead IQA and not the IQA. The details to be arranged therefore should be:

- Date, time and venue
- Personnel involved
- Portfolios to be sampled

At each sampling session the Lead IQA will check the IQA planning, records and methods used by the IQA. Following these criteria:

- IQA records sampled are completed accurately, signed and maintained for each assessor/candidate sampled.
- For a new or inexperienced IQA, 100% sampling is conducted, gradually reducing as the Lead IQA is able to see the IQA's decisions are fair, reliable, and consistent and that the evidence in the sample is sufficient for the IQA to validate the assessor's decisions.
- For non-qualified IQA's check that a qualified IQA has countersigned all decisions.
- All of the IQA records are available to support the portfolios being sampled for each Assessor.

Qualification and IQA Self-Assessment Checklist

The Operations Manager will create a generic QCF Self-Assessment. Each individual IQA will be responsible for writing a self-assessment for each occupational subject area. Both will be completed on an annual basis. The Self-Assessment Report will reflect the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework

This process will be undertaken to ensure that the quality of the provision offered meets the requirements of its candidates and sites. It will then be integrated into the RM Training Business Plan. Following this an action plan will be devised to improve the provision offered.

It is the responsibility of the Operations Manager to monitor the Quality of work of the IQA's/Moderators they are responsible for.

The Operations Manager needs to check the following on a monthly basis:

- Monthly planner is complete and meets the required activities
- Activity planned and taken place is appropriate
- The correct sample and procedures are taking place
- Any actions are dealt with or followed up with the Training Assessor(s)/Tutor(s) and IQA's
- All paperwork completed, recorded onto the database and filed in a portfolio
- Copies of all forms and the monthly planners are kept in their own occupational portfolio

4.3 Skills Procedures and Policies

RM Training works to the QCF and Joint Awarding Body guidelines, policies and procedures as a minimum standard. These state that the company must maintain a copy of the following:

- RM Training (UK) Limited Equality Policy:
- RM Training (UK) Limited Appeals Procedure:
- RM Training (UK) Limited Health and Safety Policy:

- RM Training (UK) Limited Quality Assurance procedures: contained in this manual, (which will be updated annually)
- List of Standards offered by the RM Training (UK) Limited: as specified on the RM Training (UK) Limited Website.

The Operations Manager must also:

- Ensure that all information for monitoring of Equality and those learners with additional learning and support needs is available
- Ensure that Awarding Body procedures regarding provision of particular assessment requirements are adhered to.
- Ensure that all Assessors' have access to the above and during sampling, ensuring that all Assessors' are complying with the requirements of each.
- Refer disputes and appeals to the appropriate authority, in line with RM Training Limited and the Awarding Body's Appeals Procedure.

Awarding Body Documentation

The Operations Manager must maintain and keep up to date copies of the following:

- Record of centre approval
- Scheme Booklets
- Notes for Guidance
- Updates for Verified Schemes
- Standard Pack of Cumulative Assessment Records
- Certification Records
- Candidate packs
- QCF and JAB booklets

This will be stored in the Master IQA Portfolio for the qualification.

Lead IQA Master File Procedures

All IQA's will have 2 electronic folders for their respective occupational area(s). The files will be divided into the following sections.

File 1

1: Index

2: Copies of scheme approval forms/Letters

3: Minutes of meetings (sub-divided into standardisation and general)

4: EQA reports and visit planners

5: Copies of APU forms

6: Occupational updates and Information as relevant to the Sector.

7: Correspondence

8: Copies of assessor CV's, certificates, CPD logs (filed by assessor) and this should be maintained on Smart Assessor

9: Recommended resource

File 2

1: Assessor support (filed alphabetically by assessor name)

2: Direct Observations of Teaching and Learning and Assessment (filed alphabetically by assessor name)

3: Interim IQA reports (filed alphabetically by learner)

4: Final verification reports (filed in alphabetical order)

5. Where electronic assessment methods are used records should be maintained via the sampling plan to ensure the IQA Strategy is met for each assessor.

4.4 Control of Procedures and Documentation

The Operations Manager must:

- Complete an annual self-assessment report to ensure that continuous improvement is made.
- Ensure that any Awarding Body requirements are included in the relevant procedures.
- Issue copies of all relevant procedures and assessment forms to IQA's and Assessors.
- On an annual basis, review all current procedures and documentation to ensure they are effective and in line with current Awarding Body and centre requirements. Assessors, Tutors and IQA's must note difficulties when they arise and also identify any document, which is redundant to the process and inform their Operations Manager
- Where any procedure, form or record is updated or amended, ensure all Training Assessors' are familiar with these; ensure that a copy of all relevant updated or amended documentation is available.

Standardisation

Standardisation must be conducted on a regular basis with all Training Assessors and Tutors. This must cover each subject area, and Training Assessors'/Tutors must attend for each qualification they deliver. The IQA must therefore:

- Hold regular standardisation meetings
- Issue Awarding Body guidance
- Treat all Training Assessors/Tutors equally, giving the same advice and guidance.

4.5 Standardisation Meetings

The IQA must:

- Arrange standardisation meetings in line with QCF and Awarding Body Guidelines.
- At least one per year should involve all Training Assessors/Tutors per occupational area.
- Meetings to be held quarterly. If major changes have occurred i.e. new standards, or specific needs have been identified this should be increased as required.
- Ensure that any problems encountered with individual candidates in their progress towards achievements of a qualification or units are discussed and recommendations regarding action to be taken.

- If any Training Assessors training or development needs are identified during these meetings, ensure that this information is passed on promptly to the responsible manager, in writing.

- Discuss any changes/updates to procedures or standards and ensure that all Assessors understand the implications of these and take any necessary action.

- Discuss any issues arising from sampling at standardisation meetings and ensure the appropriate action is taken.

- Maintain minutes of standardisation meetings. Where action is required from individual Assessor, ensure that this action is taken by the time allocated and is reviewed at the next meeting. Highlight any sections of the minutes, which are relevant to the EQA or IQA.

Attendance must be noted, and absenteeism reported to the Training Assessor's Line Manager if two standardisation meetings are not attended.

Occupational Updates

Each IQA will provide updates for the standards they are responsible for as and when necessary. This will cover any news regarding delivery of qualifications, EQA report feedback and copies of meeting minutes as appropriate.

4.6 Competence Requirements to Assess and Verify TAQA Units

All Assessors', primary or independent, must meet the Awarding Body criteria for occupational competence. They must also be approved by the Lead IQA, as a member of the TAQA team. Assessors' of TAQAs must already be qualified IQA's as well as qualified Assessors'.

IQA Competence to Verify TAQA:

All IQA's must meet the Awarding Body criteria for occupational competence. They must also be approved by the Operations Manager as a member of the Learning and Development team.

Assessor Candidates Role:

Before an application to be a TAQA candidate can be approved the following must be forwarded to the Operations Manager for consideration:

- A full up-to-date CV.

- Original copies of relevant certificates.

- Detailed competence summary against each unit to be assessed informing how previous and current competence can be claimed.

- Detailed summary of proposed candidates, target dates, placement details and ILP, explanation of how the Assessor candidate will meet the requirements ensuring no interruption to the candidate's schedule or hindrance to their progression.

- Action plan with timescales for implementation.

The Assessor candidate must be allocated a minimum of 2 candidates carrying out the same qualification to assess ensuring that this will not interfere with the candidates ILP.

The Assessor candidate will then:

- Identify and meet candidates learning needs.

- Train the candidates to the required standards.

- Carry out monitoring and review visits.
- Assess the candidate against the standard to reach competency over time to the national standards in line with the candidates training plan.
- Accredit previous learning/accreditation.
- Plan learning in line with the ILP.
- Participate in the IQA process by regularly updating current competence, attending standardisation meetings, Assessor meetings, reading and responding to occupational updates, attend training and development as required, present evidence for Internal and External Quality Assurance Process and attend IQA and EQA visits as required.

The Assessor candidate must work as an Assessor and be managed in line with RM Training (UK) Limited standards they must:

- Complete a full Assessor induction.
- Be managed via the one to one process.
- Be quality monitored using "RAG" system
- Have direct and interim IQA carried out by the IQA.

4.7 Training and Development of the Assessor Candidate:

Before assessing can start the Assessor candidate must prove to their TAQA Assessor they hold the relevant competence and knowledge. They must receive training in TAQA practice from their Assessor and follow an Individual Training Plan.

This should include:

- Training in assessment practice, knowledge, APL, diverse evidence collection, Awarding Body and RM Training practices and paperwork, and portfolio completion, including training on any e assessment methods used.
- Shadowing by their Assessor whilst practising the above with candidates until competence to TAQA standard is reached
- Assessment of candidates whilst being supported by the Assessor for one full unit with each candidate – successfully internally verified
- Basic Health and Safety, Customer Care and Food Hygiene (if covering catering qualifications) or relevant work experience to prove a sound working knowledge

Quality Monitoring of Assessor Candidates:

RM Training (UK) Limited will carry out quality evaluation on the assessment of TAQA candidates by direct observations of assessment practice, interim and final internal verification and quality monitoring in line with the standards.

The amount of time the Assessor candidate will spend in training and development before beginning to assess will vary with each candidate's ability and circumstances. This should be agreed with their TAQA assessor and noted in their training plan. The time span for assessment will vary according to the assessor candidates' ability and the qualification they are training to assess with as some have time spans indicated of 6/9 months per unit.

4.8 Appeals Procedures

Learner Appeals – See form

A Learner may appeal if they think their assessment was unfair.

The assessment centre, RM Training in this case, must have a clear procedure for appeals which includes:

- A formal system of recording appeals
- Prompt responses within clearly stated times
- Stages that give all parties the opportunity to put their case
- Clear outcomes at each stage of the appeal
- Constructive feedback to the candidate

The appeals procedure will have four stages as follows:

1. Discussion with Assessor
2. Discussion with IQA
3. Discussion with Operations Manager
4. Refer to Awarding Body – Fees may apply.

Assessor Appeals

This is identical to the Learner's appeal procedure as above.

Invigilation and Moderation

Invigilators will be required to operate to the current practice issued by the appropriate awarding body. RM Training will ensure this is available to all staff invigilating tests or examinations.

Moderated awards will also be moderated in line with the relevant Awarding Body guidelines and the Lead IQA for the award will be responsible for ensuring this takes place.

Suggestions for Improvement

If you have any suggestions for improvement within this policy, then please feel free to offer these suggestions to the Office Administrator (admin@rmtraining.co.uk)

Monitoring and review of this policy

The Operations Manager shall be responsible for reviewing this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

Reporting and Concerns

All queries and concerns regarding this policy should be referred David MacGregor (david@rmtraining.co.uk)