



Hampshire Learning

NCFE Investing in Quality Licence

Handbook

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Handbook

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NCFE Investing in Quality Licence

Section 1 - Introduction

NCFE's Investing in Quality (IIQ) Licence is designed to give formal, demand led recognition to organisations' bespoke programmes of learning. The licence is based on a number of Quality Statements which provide a quality assurance framework for the development, delivery and evaluation of learning activities (see Appendix 1).

The Quality Statements have been mapped to a range of quality standards, including the Common Inspection Framework and Recognising and Recording Progression and Achievement (RARPA). In addition, Hampshire Learning's Quality Improvement Framework incorporates the requirements of the IIQ Licence.

The Licence has two parts: Part A applies to centre provision which results in the award of a certificate of attendance, completion or participation. Part B applies to centre provision which results in the award of a certificate of achievement.

Part A Programmes

Programmes offered under Part A should have clearly stated programme aims and objectives (goals). Opportunities for progression should be clearly identified. Programmes must satisfy the requirements of Quality Statements 1 – 5.

Learners who have completed programmes that meet these requirements may be awarded Adult or Family Learning Certificates.

Part B Programmes

Part B of the IIQ Licence offers centres the opportunity to develop provision which identifies and accredits individual achievement of learning outcomes at a specified level. Hampshire Learning will offer support in developing accredited programmes to meet local needs. Programmes offered under Part B must satisfy the requirements set out in Quality Statements 1 – 6. They should have clearly stated learning outcomes relating to skills and knowledge as well as defined assessment criteria and methods.

Hampshire Learning has already developed a range of Part B programmes which centres may wish to adopt. Full details of current programmes are available from www.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-learning. If you would like to deliver one of these programmes, please contact the Accreditation Officer for further details.

If you are interested in developing a new Part B programme, guidance and support is available from Hampshire Learning. An outline of the process is contained in Section 2.

Assessment and Verification Procedures

Centres offering Part B programmes must ensure that Assessment and Internal Verification procedures to meet IIQ requirements are carried out and that all programmes are regularly reviewed.

The procedures must ensure that:

- candidates understand the purpose of assessment and what is expected of them;
- assessment is fair, carried out regularly and used to inform candidates of the progress they have made and how they might improve;
- candidates produce valid, current and authentic evidence sufficient to enable the assessor to judge the candidate's performance against the requirements;
- there is a process for standardisation activity which is carried out on a regular basis;
- achievement data is retained for current programmes and for at least 12 months after completion of the programme.

Full guidance on assessment and verification procedures is included in Sections 3 and 4 below.

Annual Programme Review

A review of each learning programme should be undertaken on an annual basis by the centre manager, programme leader and/or other key staff at the centre.

This review should be informed by the following:

- learner feedback
- tutor feedback
- MIS data including enrolment, retention, achievement statistics
- learners' destination data

Where the same course is delivered more than once during the year, it is important that relevant data is collected and analysed at the end of each course to inform the annual review at the end of the year. Providers delivering NCFE IIQ (Part B) programmes will be asked to submit the [Annual Programme Review](#) to the Accreditation Officer during the summer term.

Administration procedures

Hampshire Learning's administrations procedures and documentation for the delivery of NCFE IIQ Part B programmes ensure that programmes are set up and delivered effectively and efficiently. The following bullets outline the process:

- Centres who wish to develop new accredited programmes should contact Hampshire Learning. Following discussion, Centres will be asked to complete Section 1 of the Accredited Programme Proposal Form.

- Centres who wish to apply to deliver existing accredited programmes should complete the Accredited Programme Application Form.
- Centres should appoint a named contact to deal with all NCFE issues.
- Centres must ensure that all details relating to the course are on the MIS system – AQUA - either by the providers entering the details themselves (if an AQUA user) or by sending completed forms to Hampshire Learning's MIS team. Centres should indicate that the course is accredited by NCFE by completing the relevant section.
- Learners should be enrolled in the normal way no later than 2 weeks after the start of the course.
- Centres must notify the Accreditation Officer of the name of the Internal Verifier for the programme. An email requesting this information will be sent to the centre and must be returned by the date indicated.
- Approximately one week before the end of the course, the Accreditation Officer will send to the centre a Learner Registration form detailing learners' names and course aims. The centre must check details (**including spellings of names and dates of birth**), confirm that learners are being prepared for accreditation, and ensure that any learner who has withdrawn from the course, or who is not being entered for the accreditation at this stage, is clearly identified on the form.
- IV documentation **must** be returned to the Accreditation Officer at this stage. **If the IV documentation is not returned the registration of candidates will not take place and no certificates will be issued by NCFE.**
- Candidates will then be registered by Hampshire Learning with NCFE who will generate a Certificate Claim form (Form C) for signature by the Internal Verifier. The Accreditation Officer will forward this form to the appropriate contact at the provider centre for urgent return.
- Upon receipt of the completed and signed Certificate Claim form (Form C), the Accreditation Officer will request certificates from NCFE.
- Certificates will be sent to providers usually within 3 weeks. Any errors on the certificates should be reported to Hampshire Learning IMMEDIATELY for amendments to be made by NCFE.
- Any issues at any stage of the process should be reported to the Accreditation Officer at Hampshire Learning immediately. Where centres provide inaccurate information this may result in charges being incurred from NCFE, any additional charges incurred will be passed on to centres.

This process depends very much on **all** the correct information being entered on AQUA. It is **very important**, therefore, that tutor, venue and enrolment details are **entered on AQUA as quickly as possible**, either by the provider themselves if an

AQUA user or by returning all the forms to the MIS team as soon as the course is up and running.

The documents detailed below support the administration processes for NCFE IIO Part B programmes. All documents are available electronically within the [Quality Documentation](#) pack.

Accredited Programme Proposal Form (QD33)	Used by providers who wish to develop a new Part B programme
Accredited Programme Application Form (QD34)	Used by providers who wish to deliver an existing Part B programme
Accredited Programme Outline (appendix 3)	The template for writing Part B accredited programmes
Portfolio Availability Statement (QD40)	By signing a copy, learners agree to make their portfolios available up to 12 months after completion of their course.
Annual Programme Review (QD31)	Used by providers to provide annual feedback to Hampshire Learning on each programme delivered

Once a centre has agreed to deliver IIO Part B accredited programmes, the Accreditation Officer will provide full support and guidance on the administrative processes. It is important that the procedures are closely followed to ensure that courses and learners are registered at appropriate times and to ensure that Hampshire Learning conforms to NCFE's regulations. When submitting the Learner Registration Form to claim certification for learners who have successfully completed a course, it is important to indicate which Units have been completed by learners and whether the Full Certificate is being claimed.

Where centres provide inaccurate information or fail to meet deadlines set by Hampshire Learning, this may result in charges being incurred from NCFE (see table below). Any additional charges incurred will be passed on to centres.

Fee incurred	Reason	Cost
Certificate fee	Incorrect spelling or lost certificate	£25
Learner withdrawal	Learners withdrawn once registered	£10 per candidate
Transfer Fee	Learner(s) transferred from one program to another following registration with NCFE	£5 per candidate/ £25 per batch

Section 2 – Developing Accredited Programmes

Hampshire Learning has a bank of IIO accredited programmes, details of which are available from www.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-learning. Where providers would like to develop new programmes to meet the needs of particular groups of learners, they should contact Hampshire Learning to discuss their proposals. The Accreditation Officer will be able to provide initial information and Quality and Curriculum Development Officers (QCDOs) will be able to provide support in writing the programme.

When developing NCFE IIO Part B programmes the following should be taken in to account:

Aims, Objectives and Target Group

Programmes can be developed to meet the needs of specific groups of learners. Where it has been recognised that learners would benefit from taking part in an accredited programme and there is no recognised qualification that meets the specific aims and objectives of the programme or existing qualifications require study that is too long or too in depth for the learners, an accredited programme provides an alternative route for these learners.

Clearly stated aims and objectives of the programme should be agreed at the start of the development work. In addition, it is important to be aware of the target learners to ensure that the programme is developed at the right level and in right context.

Level of programme

Programmes are developed at an appropriate level to meet the needs of a specific group of learners in line with nationally recognised level descriptors. The level descriptors provide guidance on the demands that specific programmes are likely to place on learners. The programmes accredited by Hampshire generally fall into the range of Entry Level to Level 4. Further information on the level descriptors is contained in Appendix 2.

Diversity and Inclusion

The content of accredited programmes must be accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory. The seven equality strands (age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, transgender and religion/belief) need to be considered during development. It is important to ensure that no barriers to achievement are incorporated into any learning outcomes or assessment criteria.

Writing Accredited Programmes

Units should be written onto an Accredited Programme Outline. Guidance on writing accredited units is contained in Appendix 3.

Section 3 – Assessment

Assessors are responsible for assessing learners' performance against the learning outcomes for each Unit. Assessment activities are used to satisfy the assessor that the learner is able to meet the performance criteria contained in the Unit. The Assessment Guidance for the Unit contains details of the Evidence Requirements and any additional information that the assessor should take into account. Assessment activities should be seen as separate from teaching activities.

Assessors should ensure that candidates understand the purpose of assessment and what they are required to do. Assessment should normally take place regularly during the course so that candidates are aware of their progress and achievements. Candidates must produce valid and current evidence and assessors must satisfy themselves that each learner's work is authentic.

Assessment should:

- be fair, accurate, valid, honest and regular
- be appropriate for the programme and help learners develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required
- ensure that any assessed work is returned promptly
- monitor learners' progress and give clear information about progress being made
- include feedback both verbally and through written comments if appropriate
- set targets that are challenging but achievable
- be recorded
- help identify additional learning needs

Appeals against Assessment Decisions

If, for any reason, a learner is unhappy about any assessment decision, s/he has the right of appeal. Tutors/assessors should make learners aware of this at the start of the course.

If an assessor needs need advice about any aspect of this, s/he should contact the Internal Verifier or to the Programme Manager. In the unlikely event that the difficulty cannot be resolved, the matter should be referred to the Hampshire Learning team. Hampshire Learning's Appeals Procedure can be located in the Policy and Procedures for Assessment and Internal Verification document.

Documentation for recording assessment activity is contained in the [Quality Documentation](#) pack. These pro-formas provide a resource for tutors which may be helpful in the tracking of learner assessments:

<p><u>Learner Record of Achievement / Evidence Log (QD35)</u></p>	<p>Provides a format for learners to document evidence in a portfolio of evidence.</p> <p>All learners on accredited courses should complete this form with clear referencing to evidence contained in the portfolio and assessor's signature to verify evidence and achievement of learning outcomes</p>
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Section 4 - Internal Verification

One of the most important aspects in the quality assurance of NCFE IIQ Accredited Programmes is internal verification. This is the process by which the Hampshire Learning team confirms that assessment decisions in its approved centres are:

- made by competent assessors
- the product of sound assessment practice
- recorded accurately.

The Internal Verifier forms the vital link between assessors and the Hampshire Learning central team and acts as the centre's quality assurance agent. These following paragraphs focus on the way in which Internal Verifiers carry out their role.

The Role of the Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier is required to perform three main functions:

- advise and support assessors
- maintain and monitor arrangements for processing assessment information
- verify assessment practice.

Advising and Supporting Assessors

Internal Verifiers will need to ensure that assessors:

- are provided with full, up-to-date documentation, records and guidelines
- are given accurate advice and support to enable them to identify and meet their training and development needs
- are given accurate advice about the appropriate and efficient use of different types of evidence
- are assisted with arrangements for candidates with special assessment requirements
- are clear about allocations of assessor responsibilities to and match the needs of candidates and assessors
- have accurate, current advice and relevant support to achieve consistency in assessments.

Maintain and Monitor Arrangements for Processing Assessment Information

Internal Verifiers will need to ensure that:

- arrangements for monitoring candidate records and processing information meet IQ requirements
- candidate records are complete, legible and accurate
- candidate records provide accurate and up-to-date information on monitoring candidate progress within the Accredited Programme and the judgements and assessment decisions made

Verify Assessment Practice

Internal Verifiers will need to ensure that:

- individuals have the skills and knowledge to practice as assessors
- assessment practice and quality assurance arrangements are monitored in an appropriate proportion of instances to check that they meet IQ requirements
- assessors are given clear and constructive feedback
- judgements of evidence and assessment decisions are sampled regularly to check their fairness and accuracy
- documentation is complete, accurate and up-to-date
- decision makers are given clear explanations of the need for improvements in assessment practice
- disputes and appeals are referred to the appropriate authority
- internal verification is taking place across different methods of assessment
- internal verifiers cannot verify their own work

In fulfilling the above roles, Internal Verifiers ensure that candidates receive fair and equal access to assessment, which is free from discrimination and is made by well informed and well supported assessors. Further, the internal Verifier must ensure that the standard of assessment remains consistent across time and candidates with respect to individual assessors, and that consistency and standardisation occurs between assessors.

The Internal Verifier should:

- have a relevant occupational background which can be related to the vocational area to be verified.
- have a clear understanding of the standards against which the candidate is being assessed and ensure that any queries relating to the interpretation of the standards are brought to the immediate attention of the Hampshire Learning team.

How is Internal Verification Carried Out?

There is no single way of carrying out internal verification, rather a collection of methods, which can be combined in whichever way is most appropriate to the

situation. The following paragraphs set out the methods generally used by internal verifiers:

a) Observation of assessment practice

By observing the assessor at work, a greater understanding of the assessment process is gained, particularly in the area of decision making; the internal verifier also achieves a greater understanding of how the diverse needs of candidates are met.

b) Examining a portfolio of evidence from a particular candidate / candidates

Looking at the evidence provided by the candidate in their portfolio of evidence enables the internal verifier to examine such evidence criteria as sufficiency, currency and reliability.

c) Sampling across the range of candidates

Comparing evidence for a certain unit, element or even performance criterion across a range of candidates enables the internal verifier to identify assessors who are accepting evidence which either falls short of the Accredited Programme requirements, as well as those who are insistent on evidence being generated which far surpasses the requirements. It also assists in identifying the most appropriate forms of evidence that can cover the requirements of the Programme.

d) Requesting candidate feedback

Candidates may have valuable information with respect to the assessment experience, which can be fed back to assessors.

e) Meetings and communications

The outcomes of the above process, as well as awarding body issues, Hampshire Learning feedback etc, should be disseminated and discussed at regular meetings with the assessment team, in order to develop a common understanding of the assessment process.

f) Monitoring candidate appeals against an assessment decision

The monitoring of candidate appeals can enable the internal verifier, together with the assessment team, to monitor and, where appropriate, improve the system of assessment.

Frequency of Internal Verification Activity

The frequency of internal verification activity is dependent upon the duration and intensity of the course, as well as the number of candidates being assessed.

However, the sample of assessment decisions, which are internally verified, is usually between 20 and 40%. (When undertaking a new Programme, centres may wish to ensure that between 50-100% of assessment decisions are internally verified, in order to have confidence that judgements are consistent and assessments are appropriate.)

The internal verifier should sample at least one portfolio as well as comparing evidence for certain units, elements or performance criteria across assessors to ensure consistency between assessors over time and with different candidates.

Recording Verification Activity

- It is good practice to evaluate the reporting procedure regularly in order to ensure that the information recorded is appropriate and useful.
- Recording mechanisms should provide evidence that internal verification has been carried out regularly and systematically and should show that it has occurred across candidates, units and assessors.
- Internal verifiers must ensure that candidates and assessors complete internal records accurately and promptly.
- Records of all assessment and verification activity must be kept both current and secure as Hampshire Learning Quality and Curriculum Development Officers will wish to review reports during monitoring visits.
- Following final verification activity, it is the responsibility of the internal verifier and/or the nominated centre contact to liaise with to ensure that Certification Claim Forms are completed accurately; these must be signed off by the internal verifier.

Documentation

Documentation for recording Internal Verification activity is contained in within the [Quality Documentation](#) pack and is available through the Hampshire Learning website. The documentation provides a framework for recording key activities in the internal verification process:

Internal Verifier Record	Purpose	Form
Qualification / Scheme Sampling Plan	To plan and record sampling activity for each qualification / scheme	QD37
Internal Verifier Assessment Sampling Record/Feedback to Assessor	To record feedback to assessor To document action required by assessor with follow up	QD38
Candidate Appeal Report	To be used by the Centre to record the progress of Candidate Appeal against Assessment Decisions	QD36

Further information

The following table summarises the key events in the IQ process. Centres are requested to respond to all requests for information by stated deadlines and reporting any difficulties in meeting IQ requirements to the Accreditation Officer.

Timing	What Happens?	Who is Involved?
Prior to the start of a course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To develop a new accredited programme: Centre completes an IQ Accredited Programme Proposal form ▪ To deliver an existing course: centre checks that the course has NCFE status on their funding agreement. If this is not the case, centre contacts Accreditation Officer and completes Accredited Programme Application Form. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Centre Manager ▪ Accreditation Officer
At the start of the course	Centre ensures that course is set up on the MIS system and identified as an NCFE accredited programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Centre Manager ▪ Planning and Performance Officer ▪ QCDO
	Centre appoints Internal Verifier and advises Accreditation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Centre Manager ▪ Accreditation Officer
	QCDO confirms with Centre that quality systems are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ QCDO
During the course	Assessment of learners' work. IV monitors quality of provision and provides support and guidance to assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutor / Assessor ▪ Internal Verifier
	Portfolio of Evidence compiled. Feedback to learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners ▪ Tutor / Assessor
	Record of Achievement / Evidence Log maintained	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners ▪ Tutor / Assessor
	Formative sampling is carried out on a regular basis. Feedback to Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal Verifier ▪ Tutor / Assessor

	Learner Registration Form sent to Centre for checking and return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accreditation Officer ▪ Tutor / Assessor ▪ Centre Manager
At the end of the course	Portfolios completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners ▪ Tutor / Assessor
	Final assessment of learners' work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutor / Assessor
	Learner evaluation and end of course review carried out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learners ▪ Tutor / Assessor ▪ Centre Manager
	Summative sampling carried out. Feedback to Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal Verifier ▪ Tutor / Assessor
	Learner achievement recorded on register. NCFE's Certificate Claim form (Form C) sent to Centre for completion and return to Accreditation Officer to request certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tutor / Assessor ▪ Internal Verifier ▪ Accreditation Officer ▪ Centre Manager
After the course	Certificates issued by NCFE and forwarded to centre by Accreditation Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NCFE ▪ Accreditation Officer ▪ Centre Manager

For further information on any aspect of the Hampshire Learning's NCFE Investing in Quality Licence and for support in developing accredited programmes, please contact:

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All documentation contained in this handbook is available by email or from www.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-learning