

HiQual UK

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

HQUK-POL-QA-001

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Organisation	HiQual UK
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Policy Owner	Sarah Williams, Head of Quality Assurance
Approved By	HiQual UK Academic and Standards Committee
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Classification	Public Policy
Applies To	Learners, Approved Centres, Assessors, Internal Quality Assurers, Tutors, HiQual UK Personnel and Relevant Stakeholders

Framework for maintaining consistent quality, academic standards and qualification integrity

1. Purpose

HiQual UK is committed to maintaining a robust, consistent and proportionate quality assurance framework that protects academic standards, qualification integrity and learner interests.

The purpose of this Quality Assurance Policy is to establish the principles, responsibilities, controls and monitoring arrangements through which HiQual UK assures the quality of its qualifications, assessment arrangements, approved centres, certification and associated services.

Quality assurance will be used not only to identify non-compliance or weaknesses, but also to support continual improvement, prevent recurrence of identified issues and maintain confidence in HiQual UK qualifications.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all HiQual UK activities that may affect the quality, validity, reliability, consistency or integrity of its qualifications and services.

It applies to qualification design and approval, assessment, marking and moderation, internal and external quality assurance activities, centre recognition and monitoring, certification, learner support, complaints, appeals, malpractice and maladministration, records and quality improvement.

3. Quality Assurance Principles

HiQual UK will operate its quality assurance arrangements according to the following principles:

3.1 Fitness for Purpose

Quality assurance arrangements will be appropriate to the purpose, level, size and complexity of the qualification or activity being reviewed.

3.2 Consistency

HiQual UK will seek consistent standards across qualifications, centres, assessment personnel and decision-making processes while recognising legitimate differences in context.

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Assessment and quality assurance arrangements should support valid, reliable and defensible academic decisions.

3.4 Independence and Impartiality

Quality assurance decisions should be made objectively and, where reasonably practicable, by persons independent from the activity being reviewed.

3.5 Evidence-Based Assurance

Quality judgements will be based on appropriate evidence, sampling, records, data and documented findings.

3.6 Proportionality

The depth and frequency of quality assurance activity will reflect risk, performance, qualification characteristics and available evidence.

3.7 Transparency and Accountability

Quality requirements, responsibilities, findings and required actions will be documented and communicated appropriately.

3.8 Learner Protection

Quality assurance will consider the effect of identified weaknesses on learners and will prioritise action where learner interests or qualification integrity may be at risk.

3.9 Continual Improvement

Quality information will be used to identify trends, root causes, corrective action and opportunities to strengthen systems and processes.

4. Quality Assurance Framework

HiQual UK will maintain a quality assurance framework covering the full lifecycle of its qualifications and the principal activities that support them.

The framework will include, as appropriate:

4.1 Qualification Design and Approval

Qualifications will be developed and approved through controlled processes that consider purpose, level, learning outcomes, assessment requirements, resources, learner needs and applicable external expectations.

Quality assurance will be incorporated into qualification development before a qualification is approved for delivery.

4.2 Qualification Review

Qualifications will be periodically reviewed to determine whether their content, structure, assessment arrangements and delivery remain appropriate.

Reviews may consider learner achievement, assessment performance, centre feedback, complaints, appeals, external developments, risks and other relevant evidence.

4.3 Assessment Quality Assurance

HiQual UK will maintain controls for assessment design, setting, delivery, marking, moderation, verification, standardisation, results and certification.

Assessment materials and processes will be reviewed to support validity, fairness, consistency and security.

4.4 Centre Quality Assurance

Approved centres will be subject to proportionate quality assurance and monitoring arrangements.

Monitoring may include document review, sampling of learner and assessment records, meetings, remote or on-site audits, observation, action-plan review and follow-up activity.

Centre performance will be reviewed according to risk, history, volume, qualification activity and evidence of compliance.

4.5 Assessment Personnel Quality Assurance

Assessors, internal quality assurers, tutors and other relevant personnel must have appropriate competence for their assigned responsibilities.

HiQual UK may require evidence of qualifications, experience, standardisation, training or continuing professional development where relevant.

4.6 Certification Quality Assurance

Certification processes will include appropriate controls to ensure that certificates and related records are issued accurately, securely and only where applicable requirements have been met.

Certification anomalies, suspected fraud or material record discrepancies will be escalated for investigation.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that HiQual UK maintains appropriate organisational governance and resources for effective quality assurance.

The Academic and Standards Committee provides oversight of academic standards, qualification integrity and significant quality assurance matters.

The Head of Quality Assurance is responsible for operational oversight of the quality assurance framework, monitoring trends, coordinating quality activity and reporting significant matters to the appropriate governance body.

Quality assurance personnel are responsible for conducting assigned reviews objectively, maintaining evidence and reporting findings accurately.

Approved centres are responsible for complying with HiQual UK requirements, maintaining effective local quality arrangements and cooperating with monitoring and corrective actions.

All relevant personnel are responsible for following approved procedures, maintaining records, protecting confidentiality and escalating quality concerns.

6. Risk-Based Quality Assurance

HiQual UK will use a risk-based approach to determine the nature, frequency and depth of quality assurance activity.

Risk indicators may include:

6.1 Risk Indicators

New or substantially changed qualifications.

Newly approved or higher-risk centres.

Significant changes in learner numbers or delivery arrangements.

Assessment anomalies or unusual achievement patterns.

Repeated complaints, appeals or incidents.

Malpractice or maladministration concerns.

Previous quality assurance findings or overdue corrective actions.

Concerns relating to assessment security, certification or qualification integrity.

Material changes in personnel, systems or organisational arrangements.

6.2 Risk Ratings

Where appropriate, HiQual UK may classify qualifications, centres or activities as low, medium or high risk.

Risk ratings should be supported by documented evidence and reviewed when significant new information becomes available.

7. Internal Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance activities will be planned and documented according to applicable requirements.

Activities may include sampling, document review, assessment review, standardisation, centre monitoring, record checks, process audits and action-plan verification.

Findings will distinguish, where appropriate, between satisfactory performance, recommendations, minor weaknesses, significant non-conformities and critical risks.

8. Sampling

Sampling will be sufficient to provide reasonable assurance that standards and procedures are being applied consistently.

Sampling methodology may consider qualification level, assessment type, learner volume, centre risk, assessor or IQA performance, previous findings and changes to delivery.

Sampling records will identify the population considered, sample selected, evidence reviewed, findings and any resulting actions.

9. Standardisation and Moderation

HiQual UK will maintain appropriate arrangements for standardisation and moderation where required by the qualification or assessment model.

Standardisation activities should support consistent interpretation of assessment requirements and comparable academic standards.

Where discrepancies are identified, corrective action may include further sampling, re-marking, standardisation, assessor support or other proportionate measures.

10. Centre Monitoring

Approved centres will be monitored to confirm continuing compliance with HiQual UK requirements.

Monitoring may be scheduled, risk-based, thematic or triggered by specific concerns.

Centres will be required to address identified weaknesses within reasonable timescales.

Failure to implement required corrective action may result in increased monitoring, restrictions, suspension or other action under applicable centre procedures.

11. Non-Conformities and Corrective Action

Where quality assurance identifies a weakness, non-conformity or risk, HiQual UK will determine appropriate corrective action.

Corrective action may include:

11.1 Corrective Action Examples

Correction of records or documentation.

Additional assessment or quality assurance sampling.

Re-assessment or review where justified.

Additional standardisation or training.

Centre action plans.

Enhanced monitoring.

Temporary restrictions on activity.

Referral to senior management or the Academic and Standards Committee.

Suspension or withdrawal of approval where justified under applicable procedures.

11.2 Action Follow-Up

Corrective actions will be assigned to an accountable person or organisation, given a target date and monitored until satisfactory closure.

Evidence of closure will be retained as part of the quality assurance record.

12. Serious Quality Risks

Where a quality issue presents a significant risk to learners, academic standards, assessment integrity, certification or the credibility of a qualification, HiQual UK may take immediate proportionate action.

Actions may include increased monitoring, suspension of relevant activity, preservation of evidence, independent review, investigation under another policy or referral to the appropriate governance authority.

13. Complaints, Appeals and Quality Data

HiQual UK will use information from complaints, appeals, enquiries about results and related processes as a source of quality intelligence.

Significant or recurring issues will be analysed to identify systemic weaknesses and determine whether corrective or preventive action is required.

This policy should be read alongside the Complaints Policy and Appeals Policy.

14. Malpractice and Maladministration

Suspected malpractice, maladministration, assessment irregularities, falsification, plagiarism, cheating, certification fraud and other integrity concerns will be managed under the applicable policy and procedures.

Quality assurance findings that indicate possible malpractice or maladministration will be escalated promptly rather than treated solely as routine quality findings.

15. Data and Performance Monitoring

HiQual UK will maintain appropriate quality data to support monitoring and governance.

Data may include learner achievement, assessment outcomes, centre performance, quality assurance findings, complaints, appeals, malpractice cases, certification activity, corrective actions and other relevant indicators.

Data will be interpreted carefully and in context. Unusual patterns will be investigated where they may indicate a quality, assessment or integrity risk.

16. Quality Improvement

Quality assurance findings will be used to support continual improvement.

Improvement activity may include policy revisions, process changes, staff development, centre support, qualification review, assessment redesign, additional controls or governance action.

Where an issue may affect more than one learner, centre, qualification or process, HiQual UK will consider whether a broader review is required.

17. Quality Assurance Records

HiQual UK will maintain appropriate records of quality assurance activities.

Records may include:

17.1 Quality Records

Quality assurance plans and schedules.

Sampling plans and completed samples.

Audit and monitoring reports.

Assessment and moderation records.

Standardisation records.

Centre action plans.

Corrective and preventive action records.

Risk assessments and risk ratings.

Committee reports and decisions.

Evidence of follow-up and closure.

18. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Quality assurance information will be handled securely and in accordance with applicable data protection and confidentiality requirements.

Access will be limited to persons with a legitimate need to know.

Where quality assurance involves learner or personnel information, only information necessary for the relevant purpose should be accessed or shared.

19. External Quality Assurance and Independent Review

Where appropriate, HiQual UK may use independent or external reviewers, subject specialists, auditors or other competent persons to strengthen quality assurance.

External reviewers must be suitably competent and must comply with confidentiality and conflict-of-interest requirements.

Independent review may be used where additional assurance, specialist expertise or independence is required.

20. Governance Reporting

The Head of Quality Assurance will provide appropriate reports to the Academic and Standards Committee and other governance bodies.

Reports may include:

20.1 Reporting Areas

Quality assurance activity completed.

Material findings and non-conformities.

Centre monitoring outcomes.

Assessment and standardisation issues.

Complaints and appeals trends.

Malpractice and maladministration trends.

Risk profile and emerging risks.

Corrective action status.

Qualification review findings.

Recommendations for improvement.

21. Staff Competence and Development

Persons performing quality assurance functions must have appropriate competence, knowledge and experience.

HiQual UK will support relevant training, standardisation and professional development where necessary to maintain effective quality assurance.

Competence requirements should be proportionate to the role and complexity of the activity.

22. Conflicts of Interest

All persons involved in quality assurance must declare actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

Where a conflict may affect impartiality, the individual will not participate in the relevant review or decision wherever practicable.

Conflicts and management actions will be recorded.

23. Policy Exceptions

Any exception to this policy must be justified, documented and approved by an appropriately authorised person or governance body.

An exception must not compromise learner protection, academic standards, assessment integrity or the credibility of HiQual UK qualifications.

24. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where required by changes in applicable requirements, governance arrangements, qualification delivery, assessment systems, organisational risks, quality findings or lessons learned.

The Policy Owner will recommend amendments to the appropriate governance authority for approval.

25. Related Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read alongside:

- Academic Governance Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Qualification Approval Policy
- Centre Recognition Policy
- Centre Monitoring Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy
- Certification Policy
- Learner Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection and Privacy Policy
- Records Management and Retention Policy
- Assessment Security and Confidentiality Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

26. Document Control

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27. Version Control

Version	Date	Description of Change	Author	Approval
1.0	1 June 2026	Initial publication of HiQual UK Quality Assurance Policy	Sarah Williams, Head of Quality Assurance	Academic and Standards Committee

28. Policy Statement

HiQual UK is committed to maintaining a systematic, proportionate and evidence-based quality assurance framework that protects academic standards, qualification integrity and learner interests.

Quality assurance will be used to identify risks, confirm compliance, support consistent assessment and qualification delivery, address weaknesses and promote continual improvement.

HiQual UK will ensure that significant quality concerns are appropriately investigated, escalated, documented and addressed through effective corrective and preventive action.

END OF POLICY