

**1. The qualifications and standards**

<p><b>Assessment Team:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>The numbers of assessors and verifiers working on the management schemes this past year has remained consistent. There have been some small losses and additions to Centre teams as candidate numbers have fluctuated to cope with the changes in demand.</p> <p>The majority of assessors are qualified with the relevant qualifications although Centres do still have individuals working toward the assessor and IQA qualifications. EVs reported that assessment and verifier teams have experience relevant to their respective roles and occupational competence and knowledge in the units they are assessing or verifying. The External Verifier team signed off assessor and IQA qualification certificates at visits and reviewed occupational competence via continual professional development records.</p>
<p><b>Resources:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>Centres have sufficient resources to carry out the assessment process effectively. EVs saw evidence of e-portfolios being used with some candidates being able to access these remotely and store evidence on-line. Some EVs were also granted remote access to e-portfolios to assist with their sampling if so required.</p> <p>Many Centres are making use of digital recorders for various parts of the assessment process, reducing assessment time and the amount of paperwork for both assessors and candidates. There are still Centres using paper based portfolios and assessment documentation is being provided by Centres.</p> <p>Centres are providing a safe environment in which the candidate can be assessed and EVs have checked policies and procedures in relation to access to assessment, appeals and Health and Safety compliance.</p>

<p><b>Candidate Support:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings</b></p> <p>Interviews with candidates by external verifiers tend to indicate that candidates are happy with the level of support they received from their assessor. They have commented upon the induction they have received, usually in a positive way. For example:</p> <p><i>'I received a full induction into the programme and undertook diagnostic testing and initial assessment.'</i> (Candidate Interview)</p> <p>EVs also commented upon the induction process following their review of induction packs and procedures and discussions with candidates</p> <p><i>'Learners have a thorough one-to-one induction which provides details about the qualification, the units and the assessment process.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'Learners are provided with an extensive induction pack which includes the appeals process.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>Candidates with particular assessment requirements are having these identified at an early stage in the assessment process, usually at initial assessment or induction and measure are put in place to assist them with these to ensure a successful assessment experience.</p>
<p><b>Assessment and Verification:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>External verifier's found that assessment practice was on the whole effective and appropriate. Assessment methods selected were usually appropriate for both the unit under assessment and the circumstances of the candidate.</p> <p><i>'A varied and valid range of appropriate means and methods of assessment are evident.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'Observation is used, frequently supported by professional discussion.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'Sampling confirmed that a range of diverse and valid assessment methods are used.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>Assessors were seen to be planning effectively with candidates, agreeing appropriate units for candidates to work towards, relevant evidence to be gathered and guiding candidates to assist them to achieve:</p> <p><i>'Assessment plans are well documented and give clear guidelines to the learners.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>There were some issues with the assessment process at</p>

	<p>a minority of Centres that attracted sanctions. Examples of this were when assessment was left until the end of the programme rather than being an ongoing activity and poor practice in relation to securing knowledge evidence:</p> <p><i>'Assessments should be conducted on an ongoing basis in line with planning as it is currently all being left until the end.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'Centre to review methods of identifying knowledge and understanding guidance to ensure clear demonstration of achievement.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>EVs did see noteworthy assessment practice including assessment across the competence and knowledge qualifications, with assessors adopting a holistic approach by using common evidence for assessment criteria from both qualifications within an apprenticeship framework:</p> <p><i>'An integrated approach is taken across all components of the apprenticeship framework.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>There was some variance to this at some Centres where a unit by unit approach was taken:</p> <p><i>'There is a tendency for the Assessors to assess unit by unit.'</i> (EV Report). Where this was seen EVs recommended to assessors to adopt a more holistic approach to assessment.</p> <p>EVs are still making comments to Centres in relation to evidence with sensitive information within it and blank forms being included as evidence, together with copies of organisational policies which the candidate has not had involvement in writing:</p> <p><i>'Product evidence (especially of a sensitive nature) can be sign posted to the workplace. There is also no point in including blank documentation e.g. forms etc as these do not provide evidence of competent performance.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p>Many Centres have robust and appropriate IQA processes and activities with sampling planning and sampling taking place as required.</p> <p><i>'QA is formative and summative with detailed feedback provided to the assessors.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'The IQA sampling plans shows that there is formative and summative sampling. Clear feedback has been provided.'</i> (EV Report)</p> <p><i>'IQA is documented and they have commenced new and interim IQA, and this has now started to show in the</i></p>
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	<p><i>standardisation of outcomes within these qualifications.’ (EV Report)</i></p> <p>However there were issues with the internal quality assurance identified at some Centres. Issues around the lack of sampling plans, interim sampling and other IQA activities such as standardisation and observation of assessors working with candidates, all caused concern for EVs and, in some, cases resulted in sanctions being applied.</p> <p><i>‘There wasn’t a sampling model available.’ (EV Report)</i></p> <p><i>‘The Centre needs to have a schedule of observations of assessors by the IQA.’ (EV Report)</i></p> <p><i>‘There is a distinct lack of effective IQA taking place.’ (EV Report)</i></p> <p>Positive comments were made by EVs about the practice of some Centres around standardisation activities:</p> <p><i>‘Standardisation meetings are regularly held with all team members attending. Activities include the standardisation of the interpretation of the national standards and selection of assessment methods.’ (EV Report)</i></p>
<p><b>Management Systems and Records:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>EVs have seen that Centres have effective systems for recording candidate details and information, and to track progress and achievement. They keep records of registrations, achievements, candidates and assessors and when candidates complete their qualification. These are maintained in accordance with relevant legislation</p> <p>IQA records, with a few exceptions, are properly maintained and kept up to date.</p>

<p><b>Assessment Summary:</b></p>	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <p>Support and advice has continued to be provided by EVs, usually at visits but also occasionally in between them. Centres appear to have responded positively to the advice given and addressed sanctions applied prior to the next EV visit or earlier in some cases.</p> <p>The majority of centres have delivered the qualifications as required by OCR and have met the evidence requirements of the qualifications. Assessment and verification practice is overall effective and appropriate except in a minority of cases. There have been a few Centres where sanctions have had to be applied and</p>
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	these have, in the main, been at Level 1. There has been a limited number of Level 3 sanctions applied which were quickly addressed by the Centres concerned.
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## 2. Sector Developments

There are no major changes in Management and Team Leading practice.

The current suite of qualifications expires in August 2014 and OCR is working on replacement qualifications for launch in September 2014. This development work is waiting for the results of the Richard Review response and the Whitehead review in order to be able to implement any required changes.

Funding is currently focussed on the apprenticeships, however changes as a result of policy changes could affect the funding and the involvement of employers in the future.