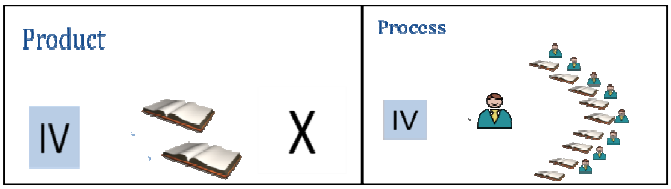
Research has shown that IQA which focuses on the involvement of the assessor as part of the process produces better results, as the assessor can improve practice across **all** their candidates.



It is also clearly understood by the IQA team within LIMMS that IQA is about sampling and checking the process of assessment. Therefore, that emphasis is placed on a holistic approach, and looking at methods as well as units.

The sampling strategy for IQA in LIMMS for 2023-24 is that the IQA process will sample and document:

- All assessors
- A minimum number of learner units, dependant on the RAG rating of the assessor:
  NEW tutors: 100% IQA for first 2 learners, then progress down to red, amber green, if no major actions are identified at any stage.

  Red assessors - 40% of learners; **amber** assessors - 30% of learners; **green** assessors - 20% learners
- 100/100/100 rule applies: Across a qualification, 100% of assessors, 100% of learners, 100% of units to be sampled
- All assessment methods over the various units
- Assessment cycle paperwork
- Audit trail with centre records and portfolio records
- Consistency of approach by assessors
- Any recommendations or actions given by the EQA will be actioned and monitored by the Lead IQA

- Sampling must happen at the beginning, middle and end of each qualification.
- RAG rating can be a mixture of Red, Amber and Green for individual Assessors based on qualification they are assessing.

IQA focuses on the assessment practice of the ASSESSOR rather than the work of the learner and may include:

- Observation of practice in a setting (College IAQA scheme)
- Interviews with learners
- Interviews with employers
- Sampling of portfolios with the assessor present
- Sampling of work product evidence sited in the workplace
- Standardisation meetings

Traffic Light System (RAG rating)

LIMMS is grading the assessors according to a 'traffic light system'. Assessors will be encouraged to grade themselves and implement an action plan with their IQA.

NEW Assessors are:	Red assessors are:	Amber assessors are	Green assessors are:
Newly qualified assessors	Trainee assessors or	Less experienced assessors – satisfactory paperwork and assessment processes	Experienced assessors – very good paperwork, and assessment processes
Experienced assessors that are new to delivering a qualification or change in Awarding Organisation.	Assessors new to a qualification but passed the first 2 learners and have progress down to Red.	Experienced assessors but working with new or different standards , or a different level	Confident in knowledge and understanding of qualification specification and levels, and collection of evidence.
	Assessors who are struggling with the assessment process	Assessors who may be returning after a period of absence	Able to adapt to different awards and levels easily

The IQA process will vary depending on the experience of the assessor:

NEW Assessors:	Red assessors are:	Amber assessors are	Green assessors are:
100% (or first 10 learners) IQA for first unit, then	Should be observed (IQA) in practice at least once a half term	Should be observed in practice termly – 3 x per year,	Observed in practice at least once per year and

progress down to red, amber green, if no major actions are identified at any stage.	and maybe more often, including seeing work products in workplace	including seeing work products in workplace	maybe more, including seeing work products in workplace more
100% for first 10 learners for the first unit	40% of units are sampled	30% of units sampled	20% units sampled
Interview at least 2 learner's per assessor	Interview at least 2 learner's per assessor	Interview at least 2 learner's per assessor	Interview at least 2 learner's per assessor
	All IQA will take place **summatively**		
Course Specific Documentation Checklist:	The IV should have a check that relevant documents are in the portfolio such as:	ILPs, Assignment Schedule, Course overview, complaints procedure, Learner Handbook, Assignment and Submission Procedure.	

Sampling plans should be individually planned in advance recognising the expected completion dates

The IQA process is a SAMPLING PROCESS and should be carried out as follows:

Is the assessed evidence:

Fair	Is the evidence sufficient i.e. is there enough evidence to determine that the standard has been met? Is it free from discrimination?
Valid	Is the evidence appropriate in terms of value, timing, and relevance? Is it verifiable i.e. is it clear enough for another person checking the portfolio to recognise its significance?
Reliable	Is the evidence presented directly relevant to the standards? Is it assessed accurately and holistically?
Authentic	Is it authentic – i.e. produced by the candidate, and are signatures in place?
Sufficient	Is it sufficient and current (i.e. does the learner still k now it and is able to do it?
Current	As up to date as possible, clear that the learner is still competent at the time of the claim.
Safe	Complies with E&D and Health and Safety requirements, does not put the learner or assessor at risk.

The IQA should:

1. Ideally verify with the assessor present. This means that there is opportunity to talk about the process and correct any minor inaccuracies as you go along. It is also a good form of standardisation. (If the Assessor cannot be present, they will be given both written and verbal feedback within 7 working days of verification happening).

2. The sampling process should be according to the sampling plan. If it varies, a note should be made on the report with the reasons. The IQA process should focus on the various assessment methods and therefore units do not have to be finished to be sampled. It is the assessor you are looking at NOT the learner.

3. **Some things to check…….**
   - Check the actions from the last IQA episode with the assessor. Ensure they have been completed, and indicate on the report. If actions have not been completed, then the situation needs to be reviewed and discussed with the assessor and an action plan made. If this happens more again, then the RAG rating of the assessor changes leading to increased IQA sampling.
     Continued failure to meet actions will involve moving to the college Under performance policy.

   - There are direct **observations** where required in 'be able to' learning outcomes; they are referenced to assessment criteria and signed and dated, and in sufficient detail for the to understand what the assessor observed, and why.

   - Sample at least **2 other types of evidence** in each IQA episode across the different portfolios. For green rated assessors, this may be checking the evidence list. This makes the IQA process much more efficient. Initial where you have sampled, to enable an audit trail for Lead IQA and EQA. ***These initials mean you have sampled, not necessarily that it is OK.***

   - Date and initial the sampling plan when you have sampled and complete the IQA report sheet. For an experienced assessor and IQA the sampling process should **efficient.**

   - There is no need to sign off any completed units if all criteria have been met in an interim IQA episode as it is a holistic IQA.

   - Counter signature: If the assessor is unqualified, units should be countersigned by another qualified assessor. IQAs should remember that it is the countersignature that they are checking If there are any anomalies in the unit, this should be taken up with the trainee assessor and the countersignature.

When the portfolios come in at the end of the process you will need to:

1. Make sure candidate and assessor have signed each unit.

2. Make sure the assessor has signed the certificate claim sheet and you have initialled as required and **checked the correct number of credits have been achieved for the qualification**
3. Complete and check the other paperwork required for funding, withdrawal forms and letters of achievement in portfolio.
4. Distribute according to the current protocols.

Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discriminatory Practice in Assessment	
Experimenter effect	Sometimes the presence of the assessor observing performance may intimidate the learner and your presence influences their performance.
Halo/horns	Just because someone was very good or bad on one occasion does not mean to say they are always very good or bad. Sometimes assessors can be prejudiced in favour or against on account of previous observations; or what they have heard; or other evidence they have read. Some learners are excellent in theory, but their practice is not as good!
Similar to me	"They do things just the way I would do them, so they must be good/right/ etc." Not necessarily. Be objective. The converse can also be true. They do things very differently from you, so it can't be right!
First impressions	This involves the assessor taking a like or dislike to the learner on the basis of first or early contact, and maybe viewing the learners more/less favourably than should be the case.
Excessive evidence demands	Once competence is demonstrated, it is wasteful to ask for more demonstrations of the performance and frustrating to the learner. We do not need an observation supplemented by a written account of the same thing!
Benefit of the doubt	This is where performance has not conclusively met the performance criteria, or fully provided the evidence which is required, giving the learner benefit of the doubt. If you are not sure the evidence has been provided, don't side with the candidate. Make sure!
Crediting nice people	Crediting those who in everyday life strike us as pleasant/nice people, who we warm to and want to spend time with. Sometimes we inadvertently conspire with them to help them through the assessment.
Inferring/ generalising	Don't work on the basis that because the learner can do 'A', they can do 'B', 'C' or 'D' as well. Only generalise when the guidance notes tell you to.
Comparisons	Sometimes we can compare our learners with each other. Learner B does not perform as well as Learner A, and we find them not yet competent….instead of checking they meet the standards.
Stereotyping	'People in that setting always do well….'; 'She's young so can't possibly understand bereavement'……He doesn't speak very good English so the

	knowledge evidence won't be understandable…….Do not make discriminatory judgements.
Not understanding asst criteria	Unless you are thoroughly familiar with the standards (performance criteria), you will not be able to help learners to understand what is required of them, not identify whether the evidence produced matches that which is required. Again, do not give the benefit of the doubt just because you don't understand what is required.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT METHODS

(the shaded areas are probably the most used methods in LIMMS)

Assessment method	Skills	Knowledge	Notes
Direct observation of learner by Assessor	Yes	Yes	Preferred choice of method of assessment
Professional discussion	Yes	Yes	Preferred method of assessment
Expert Witness evidence	Yes	Yes	Encouraged not to use
Learner's own work products	Yes	Yes	Check authenticity
Learner log or reflective diary	Yes	Yes	Possible use by apprentices/16-19s
Activity plan or planned activity	Yes	Yes	Probably not used – assessor observe the activity plan and record on evidence log
Observation of children, young people or adults by the learner	Yes	Yes	Used rarely – more likely to see copies of observations as learners own work products
Portfolio of evidence	Yes	Yes	Used for policy sheets; verbal witness testimony;
Recognition of prior learning	Yes	Yes	If learning is being recognised it should be supported by professional discussion to check currency (I/B)
Written and pictorial information	No	Yes	Written answers or information to support PDs
Task set by awarding bodies	No	Yes	Used for tasks written in LIMMS against assessment criteria
Oral questions and answers	No	Yes	Used to fill gaps in a unit. Don't get confused with PD.

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Appendix 1:

Distance Learning Internal Quality Assurance Strategy

The Internal Quality Assurance Strategy for Distance Learning will reflect the requirements of LIMMs and designed to ensure that the required standards of assessment practice are consistently maintained in accordance with the requirements of the Awarding Organisation and regulatory frameworks.

Sampling Levels

- **New tutors** will commence with 100% IQA for first 2 learners and then move to High risk for 3 learners, medium risk for 3 learners and finally to low risk. This is subject to change for each individual depending on how quickly they develop.

- **High Risk** = 30% as a minimum sampled. For those assessors where Issues with assessment decisions have been identified and standards of feedback not meeting LIMMS requirements.

- **Medium Risk** = 20% as a minimum sampled. For those improving assessors. Any assessor where there has been a small drop in quality - IQA team asked to see a bit more of their work. Anyone struggling with structure of feedback and they need more development and support.

- **Low Risk** = 10% as a minimum sampled. IQA's will be low risk. Any assessors whose work is consistently at a high standard.
- **New courses** - established tutors taking on new courses will start at high risk for the first 2 learners sampled moving to medium risk for 2 learners and finally low risk.

Sampling in practice

- IQA will take place **summatively**
- The IQA will be requested to IQA a specific unit or a full assessment depending on the requirement
- A report will be written within E-Assessor and the IQA will liaise with the assessor if there are any problems.

- The IQA will inform the lead IQA of any issues so that the sampling plan can be adjusted accordingly and development actions put into place.
- The lead IQA will ensure that an appropriate sample has taken place for each assessor, course, unit and keep records of this within the sampling plan.
- Regular standardisation meetings will take place with all IQA's to ensure that the outcome of IQA and EQA is discussed and the IQA plan and procedure is updated accordingly.
- Regular standardisation meetings with all assessors will take place to ensure that everyone is working consistently.

SAMPLING STRATEGY – GENERAL PROCEDURE

The Lead IQA must confirm that:

- All documents are centre approved
- All documents have been signed and dated by learner/assessor(s)/witness as appropriate
- E portfolios will be sampled electronically
- All units have been completed
- All mandatory units have been completed
- The required rules of combination have been met
- Optional units have been chosen from groups in accordance with QCF rules
- All learning outcomes and criteria have been met
- EQA visits will take place in line with awarding body procedures
- The Lead IQA will liaise with awarding body and EQA to arrange convenient visit dates and times
- All requested portfolio's will be organised by the Lead IQA including assessments and IQA
- Any recommendations or actions given by the EQA will be actioned and monitored by the Lead IQA