



ESTAR

ELITE SKILLS, TRAINING
& RECRUITMENT

CP-011

**Internal Quality
Assurance (IQA) Policy
and Strategy**

REV: 00



Policy owner: Head of Quality & Compliance

Operational leads: Lead IQA, Programme Managers, Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

Applies to: All funded and non-funded provision, including apprenticeships and adult skills

Review cycle: Annual, or following changes to funding, awarding or inspection requirements

Version: 00

1. Purpose

ESTAR Education is committed to maintaining **high standards of teaching, learning, assessment and learner outcomes**. This Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy and Strategy sets out how ESTAR ensures that assessment and delivery are:

- valid, reliable and consistent;
- fair and equitable for all learners;
- compliant with awarding organisation, ESFA and regulatory requirements; and
- continuously improved through robust quality processes.

The IQA framework is designed to meet and exceed expectations of **Ofsted, ESFA, awarding organisations, and EPAOs**, and to support outstanding learner experiences and outcomes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all assessment decisions made by ESTAR;
- all tutors, assessors and IQAs;
- all programmes, units and standards delivered by ESTAR;
- subcontracted provision where ESTAR is the lead provider.

It covers:

- assessment planning and decision-making;
- internal verification and sampling;
- standardisation and staff development;
- monitoring of learner progress and outcomes; and
- quality improvement actions.

3. Principles of Internal Quality Assurance

ESTAR's IQA approach is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Validity** – assessment measures what it is intended to measure
- **Reliability** – assessment decisions are consistent across assessors and programmes
- **Fairness** – learners are treated equitably, with appropriate reasonable adjustments
- **Transparency** – decisions and processes are clear and well documented
- **Continuous improvement** – quality findings lead to measurable improvement

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Sets the strategic direction for quality assurance.
- Ensures appropriate resources and staffing for IQA.
- Reviews quality performance and risks at management level.

4.2 Head of Quality & Compliance



- Owns and oversees the IQA strategy.
- Ensures compliance with ESFA, awarding and inspection requirements.
- Reports on quality performance to SLT and governance.
- Ensures corrective actions are implemented and reviewed.

4.3 Lead IQA

- Designs and manages the IQA sampling strategy.
- Allocates IQA activity across programmes and assessors.
- Ensures standardisation and consistency of assessment decisions.
- Mentors and supports assessors and new staff.

4.4 IQAs

- Sample assessment decisions in line with the strategy.
- Provide clear, constructive feedback to assessors.
- Identify good practice, risks and improvement actions.
- Confirm assessment decisions or require corrective action.

4.5 Tutors / Assessors

- Plan and conduct assessment in line with standards and guidance.
- Maintain accurate, timely and auditable assessment records.
- Act on IQA feedback and improvement actions.

5. IQA strategy and planning

5.1 Risk-based sampling

ESTAR uses a **risk-based IQA model**, considering:

- new or inexperienced assessors;
- new programmes or standards;
- learners nearing completion or EPA;
- high-risk assessment methods;
- prior issues or non-conformities.

Sampling intensity is increased where risk is higher.

5.2 Sampling coverage

IQA sampling will cover:

- a representative range of learners;
- all assessors over time;
- different assessment methods;
- different units, components or KSBs;
- early, mid and end-point stages of programmes.

5.3 Frequency

- IQA sampling is planned annually and reviewed quarterly.
- Additional targeted sampling may be carried out where risks or concerns are identified.

6. IQA activities

Internal Quality Assurance includes (but is not limited to):

- sampling of assessment decisions and evidence;

- observation of assessment practice;
- review of feedback quality and timeliness;
- monitoring use of reasonable adjustments;
- review of learner progress and completion data;
- verification of assessment records and audit trails.

7. Standardisation

ESTAR operates a structured standardisation process to ensure consistency:

- regular standardisation meetings (minimum quarterly);
- discussion of assessment decisions and borderline cases;
- review of awarding body guidance and updates;
- dissemination of best practice;
- documented outcomes and actions.

Attendance and actions are recorded and monitored.

8. Feedback and improvement

- IQA feedback is clear, constructive and developmental.
- Actions are prioritised, time-bound and tracked.
- Assessors are supported through coaching, CPD or additional training where required.
- Repeat issues trigger enhanced monitoring or support.

9. Learner voice and outcomes

IQA activity is informed by:

- learner feedback and surveys;
- achievement, retention and progression data;
- complaints, appeals and assessment enquiries;
- equality and achievement gap analysis.

Findings feed directly into:

- Self-Assessment Reports (SAR);
- Quality Improvement Plans (QIP);
- programme review and development.

10. Subcontracted provision

Where ESTAR engages subcontractors:

- ESTAR retains full responsibility for quality assurance.
- IQA arrangements are clearly defined in contracts.
- Subcontractors are subject to the same standards, sampling and monitoring.
- Outcomes are reviewed through contract and quality meetings.

11. Malpractice and maladministration

Any suspected malpractice or maladministration identified through IQA will be:

- investigated promptly;
- managed in line with ESTAR's **Malpractice and Maladministration Policy**; and
- reported to awarding organisations or funders where required.



12. Record keeping and evidence

ESTAR maintains clear and auditable records of:

- IQA plans and sampling schedules;
- IQA reports and feedback;
- standardisation meetings and actions;
- assessor CPD and support;
- improvement actions and outcomes.

Records are retained in line with the **Document Retention and Secure Storage Policy**.

13. Staff competence and CPD

ESTAR ensures:

- IQAs and assessors are suitably qualified and occupationally competent;
- CPD is planned, recorded and reviewed annually;
- changes to standards, funding or assessment practice are communicated promptly.

14. Monitoring and review

The effectiveness of the IQA strategy is monitored through:

- internal audits and quality reviews;
- awarding organisation feedback;
- Ofsted inspection outcomes;
- achievement and progression trends.

This policy and strategy are reviewed:

- annually; and
- following significant regulatory or organisational change.

Date of last Review	Print Name	Position
02/02/2026	Keiran Casey	Chief Executive Officer
	Darren Beach	Quality Manager