



ASSESSMENT POLICY

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Spiritual Companions Trust's policy on assessment is to:

1. Ensure access and equality of opportunity whilst preserving the integrity of the programme/qualification.
2. Ensure there are no obstacles to demonstrating achievement.
3. Provide on-going support to candidates, including those with particular requirements.
4. Take account of all current legislation with regards to equality of opportunity.

GOOD PRACTICE AND FAIR ASSESSMENT

A. Tutor/Assessors

In order to create and maintain good practice and fair assessment the Spiritual Companions Trust will ensure that tutor/assessors —

1. Receive an induction into Spiritual Companions Trust principles of assessment and quality assurance procedures
2. Create assessment activities with regard to the equality and diversity of learners, making sure that evidence can be produced in varied ways
3. Guarantee the use of plain language with regards to the unit
4. Make certain that the assessment plan allows for the producing of evidence to allow learners to fulfil the assessment criteria.
5. Keep records of all assessment activities for a minimum of 3 years
6. Advise learners in accordance learning outcomes
7. Devise and implement their strategy of assessment so as to neither discriminate against any group of learners nor unnecessarily overstrain learners

B. Periodical Review

There is periodical review of the assessment undertakings as an integral part of the programme/qualification review.

C. Internal Quality Assurers(IQAs)

In order to create and maintain good practice and fair assessment the Spiritual Companions Trust will ensure that IQAs —

1. Verify that the assessment strategy for a unit/module is appropriate, reliable and covers all assessors and programme activity.
2. Verify that the assessments of individual tasks meets both the principles set out above and specific programme or qualification requirements
3. Ensure that the records of tutors are clear and up to date.
4. Ensure that the feedback from tutors to learners is unambiguous and applicable to the assessment criteria.
5. Ensure all assessment criteria are valid.
6. Give written feedback to assessors on every aspect of the assessment process.
7. Ensure that the IQA procedure is open, fair and free from bias.
8. Ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of IQA decisions.
9. Ensure that all centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose.
10. Please see the *Spiritual Companions Trust Internal Quality Assurance Handbook* for further information on assessment practice and the roles of staff involved in the process.

D. The Centre Will

1. Verify an appropriately structured sample of assessor work from all programmes and qualifications, sites and teams, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards and external quality assurance requirements.
2. Plan an annual quality assurance schedule, linked to assignment plans.
3. Define, maintain and support effective internal quality assurance roles.
4. Ensure that identified staff will maintain secure records of all internal quality assurance activity.
5. Brief and train staff on the requirements for current IQA procedures.

6. Promote internal quality assurance as a developmental process between staff.
7. Provide coherent [or standardised] IQA documentation.
8. Use the outcome of internal quality assurance processes to enhance future assessment practice.
9. Keep records of assessment activities for a minimum of 3 years.

E. Learners

1. Receive an induction into *Spiritual Companions Trust* Assessment and Portfolio Building and understand criterion referenced assessment.
2. Are aware of the centre's Complaints and Appeals Policy
3. Receive a plan of assessment.
4. Are aware of any time restrictions that might affect the achievement of the qualification or completion of the programme.
5. Receive informative feedback from all assessment activities within a realistic time-scale relative to the achievement/non achievement of the assessment criteria.
6. Receive regular feedback to accompany their individual unit progression on the path towards overall programme or qualification.

F. Internally Devised Assessment

For internally assessed units the demonstration of fair and non-discriminatory assessment to all learners will be the role of the Tutor/Assessors.

At the design stage it is the responsibility of the IQA to verify that both the assessment strategy and the assessment tasks adhere to the following principles:

1. Authenticity
2. Validity
3. Reliability and consistency
4. Fitness for purpose
5. Inclusiveness

G. External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance is carried out by a Spiritual Companions Trust appointed External Quality Assurers (EQAs) in consultation with the Crossfields Institute.. Sometimes it may be carried out by a Specialist External Quality Assurer (Pearson/CACHE/SQA) for a cluster of programmes/qualifications if this has been agreed with the EQA and Crossfields Institute.

The EQAs will scrutinise the evidence for all units offered by the centre. They will:

1. Sample assessment and learner evidence of achievement
2. Ensure that rigorous processes are in place for the assessment, tracking and recording of individual learner achievements in accordance with Crossfields Institute requirements
3. Sign off Recommendations for Award forms.
4. Complete an EQA Report for Spiritual Companions Trust and Crossfields Institute. (EQA Reports are made available to the centre and form an important source of evidence for the centre Quality Improvement Plan – see Centre Handbook for more information.)

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William Bloom, Director