

# Centre Guide to External Quality Assurance

## 10 Easy Steps

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Welcome to our simple step by step guide to external quality assurance.

Our External Quality Assurers (EQAs) are here to support you, so we've prepared this guide to help you get the most out of the services we provide.

## Step 1: Register Your Learners

When learners are registered onto a qualification, we'll allocate an EQA to you who will cover all qualifications within the respective group.

The Quality Assurance Groups are:

- Arts and Media
- Business, IT and Sales
- Engineering and Manufacturing Operations
- Functional Skills
- Health, Childcare and Education (CACHE)
- Hospitality and Catering
- Music and Performance
- Prep for Life and Work
- Retail and Commercial Enterprise
- Sport, Exercise and Fitness
- Travel and Tourism

Your learners should be registered with us as soon as possible so you can benefit from the support and guidance from your EQA. You will then be able to access live assessment materials. Learners can be registered using the NCFE Portal. To gain access to the Portal please refer to your welcome email from our Customer Support Team, or refer to the [Portal User Guide](#)

## Step 2: External Quality Assurer Allocated

We'll allocate an EQA and email their contact details to the Programme Contact within 7 working days of the learners being registered. If you're unsure who your EQA is, you can check this in the [Portal](#).

## Step 3: Your EQA Will Contact You

Within 3 working days of receiving your EQA's contact details, they'll get in touch to introduce themselves and to discuss arranging your first quality assurance visit. The date and time of the visit will be convenient to you and your team. The EQA will sample learners across numerous qualifications which sit within one of the above Quality Assurance Groups.



## Step 4: Your First Visit Will Be Confirmed

You'll receive confirmation of the planned visit date by automated email. In addition to this, your EQA will confirm the visit by email at least 3-4 weeks prior to the date. The email will include a list of learner's portfolios they'd like to sample (if applicable) and will provide an overview of what will be covered on the visit.

## Step 5: The First Visit

A visit can last between half a day to 3 days, depending on the type of visit and the number of qualifications/portfolios to be sampled.

During the first visit the EQA will aim to:

- Meet the Programme Contact/Lead and check that actions from the previous visit have been carried out (if applicable)
- Meet the course team including Internal Quality Assurers to discuss delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance of the qualification
- Review resources and the effectiveness of recording and tracking systems
- Provide information, support and guidance to ensure NCFE's approval criteria are being met
- Sample learner portfolios (if appropriate)
- Check learners' grades (V Certs/Substantial Qualifications)\*

\*V Cert grades must be submitted before an EQA visit can be arranged.

It would be really useful if you could make sure that all documentation is made available for the EQA to help the visit run smoothly. A date for the second visit should be agreed during the first visit (although you can change this date if you need to) and please feel free to ask any questions during the visit.

## Step 6: You'll Receive Your EQA Report

The EQA will complete a report after each visit and a copy will be emailed to the Programme Contact. The content of the report will be discussed during the visit so there should be no surprises when you receive it. You'll receive a copy of your report within 5 working days of the visit. If you experience any delays please contact your EQA in the first instance.

## Step 7: The Second Visit (if applicable)

Should you require a second visit for the session, your EQA will arrange a date with you. The EQA will again confirm the visit date at least 3 weeks prior to the agreed date and will indicate which learners' portfolios will be required for sampling on the day (if required). However we'd expect all learners' portfolios to be made available on the day in case further sampling is required.



If learners have completed the qualification you will be able to claim for certificates online through the Portal and these will go directly to the EQA to sign off if you don't have DCS. For V Cert qualifications your grades must have been banked and accepted by your External Quality Assurer before you can claim certificates.

## Step 8: Additional Visits

You can request an additional quality assurance visit if you need one. To do this you'll need to complete the request form which is available on our website [here](#). There is a small charge for this service so please refer to our fees and pricing guide.

## Step 9: Direct Claim Status (DCS)

Direct Claim Status (DCS) allows you to claim certificates on demand instead of needing your EQA to sign off learners. With DCS you're only required to have one visit where you meet the DCS criteria every 12 months. DCS however can't be awarded to our V Cert qualifications. To find out more about how DCS is awarded please visit our website at [here](#).

## Step 10: Let Us Know What You Think

We hope you're happy with the experience you receive and we may ask you to take part in an external quality assurance visit survey which asks you what you think about the support from your EQA before, during and after a visit. If you have any comments or queries about the external quality assurance process, you can email [service@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:service@ncfe.org.uk) or contact our Customer Support team and we'll be happy to help.

## Supporting You

To ensure we can accommodate a visit when you require one, please ensure you register your learner in plenty of time and book your visit with your EQA well in advance. This is especially the case for V Cert EQA visits.

For information on scheduling V Cert EQA visits, please click the links below:

[V Certs Delivery – 1 and 2 Year Delivery](#)

[V Certs Delivery – 3 Year Delivery](#)

Our Customer Support Team is ready to help you with any questions you may have. You can give us a ring on 0191 239 8000 or email us at [service@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:service@ncfe.org.uk) and we'll let you know.

