INTERNAL VERIFICATION SAMPLING STRATEGY

Background

The purpose of internal quality assurance is to confirm that the standards of the CiLCA qualification are being met consistently throughout the period the qualification is undertaken. In most cases candidates ~~will~~ have a maximum of one year to complete their portfolio.

CiLCA is a foundation qualification for local council officers and others working with local councils. The qualification is flexible enough to meet the needs of candidates from the diversity of local councils and is also suitable for those working in an advisory body or serving as councillors.

Candidates use activities and documentation from their councils or others to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the assessment criteria contained in 5 units. Some candidates will be very experienced whilst others are new to the role. All are strongly advised to attend training before submitting units.

All candidates must complete an application form for CiLCA and ~~be~~ register with the SLCC[1] and Ascentis. The **SLCC Internal Quality Assurance Policy** (adopted July 2018) outlines all the arrangements for the qualification including sanctions, personnel, assessment standards, security of assessment records and training. The **Portfolio Guide** outlines the qualification requirements to candidates and trainers and contains the assessment criteria.

Initial assessments

Candidates wishing to undertake CiLCA must complete an application form showing that they are able to provide suitable evidence for the qualification. They also complete form 03 which indicates training undertaken and outlines their current role, responsibilities and experience. This form is submitted to the assessor. The Internal Quality Assurance Verifier (IQAV) samples this form to monitor the training undertaken.

For information on training provided by independent training organisations in each county across England and Wales, see **SLCC: Training for CiLCA**. The trainers are completely separate from the assessors and the IQAV. The trainers and not the assessors are responsible for the induction, training needs analysis and progress of learners; the trainers also ensure that the learner understands gathering evidence and portfolio building. A

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[1] The Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) is the centre delivering the qualification.

compulsory induction module has been designed to include a training needs analysis. A peer review system is being introduced to share good practice across training providers and to assist in the quality assurance of training. Since training and assessment are completely separate, the SLCC and the National Association of Local Councils working in partnership are responsible for monitoring the impact of training on performance rather than the IQAV.

Assessment planning

The assessment plan is contained in The Portfolio Guide. Candidates and trainers cannot deviate from this centrally-designed assessment plan and trainers do not carry out assessment. The CiLCA qualification is based on written work submitted to the allocated assessor using the EMMA electronic portfolio system. Candidates are assessed by anonymous assessors. The CiLCA administrator allocates candidates to assessors alternately.

Two methods of assessment have been identified for assessors to use for CiLCA – product evidence (PE) and written work (WW) as listed below:

Product evidence

- Candidates submit documents to demonstrate that they understand the legal requirements and good practice of local councils in England and Wales. These may be their own work or existing documents from their own or other councils and are annotated by the candidate to indicate their use, to identify important legal references and to make suggestions for improvement.
- Candidates submit documents to demonstrate that they can carry out required procedures correctly and give advice to their council.

Written work

- Candidates submit explanations, reports , applications and policies to demonstrate their knowledge of legal procedures relevant to local councils
- Candidates are required in many cases to keep within a prescribed word count to assess their ability to provide correct information concisely.
- Candidates are also assessed on the professional standard of their written work including spelling and grammar, format and ease of reading.

Candidates submit completed units in any order. The assessor confirms authenticity, sufficiency, reliability, currency and validity and provides formative and summative feedback based on their assessment decisions.

IV Sample

SLCC does not enrol candidates in a class or course intake. Candidates register as individuals, each with a set time to complete their portfolio. This means that the number of

completed units and portfolios does not fit a regular pattern and can be difficult to forecast. The sampling plan is built into the EMMA system and is outlined below. The IQAV is looking for the following when verifying the assessment of portfolios on EMMA:

- The quality of assessment decisions and the reasons for those decisions
- An audit trail to ensure that the assessor has checked that the evidence complies with the assessment criteria and evidence required
- Confirmation that the evidence is valid, reliable, current, authentic and sufficient

Initially the decision was made to verify 20% of all units completed, however as some candidates failed to complete the qualification this led to a lower proportion of completed qualifications being verified. As a result the following sample will be identified with effect from March 2019.

Completed portfolios.

The EMMA system lists all portfolios completed since the last External Verifier's visit. The IQAV then selects from this list and the screen keeps a running total of the percentage sampled.

RULES:

For total entries up to 10, all portfolios should be sampled

For total entries between 11and 20, 50% should be sampled

For total entries above 20, 25% should be sampled

The sample includes:

- Assessment decisions made by each assessor
- Each assessment method
- Learner work across all 5 units

Individual units submitted

The EMMA system also selects 20% of units completed. This enables the IQAV to sample candidates at various stages of portfolio building and identify ways to improve achievement of the qualification.

This sample includes:

- Assessment decisions made by each assessor
- Each assessment method
- Learner work across all 5 units

Ad hoc sampling

The IQAV will also sample units at the request of an assessor where there is a query or particular issue, or at the request of the administrator.

Trainee assessors

Assessors who are new to CiLCA are appointed a trained assessor who will second assess their work. All units assessed in this way are verified until the IQAV considers that the new assessor is working in line with the existing assessor team. The EMMA system identifies these units.

Feedback

Feedback is an important part of assessment and is provided in the following ways:

- Assessor to candidate – written feedback accompanying each learning outcome (LO)
- IQAV to assessor – written feedback on units sampled / standardisation meetings
- Assessor to IQAV – written and verbal feedback on common issues / standardisation meetings
- IQAV to Operations Group – feedback on statistics and standards achieved
- IQAV to trainers (via Trainer Forum / Hub) – feedback on common issues
- Candidates to IQAV – feedback via CiLCA administrator – complaints and compliments, appeals, training queries via Forum and evaluation
- Ascentis to SLCC – written and verbal feedback from External Verifier
- SLCC to Ascentis – written feedback to contract manager and verbal feedback to External Verifier.

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