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1. General Information

1.1 New Centres ... start here

This document outlines the basic information all OCN London centres should know and it describes the essential processes each approved centre is required to go through.

OCN London prides itself on the support we provide to centres and a measure of that is the allocation of designated staff members to help you with all accreditation matters.

As an OCN London centre, you will already have allocated an OCN London Curriculum and Relationship Development Manager, and also an OCN London Business Support Executive. If you are not sure who these people are, they would have been named in the 'welcome email' sent to you when your centre was first approved, but if you do not know, simply call the switchboard or email enquiries@ocnlondon.org.uk and we can let you know.

Contact your OCN London Curriculum and Relationship Development Manager (CRDM) with any questions regarding curriculum matters, for example if you wish to run a new qualification or get a new course accredited, or your OCN London Centre Support Officer if you have any general or administration related questions, such as, how to register learners.

1.2 Updating Named Contacts

Each centre is itself required to provide OCN London with a named contact for Quality, Curriculum, Administration and Finance, and this was done initially on the centre's Application form. These named contacts are your staff members who liaise with us for these four areas.

One of the requirements of centre approval is to keep us informed of any changes relating to the named contacts at your centre (Quality, Curriculum, Administration and Finance). Please make sure that we are aware of any such changes by promptly returning an updated Contact Form to us (available on the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/forms-and-registrations/update-centre-contacts.aspx> or please request a copy from enquiries@ocnlondon.org.uk)

If we are not informed of staff changes it can cause delays and

important information may not be received by those delivering OCN London provision in your centre.

All of those involved in OCN London provision within your centre should be aware of these named contacts. It can cause confusion if individual tutors raise issues about, for example, course development or external moderation directly with OCN London rather than going through the relevant contact person at the centre.

2. Course / Qualification Approval

2.1 New Course / Qualification Approval

If you want to add a new course or qualification to your offer, please contact your allocated OCN London Curriculum and Relationship Development Manager to discuss your plans. They will send you the OCN London 'Additional Qualification Approval and New Course Notification' Form. A copy of this form is also available from the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/forms-and-registrations.aspx>

A proposed new course / qualification should go through your centre's internal course approval process prior to being discussed with OCN London. Once confirmed in-house, please complete and send the OCN London 'Additional Qualification Approval and New Course Notification' Form to David Watson, our Curriculum Development Coordinator (CDC) at d.watson@ocnlondon.org.uk. Approval to run the course / qualification is then confirmed by your OCN London Curriculum and Relationship Development Manager and you will receive email notification of this from your OCN London Centre Support Officer along with your newly approved course list.

2.2 Developing New Units

If you need to develop new bespoke units to include in your 'bespoke' course, please discuss this with your Curriculum and Relationship Development Manager before beginning any development. New units may be 'off the shelf', or newly written. New units must be approved by OCN London before you start using them. Support for the writing, development and validation of new bespoke units is available. Fees for these services can be found in the OCN London charges booklet at: <https://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/charges.aspx>

2.3 Course Registration

Courses and qualifications a centre is approved to run, with their constituent units, are recorded on our central database called Quartz. Once courses are approved, we add them to our database system as registered courses and qualifications for your centre. Only when such courses / qualifications are registered, can you register learners on them.

2.4 Amendments to Courses

If you wish to add or remove units from a course after it has been entered on to our system, you can do so using a Course Amendment Form (available to download from the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/forms-and-registrations.aspx> .)

3. Learner Registration

3.1 Registration of Learners

All centres must register learners at, or close to, the beginning of a course:

- for short courses (less than 15 weeks duration) you must register learners within **25 working days** of the start date of the course;
- for all other courses you must register learners within **60 working days** of the start date of the course.
- These timescales are in place to ensure that we can put appropriate quality assurance mechanisms in place to monitor standards of provision.

If centres register learners after these timelines a late registration fee may be charged and centres will be required to take action to prevent further late registrations.

3.2 Online Learner Registration

All centres are required to register learners using OCN London's secure online QuartzWeb registration system (<https://quartz.ocnlr.org.uk>) The named Administration Contact at the centre is issued with a user account and further accounts can be created for additional administrators.

QuartzWeb allows centres to register learners against any of their existing OCN London approved courses using a generic e-registration spreadsheet template. The template will be sent to the centre's named Administration Contact by their OCN London Business Support Executive and additional copies can be downloaded from QuartzWeb. If the centre has an internal management information system it will be possible to export data directly to populate the e-registration template.

Course details are selected from drop down menus within QuartzWeb to create a course run and the completed e-registration template is then uploaded to link the learners to the course run.

Full instructions on the process are provided upon the creation of a new user account and the OCN London Business Support Team are available by phone or email to help and offer guidance.

A step by step QuartzWeb User Guide, complete with screenshots, showing how to register learners is available from <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/online-registration.aspx> .

A free monthly 'Introduction to Learner Registration and Certification' information session is held at the OCN London offices where a real time demonstration of the learner registration process takes place.

If you would like further information on QuartzWeb, please contact Simon Endacott, our Business Support Manager, at: s.endacott@ocnlondon.org.uk .

4. Assessment and Internal Moderation

4.1 Fair Assessments

Our policy and procedure on fair assessment, including special consideration and reasonable adjustments, explains which variations to standard assessment practice require approval from your Centre Moderator or Centre Quality Manager, before they can be used. Others are listed that can be used at your discretion, but the Centre Moderator or Centre Quality Manager must be informed so that we can maintain a central record of the use of these variations.

4.2 Assessment Practice

All those involved in assessing learners against OCN London qualifications and courses must be trained in developing assessment tasks and activities that meet the requirements of the units, and in preparing portfolios of assessed evidence mapped to unit assessment criteria. OCN London offers training sessions in assessment which are open to all of our approved centres. The training schedule and booking forms are available on the OCN London website (located in [the Training and Development](#) section of the OCN London website).

It is important that you are making use within your centre of our set of [Assessment Definitions](#). This document details fourteen different assessment methods and explanations of how we would expect centres to operate those methods with learners at the different levels, together with the types of evidence a Centre Moderator would expect to see in the learners' portfolios. The Assessment Definitions guidance is available electronically and is located in the OCN London website, at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/quality-assurance/assessment.aspx>.

In order to ensure fair assessment, the range of assessment methods used should reflect the needs of your centre's learners. At the same time the centre should maintain a consistent approach to assessment to underpin the effectiveness of the standardisation process (see section 4.4).

4.3 Internal Moderation

Internal Moderation (IM) is the system that ensures learner evidence is complete and genuinely meets all the required assessment criteria. It is

also the system that should identify and alert learners and assessors when they have not assembled evidence that meets all of the assessment criteria - and so are in danger of failing that unit. If IM is carried out responsibly and in time for the learner to be alerted and supported in producing any additional evidence, then the IM system can ensure the centre avoids learners being failed unnecessarily. The Internal Moderator is responsible for ensuring all portfolios are ready when presented for External Moderation (EM). Learners who are found to have gaps in their portfolio of evidence at External Moderation may be failed because at that point, there is often no time for the learner to come back and do additional work.

IM is therefore key to learner achievement and the Internal Moderator has to take responsibility for any learners they put forward being failed by the External Moderator. The IM should either pick up shortcomings in time for the learner to address them, or not put that learner forward as having achieved.

Internal Moderators usually need only sample assessments to ensure their assessors are assessing fairly across different units and levels. The Internal Moderator's chosen 'sample' can also show them the assessor has ensured that learner evidence is appropriate, effectively labelled, and fully ready for the External Moderator to consider. However, the sample strategy needs to ensure it covers appropriate elements, such as all the different assessors, different units, different levels, different assessment methods used and different subject areas.

Internal Moderation is also the system that enables External Moderation to only *sample* learners' work. The External Moderator relies on the effectiveness and integrity of the IM system to *not* put forward learners who have not achieved. If the External Moderator feels the IM process is ineffective and / or performed without absolute integrity, for example putting forward learners for an award whose work does not justify this, then the External Moderator will be forced to instead consider a much greater number of learners' evidence themselves. If they are concerned they cannot rely on the IM's judgement or practice, they may not sign off the entire cohort. Considering more learners is time consuming for the External Moderator and will cause delay. Also, the centre may be charged for additional time needed. This situation may constitute 'malpractice' or 'maladministration', which could invoke sanctions, for example prohibiting the award of certificates or ending membership of OCN London since the integrity of the awarding system would be compromised. IMs are responsible for ensuring assessors are aware of the consequences of malpractice or maladministration, and how to avoid this.

IM records are therefore important since the External Moderator is obliged to check that they are being kept and because they indicate the effectiveness of the process. For example, if a tutor is not assessing fairly, the IM needs to both pick this up *and* then address the situation. This might be done by amending the assessment decision for affected learners and arranging further training for the assessor. The records should include the IM's conclusions - after having sampled learners' work and considered the assessor's assessing - and include the feedback then provided to the assessor.

The centre can produce its own templates for such IM Records and Reports, but OCN London has a selection of [ready to use templates](#) if this is helpful. These are available to download from the OCN London web site at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/quality-assurance/internal-verification.aspx> .

IM records are also important in providing evidence that an effective and robust assessment system is in operation. This is useful for various reasons, including cases where learners dispute their assessment results, as the IM report provides evidence that 'due process' has been followed by the centre regarding formal assessments.

4.4 Centre Based Standardisation

Internal Moderators need to ensure there is 'standardisation' in place so that learners assessed by one tutor / assessor are not awarded credits more easily than when assessed by another tutor / assessor. The IM needs to do whatever is necessary to ensure fairness and comparability between different assessors. This is often done by conducting standardisation events where different assessors sample each-others' assessments and any variations in marking are highlighted and addressed.

Centres that rely on centre designed assessment tasks also need to ensure they are fit for purpose. The IM is responsible for ensuring that the assessment methods and tasks used by the tutor / assessor are appropriate in that they will support learners in addressing the related assessment criteria, and are valid. Also, if different tutors are using different assessment tasks in relation to the same unit, they should ensure the different tasks used are 'comparable', so that learners in one group do not have an easier task than another group. Standardisation events can be used to also 'standardise' assessment task designs as well as assessment judgements.

This 'check' is sometimes referred to as conducting 'pre-verification' and the IM should ensure this takes place, and any weaknesses in the

assessment task designs addressed, before they are used with learners.

5. Learner Achievement

5.1 Completing and 'uploading' the ERAC

All centres have the facility to make claims for certificates using our secure online QuartzWeb system (<https://quartz.ocnlr.org.uk>)

Following the registration of a cohort of learners, centre staff can download the Electronic Recommendation for the Award of Credit (ERAC) form for that particular course run from QuartzWeb. The ERAC form is an Excel spreadsheet that has the registered learners listed adjacent to columns headed by titles of the units that make up that course or qualification.

Following the completion of all assessments and the final Internal Moderation (IM) confirms the learner 'claims of achievement', the results are indicated on the ERAC form, prior to it being uploaded to QuartzWeb.

Completing and uploading the ERAC form submits the centre's claims of achievement for the learners that OCN London then needs to check and verify through External Moderation. It is only after successful External Moderation that we can then dispatch certificates.

When the ERAC is uploaded to QuartzWeb, the centres designated Centre Moderator, Centre Quality Manager, (or Approved Internal Moderator (AIM), for Direct Claim Status (DCS) centres), is notified that the ERAC is 'now awaiting' Moderation.

Hopefully, centres without DCS have previously booked a 'Hub event' (see section 6.3 below), or arranged a time for the External Moderation with a Centre Moderator or Centre Quality Manager. If not, the External Moderator will have to fit the moderation in as soon as they are available. To avoid unnecessary delay, always book an External Moderation well in advance. Contact your Centre Moderator or Centre Quality Manager or the OCN London office if you do not have an External Moderator allocated. (See following section also.)

A step by step QuartzWeb User Guide, complete with screenshots, showing how to download, complete and submit an ERAC is available from <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/online-registration.aspx> .

OCN London's free monthly 'Introduction to Learner Registration and Certification' information session contains a real time demonstration of

how to download, complete and submit an ERAC. To view the dates of these sessions and to book a place, please visit the training calendar on the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/training-events/training-calendar.aspx> .

6. Quality Engagements and DCS

6.1 Centre Quality Managers - Centre Moderators

Each centre is allocated a Centre Quality Manager or a Centre Moderator, or is designated as a 'Hub' centre. Hub centres may be moderated by different Centre Moderators at different times. Centre Moderators see a broad range of provision that enables them to share and promote good practice across centres and across different types of centre.

Centre Quality Managers and Centre Moderators are responsible for carrying out external moderations and also for carrying out periodic 'centre reviews'. Centre Reviews are usually carried out at the centre, following an External Moderation event and during the same centre visit.

6.2 Centre Review – Self-Assessment Centre Review

Centre Reviews or Self-Assessment Centre Reviews are periodically carried out to meet OCN London responsibilities in relation to learners and regulators. We will review the centre's systems of control for ensuring learners are provided with a positive experience in relation to the accredited course or qualification they are studying. Centre Reviews are necessary to meet validity requirements and a failure by the centre to comply with OCN London's Centre Review requirements may result in sanctions, including the withdrawal of membership.

When the centre first applied for OCN London membership, it had to provide particular policies and show that particular safeguards were in place to provide reassurance that it was ready to responsibly deliver accredited courses / qualifications. The periodic Centre Review has a similar purpose, but provides a continuing review to ensure such systems of control are maintained and developed.

Prior to conducting a Centre Review, the OCN London Centre Quality Manager or Centre Moderator, will send a list of the documentation they would like to see, and any other requirements, such a staff they may like to be present, in time for the centre to prepare for the review.

Self-Assessment Centre Reviews are completed by the centre if they are Externally Moderated via Hub events and OCN London will periodically send the Self-Assessment Centre Review template out to

the Quality Assurance contact at the centre, with instructions and details of how to complete the Centre Review internally. The centre will still need to provide requested documentation, though the centre will be responsible for completing the Self-Assessment Centre Review report. Once complete the centre will return the completed report and the associated documentation for review by a Centre Moderator.

The documents requested for review can vary according to the centre, but will usually include policies relating to 'malpractice and maladministration', 'learner assessment appeals', 'complaints policy and log', salient qualification certificates of teaching / IM staff and how the centre received feedback from learners, e.g. through evaluations.

6.3 External Moderation and 'Hub Days'

Centre Moderators can carry out external moderation at the centre, or this can be done 'remotely', where centres provide a selected sample of learner portfolios and related documentation, such as Internal Moderation reports and learner evaluation data, either electronically or by delivering paper based documents and portfolios. These remote External Moderations are usually done on specified days, called 'Hub Events', and can be used to access 'super-fast' certification as learner claims verified at the 'Hub' moderation event can be certificated very soon afterwards, and sometimes on the same day. Remote External Moderations on 'Hub Days' need to be booked in advance by contacting OCN London's Quality and Standards Coordinator.

6.4 Direct Claims Status (DCS)

Centres that have achieved Direct Claims Status (DCS) with OCN London can recommend learners for certification without needing to wait for Centre Quality Manager or Centre Moderator to sign the learners off.

Centres are only eligible to be considered for DCS once they have demonstrated that their quality systems are operating effectively and with integrity. The centre needs to apply for DCS by firstly discussing their intention with their OCN London Centre Quality Manager or Centre Moderator, who must 'recommend' the centre for DCS before it can apply.

To achieve DCS, the centre must also be considered a 'low risk' and been identified as such through at least one previous Centre Moderation. In their application, the centre also needs to nominate an 'Approved Internal Moderator' or 'AIM', for each course or qualification

the centre is hoping to achieve DCS for. OCN London will then consider the qualifications of the proposed 'AIM'. Usually they will need a Moderation related qualification, such as the 'Internal Quality Assurance Award', (or IQA) or the External Quality Assurance Award (EQA), or historical equivalents. OCN London may also consider IMs that have completed the OCN London 'Develop Your Internal Moderation Skills' course as suitably qualified.

Achieving DCS status with OCN London for one or more accredited courses / qualifications is a genuine 'badge of quality', and can bring a financial discount. (See the current General Charges document under the heading 'Annual Centre Membership Fee' at the following web page <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/charges.aspx> .) It also means that learners may be able to receive certificates even sooner than might otherwise be the case.

However, please note that centres with DCS are required to hold all learner portfolios until a retrospective Centre Moderation / Review does take place. Also note that should an AIM leave, the centre may lose DCS for the courses / qualifications covered unless and until there is a similarly qualified replacement approved by OCN London.

Further information regarding DCS and other Moderation related matters, is available from the Quality Assurance page of the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/centres/centre-area/quality-assurance.aspx>

6.5 Quality Engagement Reports

The collective name OCN London uses for internal moderation events, external moderation events, remote moderations, centre visit based moderations, centre reviews and centre support visits, is 'Quality Engagements', or QE.

Following any formal Quality Engagement, OCN London staff will record the key outcomes of that engagement by producing a QE Report, and a copy of the report will be sent to the designated centre staff by email.

The report aims to record key aspects relating to what was considered, the conclusions that were reached by the moderator, aspects of good practice found, formal 'actions' that the centre should take to improve their practice in relation to the aspects considered, and reference to the progress made against any previously set 'actions'. Where possible, the moderator should have given a verbal

summary of their conclusions toward the end of any centre based engagement, so that actions set in these circumstances should not be a surprise when the report comes through, but this is not always possible.

Centres that receive a report and have an issue with its contents, whether simple errors or areas of contention, can contact the Deputy CEO at OCN London and discuss the matter. If agreed as necessary and right to do so, the report can be amended and re-dispatched.

6.6 OCN London Based Standardisation

OCN London is required to conduct its own standardisation activities to ensure comparability of assessments between different centres. To do this, we need to borrow assessed portfolios of work and IM records from a wide range of centres. Please co-operate with the Centre Moderator / Quality and Standards Coordinator in identifying appropriate samples of learners' work to review for this activity, should they ask.

7. Award of Credit

7.1 Dispatch of Certificates

Once approved by an OCN London Centre Quality Manager, Centre Moderator, or designated AIM for DCS centres, the OCN London Business Support team can process learner achievements, produce certificates and arrange for their dispatch to the centre.

The certificates will be posted by first class recorded delivery and addressed to the named Administration Contact at the centre. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the certificates reach their learners.

Centres should normally expect to receive their certificates within 24-48 hours of the results being approved by the Centre Quality Manager, Centre Moderator or Approved Internal Moderator.

Should you need to clarify the timing, please call the Business Support team for an estimate for how long the certification will take, as some times of year can possibly have a longer 'turnaround time', than others. However, if you have a particular deadline, such as an awards ceremony, please do let us know in advance and we will usually be able to ensure you get the certificates in time.

8. Additional Support

8.1 Web site – for all related information

The OCN London web-site is a dynamic resource we are adding to all the time. It holds useful information including key policies and resource materials – see below. We hope the placement of particular documents and information is logical and easy to access, but if you are having trouble finding what you want, do call or email us.

Here are a few useful links to get you started...

[Assessment](#) – general brief information about assessment but links to more detailed 'Assessment Guidance' document, which relates what is expected with different assessment tasks at different levels.

[Malpractice and Maladministration](#) – as particularly relating to assessment is key for centres delivering accredited courses or regulated qualifications. See how to best avoid assessment cheating – by learners but also by assessors, and what to do if it occurs.

[Direct Claims Status \(DCS\)](#) – what DCS is and how to go about achieving it.

[External Moderation](#) – what it is and how to prepare for it. Slightly more detailed information than provided in this document.

[Hub External Moderation](#) – what it is and how to book a 'hub' external moderation event.

[Internal Moderation](#) – this is the key process that ensures learners get the assessment they genuinely deserve and has to be effective. If nothing else, read the information on the web site and in this document relating to IM to make sure this essential activity is conducted rigorously and effectively at your centre.

Please feedback and tell us what would be useful to you, to have accessible on our web site, and we'll see what we can do.

8.2 Training Opportunities

We offer a range of training events for centre staff. We have scheduled dates throughout the year for workshops on assessment, internal moderation and learner registration and certification. The training schedule and booking forms are located on the OCN London website at <http://www.ocnlondon.org.uk/training-events/training-and-development.aspx> .

For most events there is a small fee, but some are free to members.

All training opportunities are also available for tailored in-house delivery at your centre if you have a few staff that you wish to have trained. The minimum number of learners for in-house training is normally six, but please contact OCN London for further information.

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