



Access to HE Provider Handbook 2024-2025

Internal Moderation and Standardisation

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1. Key Requirements and AVA Benchmarks for Internal Moderation

1.1 All Access to HE providers are required to operate and maintain robust Internal Moderation (IM) processes that are documented and conform to common benchmarks.

Internal moderation arrangements are documented within the provider approval application and confirmed within the provider approval process. The robustness of the agreed arrangements and the validity of associated assessment judgments are monitored through External Moderation (EM).

1.2 IM arrangements are intended to ensure that:

- tutors are aware of and comply with agreed assessment arrangements
- the suitability of proposed assessment tasks is internally reviewed in advance of delivery
- the grade descriptors and components applied to specific assessment tasks are appropriate
- assessment judgments are valid, reliable, and consistent across tutor groups, pathways, sites and over time
- recorded assessment decisions are appropriate, consistent, fair, transparent, and equitable
- the documentation required for external moderation is effectively prepared and presented
- outcome disagreements between the assessor and IM are resolved before external moderation activity
- good practice is shared

1.3 Whilst the AVA does not prescribe any model of IM, providers should develop an approach that provides a best fit for local circumstances and meets the AVA’s IM benchmarks (see AVA Benchmarks below). Provider access coordinators are advised to ensure that their existing IM arrangements are consistent with these benchmarks.

Table 1: AVA Internal Moderation Benchmarks for Providers		
Benchmark		To meet the benchmarks, providers may wish to consider whether:
1	Internal moderation policy document identifying roles and responsibilities	Your policy identifies a named IM coordinator and provides a clear description of IM roles and responsibilities. Your policy is readily available to all provider Access coordinators and subject tutors as well as external moderators when requested.
2	Schedule of IM meetings which meet requirements for external moderation	The timing of IM activity ensures that any quality issues are identified at an early stage. The IM process is completed in advance of external moderation.

3	Assessment information for tutors	Tutors understand assessment requirements and have access to assessment materials.
4	A clear rationale for assessment sampling	<p>IM sampling ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ assessment plans for each unit meets the developmental needs of students and demands of the unit in as few assignments as possible. ▪ feedback to students is clear and constructive. ▪ assessment decisions are fair and consistent ▪ assessment plans/assignment briefs address all the assigned grade descriptors and allow differentiated judgments to be made ▪ the tutor selects the most appropriate grade components for a given task ▪ the grade indicators and unit grade proposed by the assessor are consistent with the relevant grade component definitions ▪ assessment records are clear, signed and dated.
5	Effective sampling procedure	<p>There is a clear procedure which identifies how and where samples will be brought together for on- programme IM sampling</p> <p>Provider’s sampling arrangements are consistent with AVA requirements (ie for each unit - all assessed work completed to date of at least five students or 10% of students, whichever is the greater)</p> <p>The sample includes an element of random selection</p> <p>The sampling strategy considers all variable factors, for example: different delivery sites and modes of attendance</p> <p>Sampling focuses on issues arising from moderation, whether internal or external.</p>
6	Records of all IM activity	<p>A record is kept of which students work has been internally moderated</p> <p>All IM commentary as well as actions arising, and outcomes are recorded.</p>
7	Records of feedback to assessors	<p>All IM feedback to tutors is prompt and clear</p> <p>Action for assessors is clear and specific</p>

		<p>It must be signed as fulfilled by the assessor, thus closing the feedback loop</p> <p>IM feedback is intended as feedback to the assessor only and should not be given to the student</p>
8	Annual review of IM process	<p>An annual review of the IM process is held and recorded</p> <p>This should be a standing agenda item on annual assessment review</p>
9	Standardisation	<p>Providers contribute to and are represented at the AVA’s annual standardisation events.</p>

2. IM Schedule

2.1 An IM schedule must be in place and identifies when the IM will take place, which units will be included and who will be involved. It is also important to ensure that the role of the internal moderator is clear.

3. IM of Assessment Briefs and Assessed Work

3.1 IM includes both the assessment brief and the completed assessments. The assessment briefs must be internally moderated, and actions responded to where necessary, before they are made available to the students.

3.2 The internal moderator will need to ensure that assessment briefs are fit for purpose and meet all requirements identified on the AM1 (AVA template for internal moderation of assignment briefs). The assessment brief should ensure that

- each unit meets the developmental needs of students and demands of the unit in as few assignments as possible.
- assessment briefs addresses all three grade standards and allow differentiated judgments to be made
- the tutor has selected the most appropriate grade components for a given task.

3.3 The IM of assessed work will need to ensure that

- feedback to students is clear and constructive
- the grade proposed by the assessor is justified
- assessment decisions are fair and consistent
- the grade indicators and unit grade proposed by the assessor are consistent with the relevant grade component definitions
- a grade profile is clearly presented
- assessment records are clear, signed by both tutor and student and dated.

Please note that if any changes are made to assessments after IM, then the brief must be moderated again before distribution to the learners.

4. IM Sampling Methodology

4.1 The IM sample provided for each module should include all assessed work completed to date of at least five students or 10% of students, whichever is the greater.

4.2 The sample should include work from all assessors, groups, delivery sites and modes of attendance. The range of achievements should also be represented, as should resubmissions and referrals. The full assessment brief must be included with the sample.

4.3 Providers are asked to provide additional windows of IM for work that may be completed later than other students due to deadline extensions. This will ensure that such learners have access to the same quality assurance processes.

5. IM Documentation

5.1 All stages of the IM should be documented, and such records will be requested by Diploma moderators. These must be completed and made available electronically. Providers may choose to use their own templates or those provided by the AVA. Templates will be accessible through the Access to HE centre Support page on the website.

5.2 Providers must keep the following learner records for the period specified and make these available to the AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group on request.

- Assessment and internal verification records (five years)
- Name(s) of assessor(s)
- Assessment records, including assessment decision and reason for decision
- Name(s) of internal verifier(s)
- Internal verification reports

6. Standardisation

6.1 The purpose of standardisation is to establish how consistently standards have been applied within and across providers, and across subjects, and to provide relevant feedback to AIM Qualification and Assessment Group and provider-based subject / module tutors.

Provider Requirements for Internal Standardisation

6.2 Providers are also expected to organise their own internal standardisation meetings across the academic year. The aim of these meeting should be to establish how consistently standards have been applied across the different curriculum areas within the provider's Access to HE Diploma provision. This contributes to ensuring equity of experience for all Access to Higher Education Diploma learners regardless of the Diploma they are studying, their delivery site or mode of delivery.

6.3 Standardisation should take place across subjects and across different delivery sites and modes where applicable and include a focus on both assessment design and assessment decisions, including feedback provided to the learner.

6.4 Details of the activities undertaken, and the outcomes must be recorded, ensuring that any actions arising from the meetings are responded to. Such responses must also be documented. Diploma moderators will ask to view evidence of standardisation meeting during their moderation. Providers may use their own developed documents for this purpose.

Annual AVA Provider Standardisation Activity

6.5 The standardisation process will be facilitated by the AVA's access to HE leads. Standardisation activity will take place annually in each of the curriculum areas identified and will be remote.

6.6 All providers are required to take part in the standardisation process and all providers will be required to upload samples to the designated SharePoint area for standardisation by an agreed deadline in advance of the event. The AVA will archive samples for use at future events, to use as examples of good practice or to contribute to QAA's standardisation events. Subject tutors from providers are also a part of this process and should participate in the activities.

6.7 AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group will send invitations to all providers to submit samples. Prior to the start of the activity, links to materials and guidance will be disseminated to provider Access coordinators to share with their teams.

6.8 During the activity AIM Qualifications and Assessment Group will

- facilitate the platform for the activity and feedback sessions
- keep a record of who participates in the activity exercises
- provide samples for participants to access to complete the required activities
- provide sampling records for attendees to record their judgements of assessment examples provided
- keep a record of issues and outcomes arising from the activities and discussions from the standardisation activity.

6.9 Post activity, AIM Qualification and Assessment Group will:

- produce a report on standardisation activity and outcomes
- provide identified examples of good practice and exemplar coursework.
- present a summary standardisation report and action plan to the designated body for Access to HE
- circulate the agreed report to participants and Providers

7. Annual Diploma Moderator Standardisation

7.1 In order to further ensure the consistency of assessment judgements between all Diploma moderators, selected samples of assessment briefs and or assessed work will be reviewed by Diploma moderators remotely. All Diploma moderators will be required to take part in the standardisation process.