

**For:**

- Consortium management
- Lead assessors
- Domain assessors



Qualifications  
and Curriculum  
Development  
Agency

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Spring  
2010

# Delivering the Diploma

## Introduction to managing internal assessment

# A brief introduction to managing Diploma internal assessment

The Diploma is a major innovation in 14–19 education. In the past, delivery of general qualifications has largely involved learners and staff in a single school or college. By contrast Diploma delivery requires teamwork and collaboration across centres working in consortia.

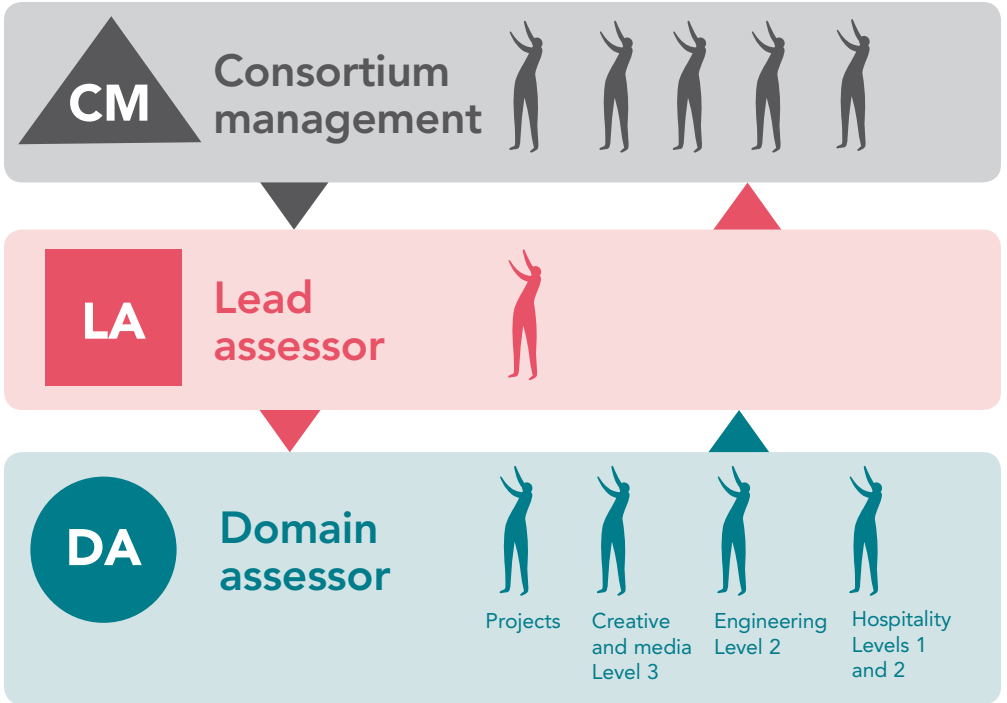
One area where robust and common working practices will be critical is internal assessment.

Diploma qualifications have a significant element of controlled internal assessment, with the majority of principal learning units and all projects being internally assessed.

The quality of internal assessment is crucial in ensuring the quality of the Diploma as a qualification. To successfully deliver consistent high quality internal assessment across a consortium, senior staff will need to recognise and address assessment issues from the outset of planning and preparation for Diploma delivery.

This leaflet provides general information on ensuring good practice in effective internal assessment. It also explains the responsibilities of the consortia and the two key assessment roles involved in managing internal assessment. The three tiers of management can be seen in the diagram on the page opposite.

# Diploma internal assessment management structure



# Consortium management

The management team of school, college and other centre staff with responsibility for overseeing Diploma delivery and internal assessment across all Diploma programmes offered by a consortium.

A consortium's responsibility for internal assessment and standardisation complements awarding bodies' responsibility for ensuring that, through internal standardisation, all learners' evidence is assessed at the appropriate standard for the level of the Diploma.

It is up to a consortium to decide on the best approach for implementing the responsibilities of the two key assessment roles, lead assessor and domain assessor, and the timing for implementing them, based on its own circumstances.

# Lead assessor

A lead assessor is the person who has responsibility in a consortium for overseeing all aspects of the quality assurance of assessment carried out for the principal learning and project components across all Diploma programmes offered.

A lead assessor is likely to have significant teaching and managerial experience in a range of settings, for example, as faculty head, senior teacher, quality manager, where the role involves dealing with staff across subject areas, sites and courses.

They are likely to have led course delivery teams and worked with them on all aspects of delivery – course design, planning teaching and learning programmes, setting and marking assessment activities, using feedback from awarding bodies or other sources to inform subsequent teaching and learning.

They are also likely to have experience of undertaking assessment activities on behalf of an awarding body or other agency (such as a local authority) in the capacity of an examiner, moderator, verifier or assessment consultant.

The role of lead assessor is central in ensuring accountability, consistency and high quality internal assessment within and between lines of learning and across the centres in a consortium. A key requirement of the role will be to set up appropriate and workable reporting and tracking systems in a consortium to ensure that internal assessment requirements are being met both at domain assessor and individual teacher levels.

In fact, many of the lead assessor's responsibilities will be implemented via domain assessors who will then report to the lead assessor on whether the requirements are being met.

# Domain assessor

A domain assessor is the person who has responsibility in a consortium for overseeing all aspects of the quality assurance of the internal assessment carried out on the principal learning and project components for a particular Diploma line of learning.

A domain assessor is likely to have significant experience of teaching and experience on courses similar in nature and content to a Diploma line of learning, for example, experience as a head of department or course leader in a school, sixth form college or FE college.

They are also likely to have some experience of undertaking assessment activities within the area of that line of learning, on behalf of an awarding body or other agency (such as a local authority) in the capacity of an examiner, moderator, verifier or assessment consultant.

It is already an awarding body requirement that one named person should be responsible for confirming that internal assessment and standardisation (for each component) has taken place according to the awarding body's requirements as stated in the specifications. The domain assessor role goes beyond this to ensure there is coherence and standardisation across all internally assessed components for a line of learning across a consortium.

Full details of the responsibilities of consortia and the two key assessment roles can be found in *Delivering the Diploma – a guide to managing internal assessment* and *Delivering the Diploma – a training guide for lead and domain assessors*.

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Our policy is to embed quality and empower all those connected with the delivery and assessment of the Diplomas. To help with this we intend to have someone shadowing each domain assessor.

Melanie Holdcroft,  
14-19 Adviser, Stoke-on-Trent City Council

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## About this publication

### What is it about?

This leaflet is a brief introduction to managing Diploma internal assessment, that outlines the responsibilities of consortia and the two assessment roles QCDA has identified as key in delivering robust quality assurance and good practice in this area.

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