

## Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy

Ofqual announced in September 2019 that all Awarding Organisations (AOs) will be required to introduce a Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) strategy no later than September 2021. This approach forms part of Ofqual's overall strategy to improve the controls AOs have in place where an assessment is marked by a centre (Training Provider) (Condition H2).

Awarding Organisations need to determine the most appropriate CASS approach for each of their qualifications and must meet Ofqual's minimum requirements. One specific form of CASS is moderation and Ofqual has defined some qualifications will always be subject to moderation (such as GCSEs, A levels and Technical Qualifications).

This strategy is to be used in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Requirements Policy.

### Overall Approach

iPET Network qualifications are predominantly developed around approved Training Providers carrying out centre assessments. iPET Network have considered specific measures through authentication of evidence and quality assurance to ensure the integrity of the assessments is assured. iPET Network qualifications are specifically for the Animal Care and Veterinary Science sector to capture skills and knowledge for individuals already practicing or wanting to practice within the sector.

Each Qualification, Tutor relevant to the Training Provider has been scrutinised for potential risks to ensure the correct management and controls are implemented. A risk rating is formulated for each, which will determine the appropriate level of quality assurance.

To ensure that the results from assessments are accurate and detailed, strict assessment strategies are outlined for each qualification that must be carried out by any approved Training Provider. This is continuously monitored by the Quality Assurance team to detect any potential malpractice or maladministration and to standardise outcomes of assessment results.

As part of the approval and 12 monthly re-approval process for iPET Network Training Providers and qualifications, there are specific criteria that the Training Provider must be compliant with. These conditions form the External Quality Assurance approval audit and ongoing auditing activities.

### Allowing Centres to mark assessments.

During the iPET Network approval process many areas of experience and competence in the Training Provider's resources and employees are scrutinised for their suitability. Each qualification that the Training Provider is approved to deliver, contains its own eligibility for anyone who wishes to deliver the qualification, including anyone making assessment decisions. The Training Provider must demonstrate competence to meet the criteria through qualifications, CVs, and continuous professional development (CPD) activity. This area of approval is to ensure iPET Network are satisfied that any Training Provider employee is approved with the appropriate qualifications and experiences to make assessment decisions on behalf of iPET Network.

iPET Network provide regular CPD activities to support the Training Providers in all areas involved in delivering qualifications and completing assessments. An External Quality Assurer (EQA) and an Account Manager are dedicated to each Training Provider for on-going support and advice.

## Monitoring

iPET Network's approach to monitoring is built around risk rating. The level of risk rating for each tutor and qualification determines the level of support that is required. As per the '*Quality Assurance Requirements*' and the '*Training Provider Manual*' we have set the procedures for approval, monitoring the assessment process and control for over sampling activities.

### Training Provider and Qualification Approval

Organisations that are considering offering iPET Network qualifications must go through the Training Provider approval process. Approval is based upon the ability to meet the Training Provider approval criteria, which is specified in the iPET Network Application Form. Training Provider approval also includes qualification approval, these requirements are detailed in the Qualification Specification. Once approved, Training Providers are able to add to the iPET Network qualifications they offer by completing the qualification approval process found on [www.ipetnetwork.co.uk](http://www.ipetnetwork.co.uk). The Training Provider Agreement with Terms and Conditions and Enforceable agreement applies once approval has been agreed.

Please note that iPET Network reserve the right to not progress with an approval application at any stage prior to approval being confirmed in writing by iPET Network. This is at iPET Network's discretion and there is no obligation to let organisations know the reasons, nor is there a right of appeal.

### Application forms

All relevant application forms and documents relating to Training Provider and qualification approval can be requested from iPET Network [info@ipetnetwork.co.uk](mailto:info@ipetnetwork.co.uk). All applications will be risk rated according to their ability to meet regulatory recognition and any specific qualification requirements set out within the qualification guides. Please note all Tutors that are new to offering iPET Network qualifications will be automatically high risk for a minimum of the first 5 candidates certificated to ensure evidence sampled demonstrates a good understanding of the qualification and quality assurance requirements.

### Training Provider definition

iPET Network defines a Training Provider as an organisation, such as a college, school, Training Provider or employer approved by one or more Awarding Organisation for the delivery of training programmes and qualifications. Providing that the organisation meets the approval criteria, Quality Assurance Requirements and receives formal written approval from iPET Network, it is defined as a Training Provider. The location for quality assurance and assessment will vary depending on the organisation. This could be a college site, workplace or even a private residence but must meet iPET Network's approval requirements.

### Written and enforceable agreement

Where organisations are approved to offer iPET Network qualifications, the written and enforceable agreement must be signed by the Training Provider and iPET Network. This agreement consists of:

- Training Provider Application Form
- Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Form
- Training Provider Agreement with Terms and Conditions
- The policies, procedures and regulations including, but not limited to
  - Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy
  - Authenticating Candidate Evidence and Identification Policy
  - Complaints Policy
  - Conflicts of Interest Policy, Conflicts of Interest Procedure and Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Form
  - Data Encryption Policy
  - Enquiries and Appeals Policy and Enquiries and Appeals Process
  - Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
  - Language Policy

- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure (including Sanctions)
- Payment and Invoicing Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Professional Code of Conduct Policy
- Quality Assurance Requirements
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Risk Rating of Investigators for Malpractice and Maladministration
- Whistleblowing Policy
- The relevant qualification approval(s)
- Enforceable Agreement

Where a Training Provider application is accepted by iPET Network it will form an agreement between the Training Provider and iPET Network (which shall come into force on the date that iPET Network accepts the Training Provider's application for the first qualification approval for an iPET Network qualification).

### **Regulatory requirements**

The following documents set out the regulatory requirements for regulatory bodies:

- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (England)
- Qualifications Wales Criteria for Recognition (Wales)
- CCEA General Conditions of Recognition (Northern Ireland)

Although Training Providers are not required to directly comply with such regulatory requirements, these documents set out the obligations for Awarding Organisations in relation to their approved Training Providers which are reflected in the iPET Network Training Provider Manual and our Quality Assurance Requirements. Training Providers must ensure that iPET Network is able to comply with these regulatory requirements. Where Training Providers fail to do so, responsibility lies with iPET Network. Therefore, approval and ongoing quality assurance monitoring ensures that Training Providers comply with regulatory requirements.

### **Pre-approval**

For Training Providers in the pre-approval stages wishing to offer iPET Network qualifications. The first step for any potential Training Provider is to complete a Training Provider Application Form. Once this has been submitted, the enquiry is passed onto an Account Manager who will continue to support the prospective Training Provider. The Account Manager will also contact the prospective Training Provider at this stage to discuss their desired level of approval.

At this stage either party may decide not to progress with the application. iPET Network have the right to not progress an application; in these instances, there is no obligation to let the prospective Training Providers know the reasons, nor is there a right of appeal.

### **Training Provider approval application process**

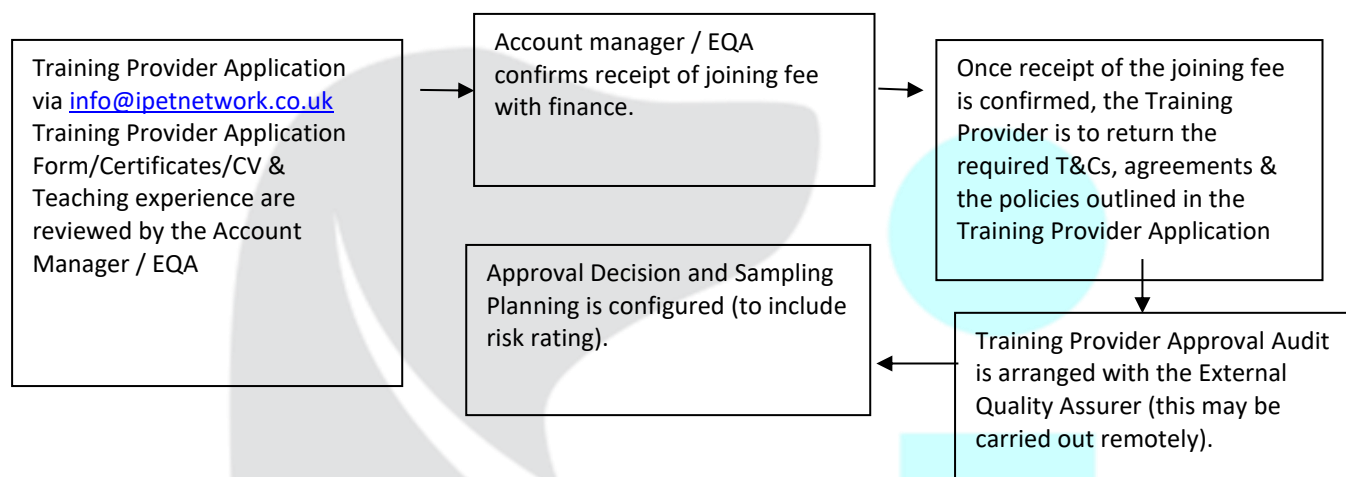
Organisations which progress to the Training Provider approval application stage will be given written notification detailing the on-boarding process to start the Training Provider approval process. Prospective Training Providers are also allocated an Account Manager for any support they may require during the approval process.

iPET Network have the right to not progress an application; in these instances, there is no obligation to let the prospective Training Providers know the reasons, nor is there a right of appeal.

### **Approval costs**

The cost of Training Provider approval is detailed in the 'Become a Training Provider' section of the website and in the document Training Provider Fees. A Training Provider approval fee is payable before the Account Manager or External Quality Assurer review the Training Provider application form. Please note that once the Training Provider approval process has started (defined as the point at which the form and associated

documentation has been acknowledged by iPET Network) the approval fee/joining fee is non-refundable. Failure to pay this fee promptly may result in a delay to the progress of a prospective Training Provider's application.



\*Please also see Training Provider Approval Flow Chart on [www.ipetnetwork.co.uk](http://www.ipetnetwork.co.uk) for further guidance.

All Training Providers are required to sign an agreement which details the Training Provider's and Awarding Organisation's commitments and the Training Provider's responsibilities in relation to administration, finance, delivery, assessment and quality assurance. Continuing compliance with the Training Provider agreement is monitored through ongoing monitoring activities and External Quality Assurance visits carried out by iPET Network External Quality Assurers.

Training Provider approval may cover more than one site, the responsibility for confirming the suitability of each venue rests with the Training Provider. iPET Network may wish to monitor any site or location used for delivery or assessment for the purposes of Training Provider compliance. If multiple site visits are required, this may incur additional fees for the Training Provider such as multiple site monitors.

If risk assessment dictates that additional monitor/audit/support activity is required at any time, additional charges may be raised in accordance with the current iPET Network Training Provider Fees on [www.ipetnetwork.co.uk](http://www.ipetnetwork.co.uk). Supplements will be charged to cover international travel and additional travel time. Upon being granted Training Provider recognition, the Training Provider is required to gain qualification approval for each qualification type/sector. Wherever possible initial qualification approval will take place at the point of Training Provider approval.

Training Provider approval will lapse for Training Providers that do not register any Candidates for a period of 1 year from the Training Provider's approval and re-approval. In this situation, a new Training Provider recognition application will be required. There may be a charge for visits associated with approval of lapsed Training Providers.

There is no appeal against the outcome of Training Provider recognition or approval. iPET Network will, however, attempt to fully explain a decision to refuse recognition.

### **Training Provider Approval Audits**

Approval audits are normally made by External Quality Assurers, who are allocated by iPET Network. They will seek evidence to confirm that the prospective Training Provider meets the approval criteria and ensure that all systems, processes and procedures are in place.

The duration of the audit will vary, depending on the time needed to complete activities. At the end of the audit the External Quality Assurer will complete an EQA audit report form which will include an action plan and approval recommendation. A copy of this report will also be made available to the prospective Training Provider for their records.

### **Training Provider approval and qualification approval granted**

When a prospective Training Provider is formally notified of approval status and qualification approval has been granted, iPET Network will:

- Approve the organisation as an approved iPET Network Training Provider.
- Issue an annual certificate of approval for display at the Training Provider.
- Issue an initial approval welcome pack.
- Allocate a Training Provider number within ten working days, which will be used in all communications with iPET Network.
- Allow registration and assessment of Candidates for the qualification(s) approved.

Training Provider and qualification approval are deemed to have been granted when iPET Network confirms the status in writing to the Training Provider, and not before.

### **Training Provider approval and qualification approval granted/withheld subject to Special Conditions.**

Where there is insufficient evidence to satisfy either the Training Provider or qualification approval criteria, the EQA will develop an action plan which will set out the Training Providers special conditions:

- areas that need to be developed further
- an indication of the additional evidence required
- the date by which improvements must be made (this is normally within three months, but this may be subject to change depending on specific circumstances)

Once the action plan has been completed, prospective Training Providers will contact their External Quality Assurer or Account Manager. They will then request evidence to confirm that the Training Provider approval criteria have been satisfied and, if necessary, a second approval visit will be made. Please note, this additional visit will incur a charge.

### **Training Provider and qualification approval denied**

Where it is clear from the visit undertaken to the prospective Training Provider that they are not in a position to satisfy the iPET Network approved Training Provider criteria, Training Provider and qualification approval are denied.

The External Quality Assurer will review the Training Provider application and information it contains regarding the requirements to deliver a chosen qualification. This information must include but not limited to:

- Qualifications of any employees involved in delivering the qualification
- Internal management of quality
- Handling data
- Facilities and resources for delivery
- Suitability for assessment practice
- Risks associated with the qualification e.g. qualifications that are related to industry licencing requirements, health and safety concerns etc.

The External Quality Assurer must use the **Risk Rating Strategy** document should be referred to when reviewing and applying the risk rating.

### **Assessment decisions from Tutors**

Internal quality assurers are responsible for ensuring tutors are standardised on assessment decisions and practice. To ensure that standards and assessment decisions are consistent the IQA can:

- Carry out direct observations (minimum of one observation per year must be carried out)
- Sample a range of all assessment methods during sampling activities
- Remain vigilant during sampling of a variation in assessment decision between different tutors
- Ensure that any guidance and documentation is provided to all tutors so that they can apply the same approach
- Tutors should be ask to keep a record of concerns or issues presented in and or during assessments so that the IQA can identify where gaps may lie in performance for each tutor.

Each qualification has a detailed IQA Strategy outlined in the Qualification Handbook, which all Training Providers must adhere to as their minimum sampling requirements in line with the applied risk rating. Further support and checks for the tutor are carried out by an iPET Network EQA during audits.

### **Planning Sampling Activity**

The External Quality Assurer assesses what level of sampling is required according to the risk rating of the Training Provider and Tutors, the tutor risk rating will be used by the Internal Quality Assurer to also plan their sampling. A sampling plan for the Training Provider will be implemented detailing the specific needs of quality assurance. The range of quality assurance support activities could include:

- Level of qualification sampling
- Standardisation activities
- Specialist technical support and advice
- Standardisation of assessment practice
- Tutor/Internal Quality Assurer support sessions

## Sampling requirements

The planned quality assurance activities are implemented and monitored to ensure that they are providing appropriate support for Training Providers. Planned activities can be amended, if necessary, to reflect the changing needs of the Training Provider, iPET Network and industry requirements.

EQAs are required to sample before any certificate requests are approved. The percentage of sampling is determined by the following:

EQA Level of support	Sampling requirements
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>Minimum of 1 formal assessment per Candidate (where applicable)</li> <li>1 x Candidate interview per year</li> <li>1 x Direct observation of formal assessment per year</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>25% Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>Minimum of 1 formal assessment per Candidate (where applicable)</li> <li>2 x Candidate interview per year</li> <li>1 x Direct observation of formal assessment per year</li> </ul>
<b>High</b> (A minimum of the first 5 candidates certificated for new Tutors and Training Providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50 % Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>Minimum of 1 formal assessment per Candidate (where applicable)</li> <li>3 x Candidate interview per year</li> <li>1 x Direct observation of formal assessment per year</li> </ul>

Risk ratings are applied to the Qualification and Tutor. The EQA must always sample according to the highest risk rating e.g. A Training Provider and tutor are low risk but the qualification is deemed high risk therefore the EQA must sample 50%.

Cohort sampling - The EQA must sample the applicable percentage according to the risk rating of the tutor or qualification. A cohort is defined as the certificate claims per qualification within each calendar month or within each sampling period. The EQA must sample a minimum of 2 Candidates per cohort, regardless of their risk rating.

Risk Ratings will be reviewed based on on-going EQA sampling or if any concerns are raised by the IQA. Where concerns are raised the Risk Rating will be reviewed immediately.

IQAs are required to sample before any certificate requests are claimed for. The percentage of sampling is determined by the following:

IQA Level of support	Sampling requirements
<b>Low</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20% Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>Minimum of 1 formal summative assessment per Candidate (where applicable)</li> <li>1 x Direct observation of assessment practice per year</li> <li>1 x Candidate interview per year</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>50% Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>Minimum of 1 formal summative assessment per Candidate (where applicable)</li> <li>1 x Direct observation of assessment practice per year</li> <li>2 x Candidate interviews per year</li> </ul>

<b>High</b> ( <i>A minimum of the first 5 candidates certificated for new Tutors and Training Providers</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% Sampling of the total qualification units</li> <li>• All formal summative assessments</li> <li>• 1 x Direct observation of assessment practice per year</li> <li>• 3 x Candidate interviews per year</li> </ul>
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Risk ratings are applied to the Qualification and Tutor. The IQA must always sample according to the highest risk rating.

Where there are no formal assessments for a qualification the portfolio of evidence must be sampled per the applied risk rating.

Cohort sampling – For some qualifications, they may be sampled by the IQA as a cohort, the IQA will sample the applicable percentage according to the highest risk rating of the total cohort including a formal summative assessment for each Candidate sampled, where applicable.

Portfolio sampling - For some qualifications, the IQA will sample the applicable percentage according to the highest risk of all Candidate portfolios.

Each qualification has a specific IQA strategy to ensure the integrity of the qualification is upheld to the highest quality, IQAs must refer to the individual Qualification Handbooks for the relevant IQA strategies.

### Monitoring Internal Quality Assurers

Internal Quality Assurers are subject to on-going monitoring by the Training Provider's External Quality Assurer. This will involve sampling both Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) documentation and Internal Quality Assurance practice. In addition, the External Quality Assurer (EQA) will sample the assessment evidence of the Candidates for whom the certificate is claimed. Feedback to the Internal Quality Assurer and the Training Provider is provided through the relevant section of the External Quality Assurer Audit Report Form. The EQA will agree a monitoring plan with each Training Provider and apply the relevant risk rating. Where the practice of an approved Internal Quality Assurance falls below the required standard, iPET Network may decide to suspend or withdraw the approved status of an individual Quality Assurer. When monitoring approved IQA, the EQA will seek evidence of best practice in Internal Quality Assurance.

Best Practice	Evidence examples
The Training Provider has systems and processes in plan for sampling Candidates according to their tutor's risks rating	Internal Sampling plan
Confirmation that tutor(s) meet any requirements specified in the qualification guide	CVs Original copies of certificates Evidence of individuals working towards the required qualifications References
Records of sampling activities	IQA Sampling Report Form
Initial induction and on-going support arrangements for tutor	Training Needs Analysis Inductions CPD records Standardisation minutes
Monitoring assessment arrangements and practices during the course	Minutes of meetings and action points Interim sampling records

Reviewing sampling activities of assessed work to ensure assessment judgments are valid, reliable and consistent	Standardisation minutes
Completing and maintaining records	IQA sampling report forms / sampling activities / IQA feedback / IQA sampling plan
Providing transparent, sufficient, valid and constructive feedback to tutor tutors	Documentation of IQA feedback
Retaining assessment and IQA records for at least 3 years, including at least one sample of a Candidate's work per unit per year	IQA records

### Quality Assurance roles

External Quality Assurers responsibilities include:

- Conducting, documenting and monitoring of the Training Providers monitoring plan.
- Conducting and documenting Training Provider audits.
- Conducting and documenting Quality Assurance activities.
- Participating in best practice and standardisation activities to ensure support for continuous improvement and consistent performance.
- Supporting the training and development of new and existing Training Providers.
- Keeping up to date with iPET Network products, services and management of information systems.

The External Quality Assurer will review the Training Provider application and information it contains regarding the requirements to deliver a chosen qualification. This information must include but is not limited to:

- Qualifications of any employees involved in delivering the qualification
- Internal management of quality
- Handling data
- Facilities and resources for delivery
- Suitability for assessment practice
- Risks associated with the qualification e.g. qualifications that are related to industry licencing requirements, health and safety concerns etc.

The External Quality Assurer must use the **Risk Rating Strategy** document to refer to when reviewing and applying the risk rating, the outcome will be detailed on the EQA audit report form.

iPET Network uses a WebPortal, a management system in place for Training Providers to input data to capture when assessments take place, who has completed the assessment and what the results from the assessments were. This has secure log in access specific to each user at the Training Provider.

The WebPortal is a secure online administration system for Training Providers. This is for direct Training Providers with iPET Network and only Training Provider Managers can authorise additional access to the WebPortal.

New Training Providers must have Training Provider approval by the External Quality Assurer before gaining access to the Web Portal.

WebPortal allows users to:

- Manage Candidate registrations and results

- Access assessments materials
- Review Audit Reports
- Monitor invoices
- Tracking statistics
- Certificate requests
- Training Provider management
- Risk Ratings and Sanctions

The secure system has a high level of functionality and is key to communication between iPET Network, Quality Assurers and Training Providers.

Once the assessment is completed the assessment evidence as outlined in each qualification handbook must be made available for sampling to the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) and the EQA.

Each Training Provider must be monitored by the External Quality Assurer through scheduled audit meetings and sampling of candidate portfolios, this will depend on the Tutor and Qualification risk rating. The audits will be conducted via Microsoft Teams, a different platform can be used at the request of the Training Provider or in-person. This process is to ensure that the delivery of iPET Network qualifications meet the standards set out by iPET Network. This will minimise Malpractice/Maladministration resulting in false certification. The monitoring process will include activities involving all Training Provider staff involved in the delivery of assessments and internal quality assurance. Remote audits may be recorded for performance monitoring purposes and to allow reflection for all involved in the auditing process. The EQA will also provide recorded feedback on an EQA Audit Report Form. EQAs have the freedom of being able to audit a Training Provider at any time without prior scheduling to allow the Training Provider to be spot checked at random. This process will usually be used in circumstances where there are any concerns related to the Training Provider such as complaints or appeals.

iPET Network outlines in the Internal Quality Assurance Strategy that performance observations must be completed for each tutor responsible for assessment decisions to support the assessment process and check compliance with the assessment strategy. This is a key contributor to the control of the assessment and moderation before the Candidate is issued with the final result of their award.

Where possible, for best practice, External Quality Assurers will be rotated every 12 months to ensure the robust quality, defined by iPET Network is upheld and any concerns are picked up promptly, there may be exceptions to this but risks will be mitigated accordingly. It allows Training Providers to receive fair assessments of their practices and to ensure that any discrepancies are flagged regarding the EQA auditing process.

EQA audits will be reviewed each year for performance assessment and to review internal Malpractice and Maladministration risks by a suitable person.

The reports will be scrutinised specifically for:

- consistency across the EQAs findings
- what has been flagged as areas of concern
- action plans are in place
- whether findings have been reported to the Responsible Officer as Malpractice / Maladministration
- appropriate risk rating / sanctions been applied following the audit

## Risks

iPET Network as part of the approval process has all Training Providers and sign a Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Form on behalf of all of the Training Provider staff so any potential or actual conflicts can be managed in line with the conditions of recognition and iPET Network's *Conflicts of Interest Policy*. As above the *Enforceable Agreement* ties up all the policies and procedural requirements of iPET Network's approval process. iPET Network also have Training Provider Terms and Conditions these set out the compliance process in order to operate within the iPET Network Awarding organisation guidelines.

In line with the *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure (including sanctions)* iPET Network is committed to minimising the risk of potential, alleged, and actual Malpractice and Maladministration. This risk is managed at all stages of the assessment, operating a transparent and clear booking to certification. Having a transparent and clear booking system with specific time periods allows tighter control over the administration of the assessment documents, restricted access to assessment booking and materials. Specific evidence requirements help prove the validity, authenticity, reliability, currency and sufficiency of the assessments.

The IQA and EQA will evaluate the risks of Malpractice and Maladministration if any procedures or policies are not adhered to as a result of the sampling activity.

Each qualification assessment strategy dictates what evidence must be captured and what documentation must be used to record the assessment. For written assessments this record is generated when the assessment is booked and for practical assessments it is available in the qualification collateral. The assessment record reiterates the key areas of the assessment process. The assessment record sets out clear mapping to what areas of assessment criteria are covered.

## Taking action and making adjustments

All allegations of malpractice or maladministration will be investigated within the agreed process. This will protect the integrity of the qualification and the fairness to the Training Provider and all Candidates. Any actual/potential/alleged/perceived instances of malpractice or maladministration need to be reported to iPET Network as soon as it has been identified and iPET Network will, in turn, report these to the Training Provider, other Awarding Organisations where necessary and to the appropriate Regulator(s).

If we are advised of, or suspect malpractice or maladministration, then we are required to either carry out investigations ourselves or ensure that Training Provider investigations are carried out rigorously, effectively, and by persons of appropriate competence who have no personal interest in the outcome. See iPET Network's Risk Rating of Investigators for Malpractice and Maladministration. The choice of investigator may change during the investigation dependent on the evidence that is provided or the condition of the allegation. iPET Network reserve the right to make any final decision on the investigation.

iPET Network will notify any Training Providers where there is a belief that there has been an occurrence of malpractice or maladministration, or any connected occurrence, that may affect the Training Provider undertaking any part of the delivery of one of its qualifications. In addition, other Training Providers may need to be informed of the malpractice or maladministration that has been reported and investigated, to avoid any further occurrence of the same issue. If required, iPET Network will share these findings accordingly.

During an investigation, the conduct of the Candidate in assessments should not be considered in reaching a finding of malpractice. However, any previous findings of malpractice against the same Candidate may be considered for the purposes of determining the appropriate sanction.

The Training Provider must record all assessment decisions, date of assessment as a minimum on the Web Portal to allow iPET Network to carry out a thorough investigation into the Candidate. Individual interviews may need to be held directly with the Candidate therefore upon registrations, a Candidate's full contact details are recorded and are held by iPET Network for a minimum of 3 years. The Training Provider must take all reasonable steps to comply with requests for information or documents made by the Awarding Organisation or the regulatory body as soon as practicable.

Regulators require all Awarding Organisation to be responsible in taking all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and maladministration.

### **How iPET Network will prevent Malpractice / Maladministration**

Initial and continuation documentation and agreements

The Training Provider will only be able to operate and deliver iPET Network qualifications once:

- Training Provider Terms, Conditions and Enforceable Agreement (to confirm all policies have been read, understood and agreed)
- Conflicts of Interest Disclosure Form is completed and signed
- External Audit Form for Approval has been completed by the External Quality Assurer
- Approval has been given by the External Quality Assurer

The documents and agreements listed above must be signed every 12 months following the Training Providers approval date. This is to ensure iPET Network have up to date information for all requirements of delivery and the Training Provider are compliant with iPET Network's latest policies, agreements and terms and conditions.

External Quality Assurers will receive initial and on-going training from the Responsible Officer to ensure they understand what constitutes Malpractice and Maladministration. 12-monthly performance reviews are scheduled to feedback the Director's findings from the quality review on all EQA Audit Reports and actions from investigations. This will contribute to managing performance, highlight any updates required and focus points in the industry, regulatory requirements and areas of concern. External Quality Assurers must demonstrate what support has been provided to the Training Provider's Internal Quality Assurer and how near miss incidents of potential Malpractice and Maladministration have been identified and managed.

iPET Network has the power to amend an assessment result where an appeal is made and the investigation results in the assessment decision being found incorrect.

In all other cases, iPET Network will consider whether it is appropriate to amend a result following any concerns raised through quality assurance.

iPET Network will take into consideration the following factors before and during the investigation to amend any assessment results:

- the need to prioritise the maintenance of standards, which will normally lead to correction of errors
- the passage of time since results were issued
- whether a qualification has been used to secure employment
- any health and safety implications associated with the qualification
- whether the qualification is a licence to practise
- the availability of opportunities to retake the assessment
- any other adverse effect that might be caused by a decision to correct, or not to correct, a result

iPET Network will prioritise the investigation and potential amendment of results depending on the weight of risk. For example, if there are health and safety implications associated with the qualification that may result in unsafe practices for the candidate due to them not being competent to safe complete the assessment.

iPET Network have the power to revoke any certificates if the result on the certificate is false because of malpractice, maladministration, or because the result has been corrected.

### Ongoing review

iPET Network will review its Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny Strategy on an annual basis. The strategy will be reviewed against relevant recognition conditions, legislative requirements and iPET Network's annual internal review. Quarterly Governing Body and Executive Committee meetings are held to review the Awarding Organisation procedures and processes, any updates or amendments that are required must be approved by the Directors. Reviewing of all iPET Network policies and procedures will be led by the responsible officer, they will be reviewed and changes will be made based on the following:

- When new legislation, regulation or best practice indicates changes are necessary
- Feedback from stakeholders is also invited upon audits and reviews.
- There is evidence to suggest that the process is not being effectively implemented or it does not adequately control the risks. This would be determined by IQA / EQA evidence / data or through procedural failure and implementing contingency planning
- Lessons learned from a malpractice investigation when the evidence suggests changes are required
- New technologies, equipment or methods of working necessitate a change in procedure
- Annual monitoring

### Document Control

**Document Name:** Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy

**Document Number:** P36

iPET Network  
Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS) Strategy  
Doc: P36 / Version: 4 / June 2023

Date of Correction	Version Number	Correction Reason
	1	
13/01/2022	2	Annual policy review
15/06/2022	3	Review and update with Responsible officer
05/07/2023	4	Updates in line with QA requirements policy review
15/05/2024	5	Updated to remove reference to Training Provider risk rating

