



Countersigning Policy

iPET Network recognises that, in order for its Approved Centres to grow and develop their internal training and quality infrastructure, there is a need to provide opportunities for unqualified or inexperienced employees to be involved in assessment processes.

This Countersigning Policy outlines the roles and responsibilities for:

- The individual responsible for unqualified or inexperienced personnel
- The criteria for personnel eligible to carry out assessments under the countersigning provision
- The types of assessments permitted for countersigning activity

Roles and Responsibilities of the Countersigner

Each iPET Network qualification details, in the Qualification Handbook, the requirements for an approved assessor to deliver the qualification. Only approved assessors and IQAs are permitted to carry out the countersigning role.

The countersigner is responsible for:

- Providing training and support to ensure the employee has a thorough understanding of the qualification requirements
- Conducting standardisation activities to ensure the employee understands the required standards for learners to meet assessment criteria
- Offering ongoing support and training
- Submitting full reports and updates following internal and external quality assurance activities
- Reviewing assessment activity and providing feedback

Evidence of the above may be requested by the External Quality Assurer (EQA) during an audit.



Eligibility for the Countersigning Process

The individual must hold either the recommended length of experience or one of the recommended qualifications (excluding teaching-related qualifications) as detailed in the relevant Qualification Handbook.

Where a qualification does not stipulate a required length of experience and the individual does not hold one of the recommended qualifications, the EQA (on behalf of the Awarding Organisation) will review the case individually. This decision must then be approved by the Responsible Officer.

Qualification Assessment

The countersigning process is authorised only for specific assessments. Most iPET Network qualifications include both formative and summative assessments. Countersigning is permitted only for formative assessments.

Only approved assessors are authorised to conduct summative assessments.

Quality Assurance

An inexperienced or unqualified IQA may carry out formative and summative sampling activities but is not permitted to conduct observations of practice.

Evidence of Countersigning Activity

Authentic evidence must be provided for any countersigning activity (e.g., where a countersigner has reviewed an assessor's marking and feedback to a learner). Where possible, this should include a signature from the countersigner.

If using an e-portfolio system that does not support countersigning, a Countersigning Declaration will be acceptable. A similar procedure must be followed for IQA countersigning. All assessment activity must be reviewed by the countersigner.



If using a platform that does not support countersigning, a record of countersigning activity (e.g., a range of assessments or learning outcomes that have been countersigned) must be maintained for tracking and quality assurance purposes.

All countersigners must sign the Countersigning Declaration.

The countersigning process is restricted to a 12-month period, which will be reviewed by the EQA during the next audit.

Risk Rating

During the countersigning process, all assessment activity must be sampled as high risk by both the IQA and EQA.

The learner must be registered with the approved assessor/IQA, but the portfolio may be allocated to the unqualified or inexperienced employee for formative assessment activity. Summative assessment documentation must be completed by the approved assessor.

Glossary

Formative Assessments – Assessments conducted throughout the qualification (e.g., theory tasks to assess knowledge)

Summative Assessments – Final assessments that summarise learning across the qualification (e.g., practical grooming assessments)

IQA – Internal Quality Assurer

Formative Sampling – Sampling conducted before summative assessments are arranged or partway through the qualification

Summative Sampling – Sampling conducted at the end of the qualification

Version Control



Date of Amendment	Version Number	Amendments
05/11/2025	1	Policy review and update

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