Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV) Status Policy and Procedures

Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV) Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

Open Awards is committed to ensuring that all centres approved to deliver our qualifications comply with regulatory requirements.

Where approved centres have a strong track record of high quality delivery of Open Awards qualifications and units, we can approve a named individual to become an Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV).

An AIV is considered able to make the right decisions about awards to learners and is given the responsibility to verify assessment decisions and directly claim credit certificates for learners from Open Awards.

The Policy **excludes** the authorisation of the Award of Credit for externally marked assessments or Access to Higher Education.

Additional requirements may be required for AIV status for qualifications at Level 3 or above or for any qualifications with additional regulatory requirements.

This document replaces all previous AIV and Direct Claims Status policies from the operative date.

2. Scope

This document is applicable for the following Open Awards products:

Ofqual regulated qualifications and units	☑
Access to HE Diplomas	☒
Quality Endorsed Courses	☒
Badge of Excellence	☒

3. Regulatory Authorities

The relevant regulatory authority is Ofqual. Every attempt has been made to ensure that the provisions of this document are consistent with the requirements of the regulatory authority. Where the requirements of a regulatory authority change, or where inadvertently these procedures conflict with those of the regulatory authority, the latter shall apply. Where the requirements of the regulatory authority are amended and require changes to this document, such changes will be made as soon as practicable and Open Awards will inform centres accordingly.

4. Audience

This document is for use by the following:

- Approved centres
- Staff at approved centres that are involved in the delivery, including assessment and internal verification, of Open Awards' Ofqual-regulated qualifications and units.
- Open Awards staff.

5. Definition[s]

Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV)	Staff at Approved Centres that have been authorised by Open Awards to authorise the Recommendation for the Award of Credit (RAC) for units/qualifications within specified sector areas.
Sectors	Open Awards assigns each regulated qualifications to one of fifteen Sector Subject Area code. AIVs are approved to authorise learner achievement in one or more sector area based on their knowledge, skills and experience and the ability of their centre to deliver in these areas.

6. Responsibility of centres

The centre should ensure that all staff involved in the management of the assessment and internal quality assurance functions of **Open Awards** qualifications are fully aware of the contents of this policy. In particular it should ensure that the Centre Contact, Quality Assurance Contact, AIVs and their managers are aware of the responsibilities assumed under AIV Status.

By authorising claims for credit, the centre is providing assurances that the qualification and/or unit criteria have been met and the assessment and internal verification processes have been completed to a high standard.

7. AIV Status Policy Statement

7.1 Minimum Quality Criteria

Open Awards is committed to timely and effective learner certification. Centres with a strong track record of high quality delivery of Open Awards qualifications and units are able to benefit from AIV Status.

The following criteria must be met before AIV Status can be applied for:
- The centre has implemented robust internal quality assurance systems

- The centre has demonstrated consistently high standards of internal quality assurance practice
- The centre has received two external quality assurance visits from Open Awards
- The centre has not been subject to any high level sanctions from Open Awards
- One or more named individuals at the Centre have been recommended by an Open Awards Lead Quality Reviewer to apply to become an AIV

Open Awards reserves the right to refuse to grant AIV Status if there are concerns which could lead to Open Awards becoming non-compliant with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

7.2 Application Process

Where the minimum quality criteria have been met, the named individual will be invited to complete an AIV application form, which includes details of their skills and experience as well as an evaluation of internal quality assurance practices at their centre.

Completed applications are reviewed by the Open Awards LQR allocated to the centre and actions put in place. Upon satisfactory completion of the actions, the applicant must complete AIV training before being granted AIV status.

If the applicant does not complete actions or training to our satisfaction Open Awards reserves the right to reject applications.

7.3 AIV status

AIV status is granted according to the skills, knowledge and experience of the individual as well as the Centre's scope of approval. Each AIV Verifier can be allocated to more than one sub-sector in which they meet the necessary criteria.

Approval is normally restricted by:
- Sector subject area
- Qualification/unit level

Larger centres offering a range of qualifications and units will be more likely to require more than one AIV. More than one AIV can be allocated to each sector area.

Additional requirements may be required to become an AIV for qualifications at Level 3 or above and for any qualifications with additional regulatory requirements.

AIV status is bestowed on named individual(s) within a particular Centre and *is not transferable, either between individuals or between Centres.*

AIV approval is subject to endorsement by Open Awards quality staff who reserve the right to apply additional criteria as deemed necessary to secure Open Awards' ongoing compliance with General Conditions of Recognition.

4.3   Maintaining AIV Status

AIV status is a mark of confidence by Open Awards in the individual at one of our Approved Centres. It is based on trust and subject to continuous effective performance of verification which is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Open Awards LQR allocated to the Centre. In order to maintain AIV status, the following conditions must be met:

- The centre's quality risk rating must remain at low
- All actions raised by the LQR during the year must have been completed by the target completion date
- The AIV must be able to demonstrate progress on actions with completion dates in the future
- At least one AIV at the centre must have attended at least one standardisation event within the academic year
- All AIV Reports must be submitted for all courses in a timely manner.
- The centre must not have been guilty of maladministration and/or malpractice
- The AIV must not have been guilty of maladministration and/or malpractice.
- The AIV remains employed by the centre.

If the internal quality assurance procedures and practices do not meet the specified criteria, sanctions will be imposed which may result in AIV status being suspended for an individual AIV or across the whole centre. This is outlined in the Open Awards Sanctions Policy which can be found on our website.

Where AIV status is suspended, Centres will be advised of a deadline by which the necessary improvements must be in place. Where improvements have been implemented, Open Awards reserves the right to decide whether to remove or extend the period of AIV Status suspension. Where improvements have not been fully implemented, Open Awards will withdraw AIV Status.

7.3   Withdrawing AIV Status

The quality of AIV activity is monitored throughout the year to ensure that standards are maintained and that the AIV remains committed to improving quality at their centre. Where concerns have been identified by the LQR, actions will be placed on the centre or the AIV directly to address them within a specific timescale.

Failure to complete mandated actions to the necessary standard and within the specified timescale will result in AIV status being withdrawn.

We may withdraw AIV status immediately if we have concerns that the AIV's actions

may risk our ability to comply with [Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition](#).

We reserve the right to remove sectors or levels from the AIV if concerns are restricted to specific qualifications. Depending on the circumstances of each case, we may remove AIV status from one individual at the centre, or we may withdraw AIV status from all AIVs at the centre.

8. Record keeping and monitoring

Centres must keep all records relating to their AIV decisions for a minimum of three years.

AIV Reports must be uploaded to the Portal at the same time as your results are submitted to ensure prompt certification.

Open Awards will retain all evidence of AIV activity, including application forms, action plans, AIV Reports and attendance at our standardisation activities. Open Awards LQRs will monitor AIV performance on an ongoing basis and complete annual reviews of their activity to inform decisions about the continuation of AIV Status.

9. Monitoring and review

Open Awards will review this policy bi-annually as part of its self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in its practices, advice from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous instances of malpractice or maladministration.

In addition, this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

10. Related documents

This document is linked to the following Open Awards documents:
- Centre Recognition Agreement
- Centre Handbook
- Enquiries, Complaints and Appeals Policy and Procedures
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Sanctions Policy

11. Regulatory Requirements

The Approved Internal Verifier Policy is designed to fulfil the requirements of our regulator. In particular:

Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition

A4 Conflicts of interest
A6 Identification and management of risks
C2 Arrangements with Centres
H1 Marking the assessment
H2 Moderation where an assessment is marked by a Centre
H3 Monitoring the specified levels of attainment for a qualification
H5 Results of a qualification must be based on sufficient evidence

Originator:	Head of Quality and Standards
Date of latest review:	August 2018
Date of last approval:	September 2018
Approved by:	Open Awards Management Team
Review interval:	Bi-annual
Next review due by:	August 2020

Part B: Procedures for Authorised Internal Verifiers (AIVs)

Internal quality assurance staff at a centre that are appropriately skilled and knowledgeable with a track record of robust quality systems could become an Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV).

An AIV is considered able to make the right decisions about awards to learners and is given the responsibility to verify assessment decisions and directly claim credit certificates for learners from Open Awards.

AIV status is a mark of confidence by Open Awards in the individual and the Centre. It is based on trust and subject to continuous effective performance of verification which is monitored on an ongoing basis by the Open Awards LQR allocated to the Centre.

AIV status is bestowed on named individual(s) within a particular Centre and *is not transferable, either between individuals or between centres.*

Open Awards has defined five stages in the process for becoming and remaining an AIV.
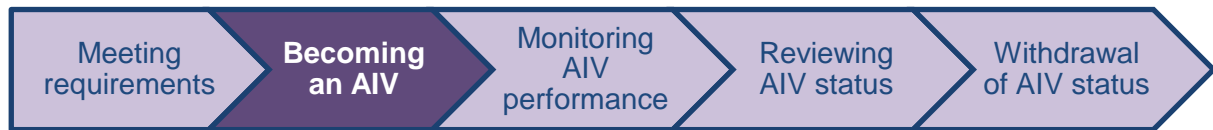
Stage 1: Meeting requirements
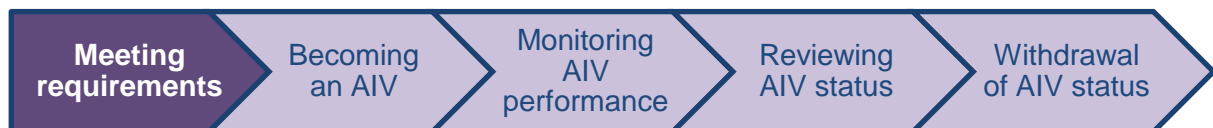
AIV status can only be recommended and confirmed by the Lead Quality Reviewer (LQR) for an existing centre that has demonstrated robust internal quality systems and whose internal quality assurers have met the minimum requirements for the role.

The following criteria must be met before AIV Status can be applied for:
- The centre has implemented robust internal quality assurance systems
- The centre has demonstrated consistently high standards of internal quality assurance practice
- The centre has received two external quality assurance visits from Open Awards
- The centre has not been subject to any high level sanctions from Open Awards
- One or more named individuals at the Centre have been recommended by an Open Awards Lead Quality Reviewer to apply to become an AIV

Open Awards reserves the right to refuse to grant AIV status if there are concerns which could lead to Open Awards becoming non-compliant with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

Stage 2: Becoming an AIV

| Meeting requirements | **Becoming an AIV** | Monitoring AIV performance | Reviewing AIV status | Withdrawal of AIV status |

Where minimum quality criteria have been met, the Open Awards Lead Quality Reviewer (LQR) allocated to work with the centre may invite a named individual to complete an AIV application form. Within the application, applicants will need to:

- Outline their previous experience of verification or moderation
- Provide details of relevant qualifications and training
- Evaluate current quality assurance practice at their centre
- Identify areas for improvement in current quality assurance practice at their centre

Completed applications must be submitted via the Open Awards Portal. Applications are reviewed by the relevant LQR who may set actions for the applicant to complete before their application can be approved.

Upon satisfactory completion of the actions, the applicant must complete AIV training before being granted AIV status.

If the applicant does not complete actions or training to our satisfaction Open Awards reserves the right to reject applications.

AIVs are approved for specific qualification level(s) and sector sectors areas depending upon their knowledge and experience, and the range of provision offered by the centre.

Over time, an AIV may request to be able to verify additional sector skills areas or at higher levels.

Authorisation of AIV status is confirmed by Open Awards via email.

Stage 3: Monitoring AIV Performance

| Meeting requirements | Becoming an AIV | **Monitoring AIV performance** | Reviewing AIV status | Withdrawal of AIV status |

Open Awards needs to be confident that an AIV is able to undertake comprehensive and robust reviews of the quality assurance practices in their own organisation. AIV performance is monitored through:

- reviews of AIV Reports
- engagement with Open Awards standardisation activities
- ongoing quality assurance visits to the centre.

AIV Reports
Initial Checks of AIV Reports

Open Awards will only certificate learners for which the AIV submits an AIV report for the relevant course run.

AIV Reports must be uploaded to the Portal at the same time as the results are uploaded for the relevant course run. AIV reports can include multiple course runs.

Failure to submit an AIV Report in a timely manner will result in late certification fees for the learners on the relevant course run(s).

Upon receipt of an AIV Report, the customer services team will perform the following initial checks:
- The correct Centre name is on form
- Course run IDs valid
- The person completing the report is an AIV
- The report is signed and dated

If the AIV Report fails these initial checks, it will be rejected and returned to the AIV for completion. If the report has been completed by a centre contact not approved as an AIV, the customer services team will advise the LQR who will investigate through an incident report.

Once the AIV Report has passed the initial checks, the customer services team will attach the AIV Report to the relevant course run(s) on Quartz.

The customer services team will complete these initial checks for all AIV Reports submitted through the Portal. Once an AIV Report has passed initial checks, we will produce certificates within 10 working days.

Quality checks of AIV reports

An LQR will review a sample of AIV Reports submitted through the portal for their allocated centres. Our approach to sampling takes a risk-based approach.

- 100% samples of all AIV reports submitted by new AIVs until the LQR is assured of the quality of the reports on an ongoing basis.
- 100% samples for all AIV reports submitted by AIVs for whom the LQR has concerns over the quality of their reports.
- 20% samples of all AIV reports submitted by AIVs for whom the LQR has no concerns.

The LQR checks the following:

- Is the AIV approved for the relevant sector(s)?
- Is the AIV approved for relevant level(s)?
- Have claims for exemptions, equivalencies and RPL been recorded?

- Are comments focused on the IV process and assessors work?
- Are the comments individualised?
- Is the AIV sample size sufficient?
- Have comments been turned into SMART actions, where appropriate?

Where concerns are raised through the review of AIV Reports, LQRs will place actions on the AIV and reserve the right to increase their sampling size to minimise the risk to Open Awards as deemed necessary.

AIV status can be withdrawn if AIV Reports are not to required standard, outline concerns over the AIV's ability to perform the role or are frequently delayed.

Engagement with Open Awards standardisation activities

All centres with AIVs must ensure that at least one of their AIVs attends at least one standardisation event per academic year. All standardisation events are listed on the Open Awards website, from where bookings can be made on an ongoing basis. The annual standardisation events calendar is uploaded ahead of each academic year.

Failure to attend standardisation events as outlined above will result in AIV status being withdrawn for all AIVs at the centre. In such cases, AIVs can only reapply for AIV status once the requirements in step one of this procedure are met.

Ongoing quality assurance visits to the centre

Centres with AIVs remain subject to quality assurance reviews undertaken by Open Awards Lead Quality Reviewers or External Quality Assurers. Findings from these reviews will be cross-referenced against the actions identified by AIVs to ensure that the AIV is aware of any compliance risks or issues.

Where compliance risks or issues have not previously been identified by the AIV, and it is reasonable to expect them to have done so, Open Awards reserves the right to remove AIV status from the relevant individual(s).

Stage 4: Reviewing AIV status

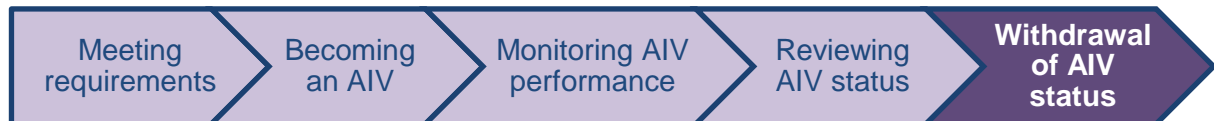| Meeting requirements | Becoming an AIV | Monitoring AIV performance | **Reviewing AIV status** | Withdrawal of AIV status |

AIV status is reviewed by the LQR allocated to the centre each academic year. In order for an AIV to retain their status, the following conditions must have been met:

- The centre's quality risk rating must remain at low
- The entre must have registered learners within the last two academic years
- All actions raised by the LQR during the year must have been completed by the target completion date
- The AIV must be able to demonstrate progress on actions with completion dates in the future.

- At least one AIV at the centre must have attended at least one standardisation event within the academic year.
- All AIV Reports must be submitted for all courses in a timely manner.
- The centre must not have been guilty of maladministration and/or malpractice.
- The AIV must not have been guilty of maladministration and/or malpractice.
- The AIV remains employed by the centre.

Stage 5: Withdrawing AIV status

Meeting requirements › Becoming an AIV › Monitoring AIV performance › Reviewing AIV status › **Withdrawal of AIV status**

AIV status is formally reviewed each academic year as outlined in stage 4.

The quality of AIV activity is monitored throughout the year to ensure that standards are maintained and that the AIV remains committed to improving quality at their centre. Where concerns have been identified by the LQR, actions will be placed on the centre or the AIV directly to address them within a specific timescale.

Failure to complete mandated actions to the necessary standard and within the specified timescale will result in AIV status being withdrawn.

We may withdraw AIV status immediately if we have concerns that the AIV's actions may risk our ability to comply with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition.

We reserve the right to remove sectors or levels from the AIV if concerns are restricted to specific qualifications.

Depending on the circumstances of each case, we may remove AIV status from one individual at the centre, or we may withdraw AIV status from all AIVs at the centre.