

Crossfields Institute

Centre Handbook for Approved Centres



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Crossfields Institute Centre Handbook for organisations who are approved to deliver Crossfields Institute qualifications

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1. Introduction

Crossfields Institute is a charity that exists to develop education inspired by holistic and integrative approaches. We promote education that recognises and serves the potential of each individual. Our specialist qualifications are designed to integrate knowledge, intellectual challenge and practice skills whilst aiming to facilitate the holistic development of learners. We also develop employer specific qualifications to support organisational methods and vision.

Crossfields Awarding is a part of Crossfields Institute and is regulated by the office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) which regulates qualifications, examination and assessments in England.

We promote holistic quality assurance that is a truly reflective, mindful process, focused on the needs of the learners and ultimately, the society they contribute to. Our aim is to have a set of processes which are embedded in everyday practice and guarantee that the quality will be experienced consistently throughout our partners, their learning provision and in all areas of our work.

We are aware that many organisations regard quality assurance as a bureaucratic process and so encourage you to think of quality assurance as mindful, reflective practice. We are endeavouring to keep the bureaucratic aspects of quality assurance to the minimum required to fulfil our needs, whilst also being able to demonstrate high standards with transparency and clarity to everyone involved in the process.

We consider ourselves part of an action research culture and aim to create an ongoing dialogue with peer organisations to share best practice.

This handbook provides essential information required to successfully administer, deliver and quality assure Crossfields Awarding qualifications.

2. Being a Crossfields Awarding approved centre

In order to ensure that the provision of Crossfields Awarding qualifications is to the highest standard, we expect that centres have rigorous policies and procedures in place at all times.

Centres are monitored using the guidelines below and where a centre wishes to propose an alternative arrangement, they must submit a written statement describing the underlying principle of their proposal.

2.1 Organisational arrangements

Centres are required to have a legal structure that provides a healthy and robust foundation for qualification delivery and quality assurance. An overview of the organisational structure must be provided as well as job specification and CVs for key members of staff.

2.2 Staffing

Centres are required to ensure that individual team members meet the requirements of the specification for the role that they undertake in the delivery, assessment and quality assurance for each qualification that they are approved to deliver.

Centres delivering regulated and self-regulated qualifications are required to have a named and appropriately qualified Internal Quality Assurer (IQA).

2.3 Learner recruitment and entry requirements

Centres are required to provide information on course entry requirements and learner recruitment explaining how these are conducted. The process must reflect equality, diversity, fairness and rigour.

3. Crossfields Awarding support

3.1 Key contacts

General enquiries should be sent to info@crossfieldsinstitute.com. This email address is monitored by our administration team.

Assessment and internal quality assurance enquiries should be sent to lead.ega@crossfieldsinstitute.com

Responsible officer is Lou Doliczny, she can be contacted through dialogue@crossfieldsinstitute.com

3.2 Crossfields Awarding policies

Centres are required to be familiar with all Crossfields Awarding policies which can be viewed and downloaded at www.crossfieldsinstitute.com/resources and are also available in the Documents section of Mercury.

4. Centre resources

Centres are required to demonstrate sufficient technical and staffing resources to support the qualification that it intends to offer throughout the lifetime of the qualification. These resources must be available to learners, fit for purpose and safe to use. This should include any specialised as well as general resources and must be available in sufficient quantity for the size of the learning groups. These resources must be monitored by the centre to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose and safe to use. Where external expertise is used, the centre must ensure that the experts are familiar with the specification and the assessment requirements of the qualification.

4.1 Staff resources

All delivery and assessment staff must have relevant subject and teaching/assessment experience and/or relevant qualification as required in the relevant qualification specification. Centres are required to have processes in place for maintaining the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for all staff whether full or part time and promote the integration of visiting and peripatetic staff so that they also have access to staff development opportunities.

The centre is required to:

- Have sufficient staff that are competent, experienced and with a track record to undertake the delivery, assessment and quality assurance of the qualification.
- Undertake robust staff induction and ongoing professional development to ensure staff can maintain their expertise and competence for the qualifications that they will deliver/assess/quality assure.
- Ensure that staff involved with a qualification delivery/assessment/quality assurance fully understand the relevant qualification specifications provided by Crossfields Awarding and will comply with its provisions.
- Ensure that assessments or quality assurance monitoring are not undertaken by any person who has a personal interest in the outcome of the assessment, for example IQA signing off own assessments, someone assessing a member of their own family or someone whose pay is unduly influenced by positive assessment results.

4.2 Physical resources

Centres are required to have adequate physical resources in place to support the delivery and assessment of the qualification which should include:

- IT facilities
- Learning resources
- Learning facilities
- Any specialist equipment that may be required in the delivery and assessment of the qualification

4.3 Systems resources

Centres must ensure that they have adequate systems in place to administer and deliver the qualifications. As a minimum, centres must have in place:

- Reliable web access
- Robust operating systems that are appropriate to the administration and delivery of qualifications that are compatible with Crossfields Awarding systems
- Comprehensive back-up systems to ensure data security and operational continuity

5. Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance guidance and arrangements

5.1 Centre support and guidance

It is strongly recommended that centre staff become familiar with the following Crossfields Awarding documents that are available to support centre staff in meeting assessment and internal quality assurance requirements:

- *CFI Assessor Toolkit*
- *CFI Qualification Specifications that are relevant to programmes delivered by the centre.*
- *CFI Quality Assurance handbook*

Touchstone events are arranged at least annually to support standardisation, consistency, and the sharing of good practice. These events encourage Centres to come together to compare practice, moderate assessment and IQA decisions and to be updated on regulations and developments. You are expected to attend at least one annual Touchstone event.

5.2 Keeping records

Centres are required to have a data protection policy in place that complies with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and provide information on how data is protected.

All relevant records relating to learner registration, progress, achievement and certification must be kept securely for three years post certification and Crossfields Awarding requires centres to keep clear and auditable records for:

- Registration and learner details
- Assessment decisions
- Learner progress and achievement
- Internal quality assurance activity including sampling plans, sampling reports and standardisation
- Certification claims

5.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Centres are required to recognise prior learning and achievement of learners and must have a policy in place that meets the approval of the External Quality Assurer (EQA) and is in accordance with the Crossfields Awarding [RPL policy](#).

5.4 Reasonable adjustments and considerations

Centres are required to familiarise themselves with the Crossfields Awarding [reasonable adjustments and special considerations policy](#) and have their own policy in place that relates to their own practice/learners and is in accordance with the Crossfields Awarding policy.

5.5 Centre obligations

Centres are required to provide their assessment and quality assurance strategy, policies and procedures and ensure:

- Access and equality of opportunity whilst preserving the integrity of the qualification
- There are no obstacles to learner achievement
- There is ongoing support to learners, including those with particular requirements
- All current legislation is met with regards to equality of opportunity

6. External Quality assurance

Centres should be familiar with the *Crossfields Awarding Quality Assurance Handbook* to ensure that arrangements for the delivery, assessment and quality assurance of the qualification being delivered are met.

6.1 Centre monitoring and External Quality Assurance

The **Annual Centre Review** will be conducted by the **External Quality Assurer** (EQA) allocated to your centre who will make contact with your nominated contact to make arrangements for the review. The EQA will want to be updated with any changes to your organisation and ensure that your policies and procedures are current and up to date. Topics likely to be covered are:

- Centre governance
- Systems and processes for assessment and quality assurance
- Programme/courses of study outlines
- Learner support
- Centre administration
- Centre Policies
- Action points arising from the Annual Centre Review

The **Annual Centre Review** is a risk-based process used to check that centres have robust quality assurance, administration and management processes in place to deliver the qualification. Should there be a need additional monitoring visits may be conducted. Your EQA will discuss requirements for additional monitoring visits with you should it be required.

Assessment and Quality Assurance sampling undertaken by the EQA may take place at the same time as the annual centre review, or at another time if it is deemed more appropriate. There are a number of factors that can determine the frequency and timing of sampling, all of which are risk-based. Your EQA will discuss the exact requirements with your nominated contact. [Link to quality assurance handbook](#)

All centres will undergo a risk assessment through the Annual Centre Review and the Assessment and Quality Assurance monitoring activities. Details of the centre's risk profile will be discussed with the centre following these monitoring activities and can be viewed on Mercury.

7. Centre policies and procedures

7.1 Registration and certification

Centres should familiarise themselves with the Crossfields Awarding [registration and certification policy](#) and

Key requirements are that centres must:

- register all new learners with 4 weeks of the qualification or programme commencing using the Mercury online system.
- register a minimum of 5 learners per cohort for each qualification.

Centres should ensure that all registrations and claims are accurate and that claims have undergone the appropriate quality assurance procedures.

Replacement certificates can be issued at a cost to the centre. Refer to [the registration/certification policy](#) for further information

Queries around registration and certification should be sent to info@crossfieldsinstitute.com

7.2 Learner handbooks

All learners must be able to easily access both the qualification specification and the centre's policies and procedures. Policies and procedures can be either in the form of a learner handbook or made available on the centre's website or VLE. The information made available should be **addressed to the learner** and should include:

Key information

- Overview of the training organisation and qualification
- Course fees and payment arrangement of the fees
- Important contact information
- Learner entry requirements
- Attendance requirements
- Teaching schedule
- Assignment schedule, assessment plan and submission deadlines
- How assessment decisions, progression and achievement will be communicated to the learner
- Learner support and guidance

Mandatory policies that must be made available to the learner

- Data protection and privacy notice
- Health and Safety
- Equality and diversity
- Safeguarding (where appropriate)
- Learner recruitment and admissions
- Registration and certification
- Initial assessment
- Assessment strategy
- Quality assurance strategy
- Reasonable adjustments and special considerations
- Recognition of prior learning
- Complaints
- Appeals
- Malpractice and maladministration

Other useful/optional information

- Learner self-assessment
- Learning agreement Referencing of learner work
- Graduation and granting the qualification
- Qualifications and job prospects
- Statement of understanding
- Migrant learner and sponsorship (if recruiting international learners)

7.3 Staff handbooks

All centres approved to deliver Crossfields Awarding qualifications are required to provide key information about the organisation, its values, mission, method and practical details relating to the qualifications as well as the key policies and procedures to all its staff.

Policies and procedures can be either in the form of a staff handbook or made available on the centre's website or VLE. The information made available should be **addressed to staff** and should include:

Key information

- Vision/mission statement
- Staff contact details
- Process for criminal records and DBS checks where required
- Team meetings that include the standardisation of the qualifications
- Resources
- Staff appraisal scheme
- Staff development

Mandatory policies that must be made available to all staff are the same as must be made available to the learner, with the addition of:

- Staff recruitment
- Staff induction
- Continuous professional development

Other useful/optional information in addition to what might be made available to the learner include:

- Organisational structure and management
- Probation
- Stress management
- Attendance and sickness procedures
- Annual leave
- Parental leave
- Pay and grading
- Confidentiality
- Flexible working
- Internal and external communications
- Alcohol, drugs and smoking
- Disciplinary and dismissal
- Whistleblowing

8. Complaints and appeals, malpractice and maladministration

8.1 Complaints and appeals

Centres may have to make decisions that affect learners personally, perhaps to do with an application for exceptional assessment arrangements, a request for a fee refund or certification. If a person thinks that a case has not been properly considered or that a decision is unfair, they have the right to complain and/or to appeal against it. In order to ensure a fair process around complaints and appeals, centres are required to have in place policies that set out an appropriate step-by-step process. Complaints and appeals policies must explain the general procedure for querying and appeals against centre decisions.

8.2 Malpractice and maladministration

Centres must have arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and will be required to have a malpractice and maladministration policy that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of Crossfields Awarding qualifications, and all learners, are fully aware of. This policy must align with that of Crossfields Awarding requirements regarding malpractice and maladministration.

8.3 Obligations

Failure to report suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration cases or have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on a centre. See Crossfields Awarding [sanctions section in the quality assurance policy](#).

The centre's compliance with malpractice and maladministration policies and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration will be reviewed by Crossfields Awarding through the EQA monitoring process.