



Skillwise Training Quality Assurance Policy

Title	Date	Who
Origin date	January 2012	Ian Simms
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1 POLICY STATEMENT

Skillwise Training is committed to ensuring a standardised approach to internal quality assurance practice, under a single quality assurance system that is well documented and systematically reviewed regularly. The internal quality assurance procedure for all provision must be open, fair and free from bias and have accurate and detailed recording of internal quality assurance decisions. An accredited lead internal quality assurer (LIQA) for each AO principal subject area will be recruited to ensure that internal quality assurance of all programmes is in line with requirements. The internal quality assurance process will monitor and maintain the quality, transparency and integrity of assessment in line with the requirements of our awarding organisations.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- a. Ensure that staff receive appropriate information regarding the internal quality assurance and assessment process
- b. Ensure the consistent and fair treatment of all staff in the application of this procedure
- c. To provide student-centred approaches to assessment that serves the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our students
- d. To assess students' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgements and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid
- e. To register individual students to the correct programme within agreed timescales
- f. To claim valid student certificates within agreed timescales
- g. To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual student registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each student.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all lecturers/trainers/assessors, the full range of qualifications delivered within the main and satellite centres, including all sub-contracted provision.

4 ROLE OF THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURER (IQA)

It is the responsibility of the IQA to ensure:

- a. all awarding organisation communication is channelled via the MIS Manager.
- b. all external quality assurance visits, confirmation sampling and quality review and development activities are organised and sanctioned by the Directors
- c. a lead internal quality assurer (LIQA) for each principal subject area is accredited by the AO via the successful completion of an online support for centre assessor's standardisation exercise

- d. each LIQA oversees effective internal quality assurance systems within each principal subject area and or curriculum area
- e. all assessment staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current internal quality assurance procedures
- f. effective internal quality assurance roles are defined, maintained and supported
- g. internal verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff
- h. standardised internal verification documentation is provided and used
- i. an annual internal verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place
- j. secure records of all internal verification activity are maintained for three years
- k. the outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice and all assessments are subject to internal verification sampling
- l. each verified sample will be appropriately structured to include tutor work from all units / programmes, processes, assessment methods, sites and teams
 - i. all the assignment briefs or assessment tools used in every unit is verified
 - ii. a sample of assessment decisions made for every unit are verified
 - iii. a sample of assessment decisions from every tutor is verified
- m. that within the sample:
 - i. the range of assessment decisions made is included
 - ii. the experience of the tutor is taken into account when setting the sample size
 - iii. the sample size is sufficient to assure the accuracy of the assessment decisions for the whole group IV
 - iv. the sampling process is planned and documented

5 ROLE OF THE TUTOR

It is the responsibility of all lecturers / trainers / tutors to:

- a. ensure that students are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- b. assess students evidence using only the awarding organisation assessment and grading criteria
- c. ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable
- d. ensure that assessment procedures will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- e. maintain an accurate and detailed audit trail of student recruitment, induction, registration with the awarding organisation, assessment decisions and certification
- f. ensure assessment of all programmes meets both the relevant national standards and the grading criteria for the qualification
- g. ensure equal and fair access to assessment for all students and that the methods used are valid (appropriate for each student and qualification) and maximise holistic assessment opportunities
- h. seek to prevent misuse of the conditions for special student requirements, (for example where students are permitted support) and that details of all students

- that are entitled to special consideration are sent to the relevant awarding organisation
- i. ensure all students enrolled onto a qualification can claim Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) as a valid method of assessment that considers whether they can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to further develop through a course of learning
 - j. ensure that once students are enrolled to the organisation, registration with the awarding organisation takes place according to the schedule set by the Exams department
 - k. ensure roll-on, roll-off short courses or programmes not following the standard academic year are registered within one month of enrolment
 - l. ensure that assessment schedules are planned, published (issued to students and relevant staff), monitored and allow for naturally occurring evidence
 - n. resources provided enable assessment to be performed accurately and appropriately, leading to assessment decisions that are valid, authentic, reliable and sufficient
 - o. ensure students are provided with assessment material and assignments that have been internally verified as fit for purpose, which enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
 - p. ensure that dates for submission of formative assessment are clearly visible and marked work is turned around within 15 working days for Access qualifications, and within 10 working days for all other qualifications. In accordance with awarding organisation requirements, late submission of students' work will not be limited or 'capped', except where required by an awarding organisation's or Higher Education Institution's assessment strategy
 - q. ensure that all unit achievement is recorded as follows:
 - i. all Pass criteria must be met for a student to achieve a Pass
 - ii. if Merit and Distinction grades are available: all Pass and Merit criteria must be met to achieve a Merit
 - iii. all Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria must be met to achieve a Distinction
 - r. ensure that during the programme, accurate records of assessment and achievement, at criterion level are tracked using e-Tracker
 - s. ensure assessor to candidate ratio is compliant with awarding organisation requirements to enable fair access to assessment
 - t. ensure work-based tutor to candidate ratio is capped at 40 candidates per full time tutor or pro-rata
 - u. ensure assessment processes minimise the opportunity for malpractice from both the student and staff; any such practice will be subject to student or staff disciplinary procedures
 - v. ensure students declare that submitted work is their own, use appropriate citations and referencing for research sources and that authenticity is checked
 - w. ensure that feedback is constructive, motivational, relates to the assessment criteria, provides clear guidelines for improvement and informs the next step in the process

- x. ensure all tutors/lecturers/personal tutors update summative assessment decisions/grade on the organisation e-Tracker on a regular basis to track summative student progress
- y. ensure all assessment decisions in (QCF) NVQ qualifications made by trainee internal quality assurers and assessors are countersigned by qualified quality assurers' and assessors' who hold the relevant vocational qualifications
- z. ensure students who wish to appeal against an internal assessment decision, i.e. if the student considers that their work has been wrongly assessed and wishes to appeal, are fully informed of the organisation appeals process
- aa. ensure assessment is accurately recorded, tracked on e-Tracker and leads to a valid certification claim and to
- bb. avoid the risk of falsified records (by alteration, substitution or making fraudulent certificate claims)
- cc. ensure that full or unit award claims have been authorised by the Lead IV before submitting to Exams team for processing
- dd. ensure all certification claims are submitted to the Exams team via e-Tracker and by the end of June, or within two weeks of the end date for all other programmes
- ee. the MIS Manager will audit all processes in line with the IQA 5 Stages, feedback on the outcomes will be documented and cascaded at the Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee
- ff. ensure that all records of student achievements, assessment tracking and internal quality assurance documents are stored securely for a minimum of three years

6 EXAMINATIONS AND CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS

6.1 These regulations are taken from the ActiveIQ General Regulations for Approved Centres updated March 2020, and have been established to ensure that the integrity and security of the examination/assessment system is maintained at all times and is not brought into disrepute

6.2 Centres must conduct examinations and assessments in accordance with these regulations and, where relevant, the AIQ publications:

- a. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- b. Instructions for conducting controlled assessments
- c. Instructions for conducting coursework
- d. Instructions for conducting examinations

7 CENTRE MANAGEMENT

The centre agrees to:

- a. deliver the qualification, as required by the awarding organisation, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (or any legislation in a relevant jurisdiction other than England which has an equivalent purpose and effect)
- b. appoint an examinations officer/quality assurance co-ordinator to act on behalf of the centre in matters relating to the administration of examinations and assessments
- c. ensure that the examinations officer receives appropriate training in order to facilitate the effective delivery of examinations and assessments within the centre
- d. provide contact details and an address to which all correspondence in connection with the administration of examinations and assessments can be directed. This must be the registered address of the centre and should be permanently staffed between 8.30 am to 3.30 pm during term time. A senior member of staff or a member of the exams office must be available until such time that all afternoon examinations have been completed, examination scripts despatched or placed in secure storage for despatch the next working day
- e. (Centres must provide awarding organisations with an official email address and landline telephone number. Personal e-mail addresses such as 'yahoo', 'hotmail' and 'gmail', and mobile telephone numbers are not acceptable. Emergency contact details must also be provided. These may be a mobile telephone number or personal e-mail)
- f. respond accurately and promptly to the National Centre Number Register annual update, confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of these regulations
- g. confirm their details or inform the awarding organisations of any changes to their contact details through the National Centre Number Register
- h. inform the National Centre Number Register Team immediately (e-mail address – ncnocr@ocr.org.uk) if any changes occur after the National Centre Number Register annual update has taken place
- i. inform the National Centre Number Register Team (e-mail address – ncnocr@ocr.org.uk) no later than 6 weeks prior to moving to a new address or changing secure storage facilities in light of a substantial new build; (A change of address or a substantial new build, resulting in revised arrangements for the centre's secure storage facilities will lead to a new centre inspection)
- j. inform the National Centre Number Register Team immediately of any other changes in their circumstances that could affect their centre status
- k. inform the awarding organisations of any members of centre staff who are either sitting examinations and assessments or teaching and preparing members of their family for examinations and assessments. Awarding organisations should also be informed where children of exams office staff are being entered for examinations and assessments; (If a student is entered for an awarding organisation's examinations at a centre where a relative is employed, the head of centre must ensure that during the examination series the student's relative does not have unaccompanied access to examination materials e.g. question papers and pre-release materials, either before the examination or after the examination, e.g. answer scripts. If the relative in question is the centre's examinations officer, then appropriate arrangements must be made to ensure

- that another person is present for all of the administrative arrangements relating to the student's examinations. For example, any application for special consideration must be authorised by a member of centre staff other than the student's relative)
- l. have in place a policy on DBS clearance which satisfies current legislative requirements
 - m. make arrangements to receive, check and store question papers and examination material safely and securely at all times and for as long as required in accordance with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations
 - n. take all reasonable steps to maintain the integrity of the examinations/assessments, including the security of all assessment materials;
 - o. co-operate with the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, and/or an awarding organisation and/or regulatory authority when subject to inspection and/or investigation, and take all reasonable steps to comply with all requests for information or documentation made by an awarding organisation or regulatory authority as soon as is practical
 - p. assist an awarding organisation in carrying out any reasonable monitoring activities
 - q. ensure that all venues used for examinations and assessments, records and secure storage facilities are open to inspection. (JCQ centre inspectors will present themselves to the centre and will identify themselves with an appropriate letter of authorisation/card.) The Inspector must be accompanied throughout his/her tour of the premises, including inspection of the centre's secure storage facility (AIQ, AQA, CCEA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC, through the JCQ Centre Inspection Service, have agreed a common set of sanctions in the event of an Inspector identifying that the centre has not complied with the published JCQ regulations.)
 - r. inform the JCQ Centre Inspection Service using the JCQ Alternative Site form of any alternative sites that will be used to conduct examinations and/or assessments
 - s. make arrangements to receive and issue material received from the awarding organisation to staff and students, and notify them of advice and instructions relevant to the examinations and assessments
 - t. submit in accordance with awarding instructions, information they may reasonably require in relation to their examinations and assessments, returning all subject specific forms by the required date
 - u. allow students access to relevant pre-release materials, on or as soon as possible after the date specified by the awarding organisation
 - v. create examination/assessment conditions, including on-screen and computer-based assessments, which ensure that the work submitted is that of the student alone using only the items/materials specified
 - w. retain a workforce of an appropriate size and competence, including sufficient managerial and other resource, to undertake the delivery of the qualification as required by an awarding organisation. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required for the assessment of specific qualifications
 - x. ensure that students have had adequate recent laboratory experience, or relevant training where required by the subject concerned

- y. ensure that local health and safety rules are in place and that the centre is adequately covered for public liability claims

8 ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The centre agrees to:

- a. ensure that it will recruit with integrity with regard to both general and vocational qualifications
- b. ensure that students will have the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s) and that the qualification(s) will meet their needs. The recruitment process must include the centre assessing each potential student and making justifiable and professional judgements about the student's potential to successfully complete the examinations/assessments and achieve the qualification(s). The centre's assessment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the student to facilitate access to examinations/assessments
- c. ensure that where a student with a learning difficulty requires an assessment of their needs, they are assessed by an appropriately qualified specialist assessor
- d. assist the awarding bodies in the discharge of their duty to make reasonable adjustments by requesting access arrangements, where required, and effectively implementing those arrangements once approved;
- e. submit any applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments ensuring that appropriate documentary evidence is held on file to substantiate such an arrangement and is open to inspection. For GCSE and GCE qualifications, a JCQ centre inspector will sample a centre's applications
- f. ensure that for GCSE and GCE qualifications, a file is presented which must contain for each application the downloaded approval for the respective arrangement(s), supporting evidence of need (where required) and a signed data protection notice. This information must be available for inspection at the venue where the student is taking the examination
- g. submit requests for modified papers by the due date
- h. recognise its duties towards disabled students as defined under the terms of the Equality Act 2010. This must include a duty to explore and provide access to suitable courses, submit applications for reasonable adjustments and make reasonable adjustments to the service the centre provides to disabled students;
- i. The arrangements must be carried out in accordance with the following JCQ publication: Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments,

9 CANDIDATES

The centre agrees to:

- a. register or enter candidates for an examination or assessment in accordance with the awarding organisations' published procedures for that qualification
- b. maintain a unique candidate identifier (UCI) or unique student number (ULN) for each student entered for an examination or assessment and to ensure that the same UCI is used consistently for the candidate over time to enable aggregation of units and qualifications
- c. enter students who are usually following general qualifications at that centre as internal students
- d. enter a candidate not in attendance at a centre who is following a general qualification as a private candidate and, where necessary, will inform the centre at which the candidate is registered of the entries made
 - i. (A private candidate is responsible for his or her own entry which must be made through an accredited centre in the United Kingdom. A student may not be entered as both an internal and a private candidate at the same centre in the same examination series)
 - ii. N.B. Awarding organisations do not accept entries directly from private candidates; they will only accept entries made through an accredited centre. Further advice should be sought from the relevant awarding organisation who may maintain a list of centres who have indicated a willingness to accommodate private candidates
- e. enter student under names that can be verified against suitable identification such as a birth certificate, passport or driver's licence. You may need to check that the name the student is using within the centre is his/her legal name rather than a 'known as' name. This will help to prevent issues at a later date when the candidate may need to verify that he/she is the person named on the certificate
- f. verify the identity of all students that they enter for examinations or assessments. The centre must be satisfied that all student identities have been checked, whether as part of the initial registration process, or in the case of private candidates through a verification process which involves photo-ID
- g. make arrangements to notify students, including any private candidates entered through the centre, of their examination entries and the dates and times of their examinations/assessments
- h. ensure that, in relation to examinations, the JCQ Mobile Phone and Warning to Candidates posters are displayed in a prominent place for all students to see prior to entering the examination room
- i. ensure that the JCQ Information for candidates (controlled assessments, coursework, on-screen tests and written examinations) are distributed to all students whether electronically or in hard copy format prior to assessments and/or examinations taking place. Students should also be made aware of the content of the JCQ Mobile Phone and Warning to Candidates posters
- j. N.B: It is permissible for each of the JCQ Information for candidates to be placed on the centre's website and for the respective link to be e-mailed to students, with an appropriately worded message. The centre should follow this up with a briefing session or a special assembly led by the relevant Director or an Assistant Principal. The briefing session would reinforce what candidates must and must

- not do when sitting written examinations and/or on-screen tests, and when producing coursework and/or controlled assessments
- k. A centre may provide student with a copy of the JCQ Information for candidates in a language other than English, Irish or Welsh
 - l. ensure that all student data where required by the awarding organisation has been supplied to the awarding organisations within the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and that students have been properly informed that this data has been transferred to the awarding organisations

10 CONTROLLED ASSESSMENTS, COURSEWORK AND PORTFOLIOS OF EVIDENCE

The centre agrees to:

- a. ensure that arrangements are in place to co-ordinate and standardise all marking of centre-assessed components and to ensure that students centre-assessed work is produced, authenticated and marked, or assessed and quality assured in accordance with the awarding organisations' instructions
- b. notify awarding organisations of a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements for GCSE and/or GCE qualifications, so that the students for each specification can be treated as a single group for the moderation of centre assessed work. This is required only if two or more member centres will be entering candidates for work that is centre assessed
- c. take reasonable steps to ensure that all associated administrative tasks are completed in an accurate and timely manner. For example, marks are correctly calculated, recorded and submitted by the published date
- d. submit centre-assessed marks and to despatch moderation samples, if required by the awarding organisation, by the published date
- d. have in place, and be available for inspection purposes, an internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions and to ensure that details of this procedure are made widely available and accessible to all candidates; (A centre may place its internal appeals procedure on the school/college website or alternatively the document may be made available to candidates upon request)
- e. have in place, and be available for inspection purposes, a policy with regard to the management of controlled assessments
- f. use only current assessment materials/tasks to assess students' knowledge and skills (in cases where the awarding organisation provides such material);
- g. store safely and securely all controlled assessments, coursework or portfolios until the deadline for an enquiry about results has passed or until any appeal, malpractice or results enquiry has been completed, whichever is later. This includes materials stored electronically

11 REGISTRATIONS AND ENTRIES

The centre agrees to:

- a. observe the awarding organisations' terms and conditions for the entry and withdrawal of students for their examinations and assessments; (The awarding bodies will not allow centres to withdraw subject entries or subject awards after the release of examination results to centres.)
- b. pay fees as instructed and at the time specified by the awarding organisations;
- c. submit any applications for transferred student arrangements in accordance with the JCQ document Guidance notes concerning Transferred Candidates.

12 DURING THE EXAMINATION/ASSESSMENT

The centre agrees to:

- a. provide suitable accommodation and facilities for all examinations and assessments, including centre-assessed work
- b. provide fully trained invigilators for examinations, including on-screen and computer-based assessments
- c. provide fully trained Oral Language Modifiers, practical assistants, readers, scribes and Sign Language Interpreters for examinations where permitted in accordance with the JCQ publication Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- d. provide fully qualified teachers to mark, and/or fully qualified assessors for the verification of centre-assessed components;
- e. have in place procedures to verify the identity of all students at the time of the examination or assessment;
- f. conduct all examinations/assessments governed by these regulations in accordance with the following JCQ publications:
 - aa. Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
 - bb. Instructions for conducting controlled assessments
 - cc. Instructions for conducting coursework
 - dd. Instructions for conducting examinations,
- g. keep records of all cases where overnight supervision is required in accordance with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations,
- h. submit declarations for very late arrival of students for examinations, in accordance with the JCQ publication Instructions for conducting examinations,
- i. submit any applications for special consideration where students meet the published criteria.

13 MALPRACTICE

The centre agrees to:

- a. notify an awarding organisation as soon as it is discovered, by completing the appropriate documentation, any established, suspected or alleged case of malpractice (which includes maladministration)
- b. Notification must be made to an awarding organisation whether involving a student (during examinations or following the authentication of controlled

- assessment, coursework or verification of other assessed qualifications) or malpractice or maladministration by a member of staff
- c. investigate any instances of suspected malpractice (which includes maladministration) in accordance with the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures, and provide such information and advice as the awarding organisation may reasonably require

14 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The centre shall:

- a. Strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the organisation on the one hand and personal, professional and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.
- b. identify, record, appropriately disclose, monitor and properly manage, any conflict of interest.
- c. Where such a conflict of interest, or loyalty, has had an Adverse Effect, the centre shall take all reasonable steps to mitigate the Adverse Effect as far as possible and correct it.
- d. take all reasonable steps to avoid any part of an Assessment of a student (including by way of Moderation / Internal Verification) being undertaken by any person who has any personal interest in the result of the Assessment.
- e. Where, having taken all such reasonable steps, and an Assessment by such a person cannot be avoided, the Centre shall make arrangements to verify and record the Assessment.

15 POST-EXAMINATION

In relation to externally assessed examinations, the centre agrees to:

- a. keep scripts secure from the time they are collected from students until they are despatched to the examiners or the awarding organisations
- b. despatch scripts without delay on the day of the examination. If scripts have to be retained overnight, they must be kept under secure conditions and despatched the next working day
- c. respect the confidentiality of scripts by not allowing them to be read or photocopied by any person prior to marking, without the permission of the awarding organisation
- d. follow the instructions issued by an individual awarding organisation relating to the use of question papers for vocational qualifications after the examination has taken place
- e. prior to the official dates and times for the release of results to students, keep result files and their contents entirely confidential to the head of centre, examinations office staff and those teaching staff who, in the opinion of the head of centre, need to be aware of the information

- f. distribute provisional statements of results to all students, either electronically or in hard copy, without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees)
- g. Centres are not permitted to withhold provisional results from students under any circumstances. Under the terms of the Data Protection Act centres are compelled to release results to students upon receipt of a Subject Access Request
- h. Alternatively, if a student makes a Subject Access Request directly to an awarding organisation in order to obtain his/her examination results, (see section 6.6, page 16) the awarding organisation is similarly compelled under the terms of the Data Protection Act to provide those results

16 ACCESS TO SCRIPTS, ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS AND APPEALS, AND LATE SUBJECT AWARDS

The centre agrees to:

- a. have in place procedures for access to scripts, enquiries about results and appeals to the awarding organisations and to ensure that details of these procedures are made widely available and accessible to all students. Students must be made aware of the arrangements for post-results services before they sit any examinations
- b. ensure that all internal students are made aware that all post-results service requests must be made through the centre
- c. (Private candidates may submit applications for access to scripts, enquiries about results and appeals directly to the relevant awarding organisation)
- d. ensure that students have provided their confirmed consent for re-marking and access to scripts services offered by the awarding organisations
- e. submit requests electronically for enquiries about results and access to scripts by the deadline(s) in accordance with the JCQ publication Post-Results Services;
- f. submit requests for appeals in accordance with the JCQ A guide to the awarding organisations' appeals processes
- g. ensure outcomes of enquiries about results and appeals are made known to students
- h. have available for inspection purposes and draw to the attention of students and their parents/carers, an internal appeals procedure to manage disputes when a student disagrees with a centre decision not to support an enquiry about results or an appeal
- i. (A centre may place its internal appeals procedure on the school/college website or alternatively the document may be made available to students upon request)
- j. submit late subject awards for unitised GCSE and GCE qualifications by the deadline(s)

16 CERTIFICATES

The centre agrees to:

- a. distribute certificates to all students without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees). Certificates must not be withheld without prior

- permission from an awarding organisation which will only be given in very exceptional circumstances. A record should be kept of the certificates that are issued;
- b. retain all unclaimed certificates under secure conditions for a minimum of 12 months from the date of issue;
 - c. destroy any unclaimed certificates after retaining them for a minimum of 12 months. They must be destroyed in a confidential manner. Centres that do not have a means of destroying certificates confidentially may return them to the respective awarding organisation. A record of certificates that have been destroyed should be retained for four years from their date of destruction. However, students should be informed that some awarding organisations do not offer a replacement certificate service. In such circumstances the awarding organisation will issue a Certifying Statement of Results;
 - d. return any certificates requested by the awarding organisations. Certificates remain the property of the awarding organisations at all times