

Possible risks for an internal quality assurer (IQA) to look out for
(in alphabetical order):

- a lack of confidence by the assessor to make correct decisions
- a lack of standardisation activities leading to one assessor giving more of an advantage to a learner than another assessor of the same subject
- a learner's lack of confidence or resistance to be assessed
- action points from external reports not being carried out by the target date
- an assessor not taking into account a learner's particular needs
- an unsuitable environment for assessment to take place
- answers to questions being obtained inappropriately by learners
- assessing written work too quickly and not noticing errors, cheating or plagiarism
- assessor expertise, knowledge and competence not being kept up to date or failing to note new staff are working towards an assessor qualification.
Unqualified staff might need their decisions countersigning. Staff should have appropriate job specifications and development plans, otherwise they won't know what is expected of them to perform their role correctly
- assessors who might be under or over assessing compared to other assessors
- assessors using leading questions to obtain the correct answers they require
- assistive technology for learners with particular needs being used wrongly or used to give too much support
- awarding organisations prescribing assessment methods which might not complement the qualification; a learner's needs or the learning environment
- changes to qualifications, standards, documents, records, policies and procedures: staff need to be kept up to date
- feedback to the learner which is unhelpful or ineffective
- high turnover of staff resulting in inconsistent support to learners
- how quickly (or how slowly) learners complete with a particular assessor compared to others
- instructions too complex or too easy for a learner's ability
- insufficient or incorrect action/assessment planning with learners
- lack of resources or time to perform the assessment role correctly
- learners creating a portfolio of evidence which is based on quantity rather than quality, i.e. submitting too much evidence which does not fully meet the requirements (or exceeds the requirements)

- learners plagiarising or copying the work of others or taking it from the internet or text books without correctly referencing it
- locations of learners and assessors which might make them inaccessible at times
- marking and grading carried out incorrectly by assessors
- misinterpreting the assessment requirements and/or criteria (by learners and assessors)
- numbers of learners allocated to assessors is too high, leading to rushed assessments
- resources and equipment: lack of accessibility, availability and safe use
- time pressures and targets put upon assessors and learners
- type of qualification or programme being assessed; problem areas or units
- types of evidence provided by learners e.g. a reliance on too many personal statements or witness testimonies which are not backed up by assessment decisions
- unreliable witness testimonies from the workplace or a lack of support to witnesses
- unsuitable assessment methods i.e. an observation when questions would suffice
- unsuitable assessment types i.e. formative being used instead of summative
- unwelcome disruptions and interruptions when assessing; such as noise or telephone calls
- use of (or lack of) appropriate holistic assessments and recognition of prior learning (RPL)
- use of (or lack of) technology and how reliable it is for assessment purposes
- whether bilingual assessments could lead to any issues, or language barriers which might impede communication
- whether evidence and records are stored electronically or are paper based, and are safe and secure in case they can be accessed by unsuitable people
- whether the learners have been registered with an awarding organisation (if applicable) as assessment decisions might not be valid otherwise