

How To Conduct Standardisation

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Key information

What is standardisation?

Standardisation refers to the practice of forming an academic consensus among staff who are assessing and internally verifying within the centre. It should not be confused with Internal verification, which refers to a member of staff quality assuring the work of another member staff member.

Why is standardisation important?

Standardisation is vital for ensuring a consistent approach to assessment and quality assurance practices within a centre. Both assessors and internal verifiers must take part in standardisation. Standardisation should also be used to support the development of assessors, internal verifiers and teaching staff in the delivery of qualifications and inform SMART target setting for staff and constructive feedback to learners.

Standardisation requirements

Centres must ensure that each assessor has access to standardisation at least twice in any academic year. RSL will need to see evidence of at least one standardisation activity having been conducted by the date identified in the Key Dates calendar (available from [Key Documents/Forms](#) on the Help and Support page of the RSL administration site. We highly recommend that you undertake a standardisation activity using the materials provided in the RSL standardisation pack for the current year (available from [Standardisation Materials](#) on the Help and Support page).

Related guides

[How to Conduct Internal Assessment](#)

[How to Provide Feedback](#)

[How to Develop and Support Assessors](#)

[How to Conduct Internal Verification](#)

[Centre Handbook](#)

Additional support

Please direct any queries about conducting standardisation to vocational@rslawards.com

How to use the RSL standardisation pack

Standardisation pack contents

The standardisation pack contains learner work from a selection of units across RSL's music and creative and performing arts qualifications, alongside assessment decisions and a commentary on the work from a senior RSL EQA, and a form to complete with details of a standardisation meeting. Due to the number of units available on our qualifications, standardisation evidence is not available for every unit. If material is not provided for a unit we recommend either using a similar unit, or looking at an example from a different level and including in your discussion what the differences are in the evidence you would expect to see at that level.

Using the RSL standardisation pack

As all staff assessing and internally verifying on the qualification must attend a minimum of one standardisation activity we highly recommend that you undertake a standardisation activity using the materials provided in the RSL standardisation pack for the current year. A form has been provided in the pack to record the details of your standardisation meeting. Prior to the standardisation meeting, all staff should individually mark and provide feedback on the learner work, using the unit specification for guidance.

Supplying evidence of the standardisation meeting

The completed standardisation form must be uploaded to the RSL administration site, under the heading Standardisation, by the date identified in the Key Dates calendar, alongside any additional evidence. See [How to supply evidence of standardisation](#) (page 7), for further details about supplying evidence from a standardisation activity.

How to conduct standardisation

How is standardisation conducted?

Standardisation is conducted through:

- Regular meetings
- Professional discussion
- Internal verification sampling
- Observation of teaching and assessment practice

How frequently should standardisation be conducted?

The frequency and type of standardisation depend on:

- How big your centre is (how many sites etc)
- How many assessors are in the centre
- How many internal verifiers the centre has

What is best practice in standardisation?

Best practice dictates that internal verification sampling activities need to inform the content of standardisation. This can be done in a number of ways:

1. Select an issue which is common to most assessors. For example, a unit where evidence is proving difficult for learners to identify. Each assessor can be asked to bring along completed examples of work. These are circulated to other assessors for their judgement. A discussion on best practice can then arise out of the group findings.
2. Concentrate on a standardisation unit (chosen for a specific period of time) and issues that have arisen from sampling activities.
3. Concentrate on particular types or sources of evidence and how these have been recorded and assessed. Share constructive criticism on any examples put forward by the assessment team.
4. Identify alternative forms of evidence which most assessors do not use or are unfamiliar with. Discuss the acceptability or otherwise of this type of evidence and agree a consensus view.
5. Explore documentation issued by the awarding organisation and how the centre meets the standards required at all levels.

How to conduct standardisation in a one person department

In order to deliver vocational qualifications, there must be a minimum of one assessor and one internal verifier. Both members of staff must attend a standardisation activity. Standardisation can be conducted remotely where the internal verifier works in another centre. You may also wish to consider contacting a local centre who run RSL qualifications and arrange wider standardisation activities within your area. A map of all delivery centres is available from the Vocational dropdown menu of the RSL administration site.

What are examples of standardisation activities?

Examples of standardisation could include:

1. Marking work set outside a meeting and providing written feedback

Each attendee at the meeting is given the same piece of learner work prior to the meeting and asked to mark and provide feedback on the learner work. The grade awarded and feedback given would then be discussed at the meeting and a consensus reached about how and why the grade was awarded. The important part is the discussion of grading and assessment criteria and the need to justify the grades awarded.

Evidence could be notes and feedback of each assessor and minutes of the meeting with the grade reached and the salient points of the discussion.

2. A standardisation meeting in which good practice is discussed

This could take the form of assessors and internal verifiers bringing an example of good practice to the meeting (e.g. an assessment brief, feedback to learners, internal verification paperwork). The attendees can then discuss and review why it would be considered to be good practice. A consistent approach to feedback can then be applied within the department.

Evidence of this could be the initially completed documents, minutes of the meeting with discussions had and an action plan evidencing how feedback will be completed moving forward.

3. Observing assessment activities and providing feedback

Assessors could observe another assessor conducting assessment with learners and provide feedback on how the activity meets the needs of the assessment criteria.

Evidence could be feedback notes from the observer, minutes of the discussion held with the observee and an action plan of how good practice could be developed in the department.

4. Discussing approaches to specific units

Assessors and internal verifiers could choose a unit to look at from the specification. Prior to the meeting, they could prepare an approach as to how they would create an assignment which allows learners to meet all assessment and grading criteria while engaging learners with the assessment. Each individual approach could be shared and form discussion for best practice in assessment.

Evidence could be the notes and ideas from each person, minutes of the discussions had and decisions reached.

How to supply evidence from a standardisation activity

RSL Standardisation form

All centres must complete the form that is included in the RSL standardisation pack, whether they have used the standardisation materials provided by RSL or have carried out an alternative standardisation activity. This should be saved in the following format: 'RSL Standardisation' followed by the current academic year, the name of the centre, and the subject specialism. For example, 'RSL Standardisation 2022–23, London College, CDM'

Uploading standardisation evidence

The completed standardisation form and any additional evidence (e.g. notes of discussions) must be uploaded to the RSL administration site, under the heading Standardisation, by the date identified in the Key Dates calendar.

Steps for uploading standardisation evidence

1. Select **Documents** from the user dropdown menu
OR
Click **View Documents** from the dashboard
2. You will be on a 'Submission System' page, where you will see any documents that have been previously uploaded
3. Click **New Submission** from the 'Options' menu
4. Select 'Standardisation' as the document type
5. Upload the files
6. Select the current academic year
7. Click **Upload Documents**
8. If your document has uploaded, you will see a 'success' page, with the option to submit more files, view this submission or view all submissions; if you do not see a 'success' page, the documents have not uploaded