QAA Access to HE Diploma

Arrangements for Remote Sampling 2020

Moderator Sampling of student work is an important event for Access to HE courses. Moderators sample the outcomes of the centre's assessment, internal moderation and standardisation processes for each diploma and unit being delivered in order to assess the extent to which the processes are being implemented in line with AVA and QAA requirements. The resulting verbal and written feedback from moderators provide an indication to the course teams as to areas of good practice and areas for development, plus any required action between the visit and the Final Awards Board.

Under the current extenuating circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic 2020, all face-to-face sampling visits have been suspended and sampling will be completed remotely. This document replaces all other previously published guidance relating to arrangements for the Moderator Sampling Visits.

The purpose of the remote sampling process 2020

The purpose of remote sampling by Access moderators is to ensure Access students have fair and equal opportunity to achieve and progress. Therefore, during sampling activities moderators will prioritise the consideration of student work and the confirmation of assessment judgements in line with AVA and QAA requirements.

The Lead Moderator appointed by the Access Validating Agency (AVA) is the key contact and will liaise with providers to ensure that the remote sampling process takes place in line with AVA and QAA requirements. The Diploma Moderators have responsibility for moderating the achievement of units and grades for each diploma/unit for which they are responsible.

Preparation for Remote Sampling:

1. A Programme Contact should be nominated to liaise with the Lead Moderator. This would usually be the Access Coordinator or Programme Leader.

2. The Lead Moderator will arrange an initial discussion (remotely) to agree the scope and strategy for the remote sample, including timeframes, sample size and the way in which moderators will access the documentation remotely. This is also an opportunity for providers to outline their contingency plans and seek guidance from the AVA where required.

3. The Lead Moderator will produce a **Remote Sampling Plan** which will outline the arrangements agreed during the initial discussion.

4. The Remote Sampling Plan will include the sampling strategy which will be agreed on a risk-based approach, reflecting the circumstances of each provider and diploma. This will take account of any new diplomas, units and assessors, conditions currently in place and any significant changes since the Desktop Review, plus provider contingency planning and implementation. The chosen sample will be as minimal as can be justified, whilst ensuring QAA requirements are met. As a minimum a sample will be requested from **every unit, every cohort and every assessor**, incorporating examples of resubmissions, late submissions and drafts, as appropriate.

5. Other documentation required will also be listed on the Remote Sampling Plan, including copies of assignment briefs, assessment feedback, trackers and IM records relating to the sample.

6. Arrangements for moderators to be able to access samples of work and other documentation will be agreed during the initial discussion (see point 2 above) and detailed in the Remote Sampling Plan:

   - Providers may upload scanned and electronic documents to the Desktop Review area of Sharepoint and guidance as to how to do this is detailed on page 5.

- Providers may have facilities in place to provide moderators with remote access to their own learning platform. Secure guest logins must be provided and permissions limited only to the areas of the platform where the required documents are available. It must also be straightforward for moderators to find and identify the requested documents.

- WeTransfer can be used to send a number of documents without the need to set up an account - https://wetransfer.com/

7. The Lead Moderator will remain in contact with the Programme Contact throughout and provide guidance and support in relation to the implementation of provider plans. **The Programme Contact should contact the Lead Moderator immediately should anything change which will impact on the remote sampling process**.

8. The Lead Moderator will also liaise with the Diploma Moderators throughout the planning process.

9. We will work as flexibly and supportively as possible with providers throughout the process. However, should providers fail to respond to the arrangements detailed in the Remote Sampling Plan, without prior notice and discussion with the Lead Moderator, a penalty fee of £260 may be incurred.

Once the planning process has been completed the **Remote Sampling Plan** will be sent by the Lead Moderator to the Programme Contact who will ensure that arrangements are made and plans disseminated to all course teams.

Remote Sampling Activity:

10. The remote sampling activity will start with a remote meeting between the Lead Moderator and the Programme Contact plus other provider representatives as appropriate and practical. This will be undertaken as a teleconference call or video conference via Skype, Teams, Zoom or other system used by the provider. This will be outlined in the Remote Sampling Plan.

11. The Lead Moderator will lead the meeting, which will include an update from the provider on the implementation of current plans and any issues arising, any previously set conditions and the proposed sampling process. The Lead Moderator will have requested the required documents in the Remote Sampling Plan and will have reviewed them prior to the meeting. This will include:
    - An up-to-date staffing list showing assessors and IMs by diploma and unit
    - Up-to-date tracking sheets showing emerging grade profiles for all students, units, diplomas and assessors
    - A list of all students enrolled on the programme showing the different groups, any who are on two-year courses and any who have been withdrawn.
    - Special circumstances, for example, students for which extenuating circumstances or mid-referral applications apply, any late submissions and representations.

    Please note that recommendations made in previous reports will not be reviewed at this time.

12. As it will not be possible to meet students face-to-face the Lead Moderator will discuss the means by which a small number of students can be contacted for a short conversation about their experience on the course. The AVA understands that this experience may now have been significantly impacted by COVID-19.

13. Once the Lead Moderator meeting has taken place and the required samples of work and supporting documentation made available, the Diploma Moderators will undertake sampling remotely. It is proposed that all diplomas are sampled concurrently and within 5 working days of the samples becoming available, however this may need to be flexible and will be agreed with the Programme Contact and moderators. The Lead Moderator will act as liaison between the moderators and the Programme Contact who should be contactable throughout the period.

14. Diploma Moderators will complete their reports and send them to the Lead Moderator within 5 working days so that they can collate the feedback and produce the Lead Moderator Report. The draft reports will be forwarded to the Programme Contact within 15 working days to check for factual accuracy. Any amendments or points of clarification to be identified by the Programme Contact within 5 working days.

15. However, should issues be identified during the sampling process which require urgent attention the Lead Moderator will contact the Programme Contact immediately to discuss a course of action.

16. Once the full sampling and reporting process is complete the Lead Moderator will arrange to provide verbal feedback to the Programme Contact, and other staff as required, using an appropriate communication method.

17. During the feedback session the Lead Moderator will highlight any areas of good practice identified as well as any areas which are likely to require a condition. If any areas require further sampling or scrutiny prior to the Final Awards Board, the Lead Moderator will outline the issue(s). The detailed arrangements for any follow-up moderation activity/additional moderation visits will be confirmed in the Lead Moderator Report.
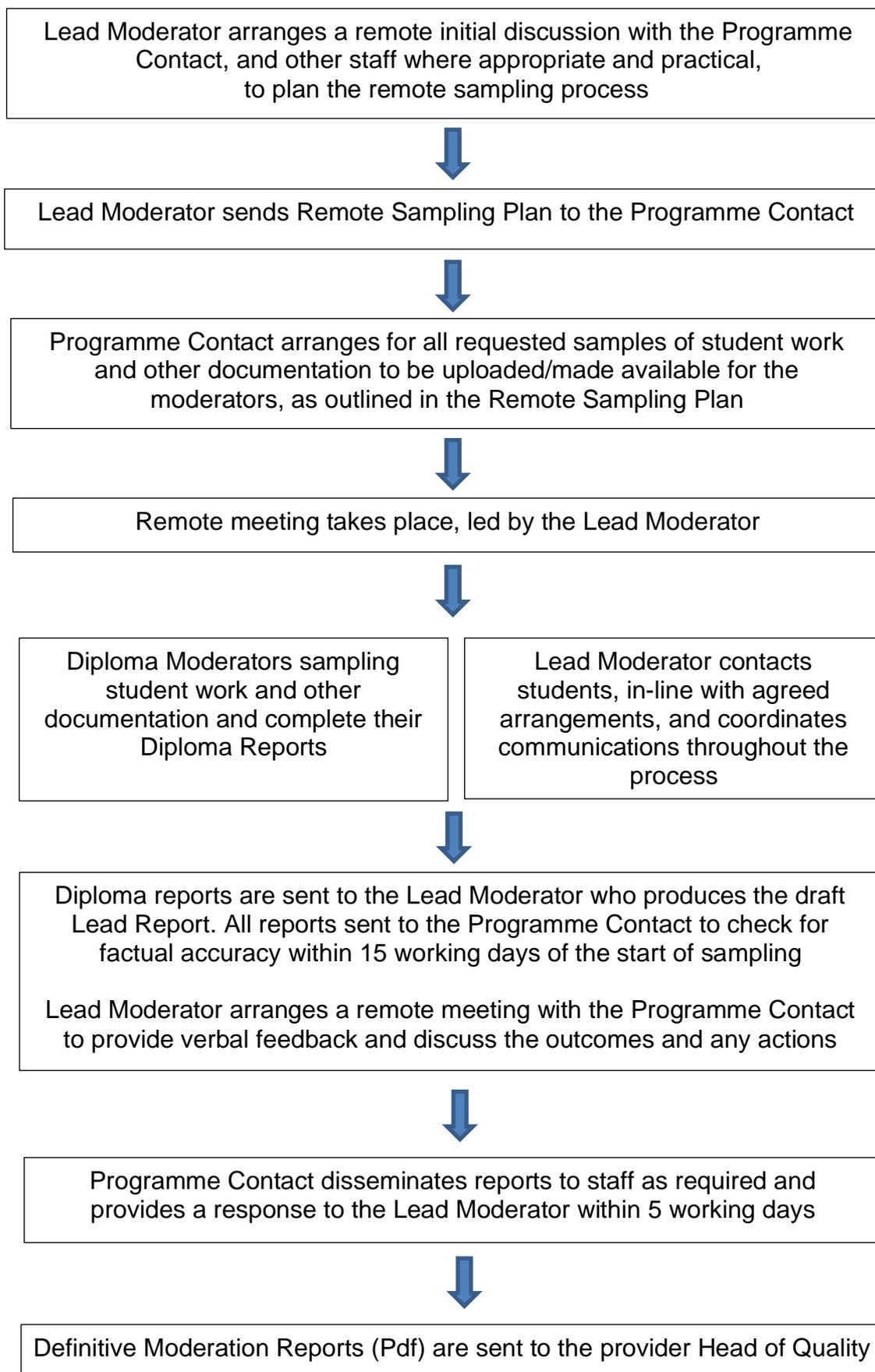
Following the Remote Sampling Activity:

18. Once the feedback meeting has taken place and the reports finalised, the final version of the reports are sent to the AVA. The AVA logs the reports and any conditions set, which are then tracked on the AVA database, with reminders sent to Lead Moderators should a condition be nearing its deadline without completion being confirmed.

19. Copies of the Lead and Diploma reports in Pdf format are sent to the provider's Head of Quality.

20. Any Conditions must be addressed within the timescale and providers are expected to be proactive in liaising with moderators to update them on progress or providing evidence of completion. The Lead Moderator will provide support as required in ensuring the process is followed in line with AVA requirements. The Lead Moderator will appreciate that, should plans and circumstances change, there may be difficulties in meeting the deadline, in which case the Programme Contact should contact the Lead Moderator to discuss it. In cases where providers do not respond adequately to Lead Moderators' requests the One Awards Head of Quality will contact the Head of Quality at the provider to discuss an action plan for the completion of the condition(s).

Please note: If any conditions with completion dates up to the date of the Final Award Board (FAB) have not been adequately addressed by the day of the FAB, the Lead Moderator may not be able to verify the achievement of the students and a Level 3 Sanction will apply*. Therefore it is essential that providers fully understand the requirements of any conditions set and ensure they are addressed, seeking guidance as and when required.

One Awards staff and moderators are committed to doing everything we can to support providers and students at this challenging time, whilst ensuring assessment standards are maintained. Hopefully this guidance is clear and helpful but, if you do have any questions about any aspect of the assessment and moderation sampling process, please contact your Lead Moderator or Jennie Lawson, Head of Quality, for clarification.

*For a full copy of the One Awards Risk Management and Sanctions Policy please go our website: Link to Publications and Policies or contact Jennie Lawson, Head of Quality.

Outline of the Remote Sampling Process and Key Activities

Lead Moderator arranges a remote initial discussion with the Programme Contact, and other staff where appropriate and practical, to plan the remote sampling process

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Lead Moderator sends Remote Sampling Plan to the Programme Contact

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Programme Contact arranges for all requested samples of student work and other documentation to be uploaded/made available for the moderators, as outlined in the Remote Sampling Plan

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Remote meeting takes place, led by the Lead Moderator

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| Diploma Moderators sampling student work and other documentation and complete their Diploma Reports | Lead Moderator contacts students, in-line with agreed arrangements, and coordinates communications throughout the process |

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Diploma reports are sent to the Lead Moderator who produces the draft Lead Report. All reports sent to the Programme Contact to check for factual accuracy within 15 working days of the start of sampling

Lead Moderator arranges a remote meeting with the Programme Contact to provide verbal feedback and discuss the outcomes and any actions

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Programme Contact disseminates reports to staff as required and provides a response to the Lead Moderator within 5 working days

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Definitive Moderation Reports (Pdf) are sent to the provider Head of Quality

Additional guidance and sources of information:

The following sources of information are available on our website and outline AVA and QAA requirements:

- **The One Awards Access to HE Provider Handbook**
  https://www.oneawards.org.uk/access-to-he/ahe-info-providers/ahe-guidance-resources/ahe-handbook/
- **The One Awards Guide to Assessment and Grading of the Access to HE Diploma**
  Click here
- **The One Awards Guide to Internal Moderation and Standardisation of the Access to HE Diploma**   Click here
- **The QAA Grading Scheme Handbook**   Click here

Guidance for providers on presenting electronic evidence for remote sampling

To ensure that the moderation process can be undertaken by One Awards moderators effectively and efficiently, all documents must be easily accessible and clearly presented. The following requirements apply:
1. Individual/guest passwords are required to access material
2. Access to Moodle or other VLE should be with viewing rights only, not editing rights
3. Documents should be clearly labelled, using One Awards conventions where appropriate, and easy to access. It should be very straightforward to find the information
4. All evidence and software should work effectively, e.g. video clips and sound recordings
5. All assignment briefs must be available for reference, along with the student work

Instructions for upload of documents to Sharepoint for remote sampling

For each diploma for which remote sampling of student work is required a folder should be uploaded to Sharepoint containing:
- the samples of student work
- assessor feedback sheets, which include the grading judgements (AP4s)
- the related assignment brief(s) (AP3s)
- the related internal moderation records (IM4s)

Labelling of folders and files should be consistent and in-line with the guidance below:
- The folders should be labelled as follows - Health Diploma Samples, Science Diploma Samples etc
- The samples should be labelled as follows - Health Promotion sample 1 or Core Science sample 2 (unit title/sample number)
- The assessor feedback sheet should be labelled as follows - AP4 Biology sample 1 or AP4 Core Science sample 2. (AP4/unit title/sample number)*
- The assignment briefs should be labelled as follows - AP3 Biology 1 (AP3/unit title/assignment number)*
  *please note that abbreviations of long unit titles are recommended but please ensure that it is still completely clear which unit is being referred to.

Additional documentation requested should be placed in a separate labelled folder.

Once the documents have been uploaded to Sharepoint please notify the Lead Moderator and they will inform the Diploma Moderators so that they can undertake the sampling exercise

NB. If for any reason moderators are not able to complete the sampling activity, it will be postponed and reconvened. In such cases a charge of £150 per diploma may be made to the provider.