

BDAC Work Based Learning

Handbook for learners

for the

Crossfields Institute Level 3

Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing



Biodynamic Agricultural College

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Charity Number: 1141825



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1. Welcome

The Biodynamic Agricultural College warmly welcomes you to the Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing. We hope you will find your time spent with us both a rewarding and a satisfying experience.

The purpose of this handbook is to inform you about the training course. It contains information about the course content, the academic requirements, the resources available and administrative procedures.

We hope you will find it to be a useful reference.

For your benefit, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with the contents. Course leaders will always provide assistance and answer any questions you might have about the training.

2. Mission of the Biodynamic Agricultural College is to:

To create a foundation for developing an independent understanding of the earth, life and human beings from a spiritual perspective.

To gain essential agricultural / horticultural skills and understand the principle and practice of biodynamic techniques by living and working on a biodynamic/organic farm or garden.

3. Organisational Structure of the Biodynamic Agricultural College

The Biodynamic Agricultural College is a registered charity (no.1141825) that exists to provide professional training to foster the biodynamic approach to farming and gardening as inspired by Rudolf Steiner.

It is governed by a board of Trustees, who have overall responsibility for the successful development and management of the Biodynamic Agricultural College.

The Biodynamic Agricultural College delegates day-to-day responsibility for the management and running of the Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing to a core group of trainers and administrative staff that it shall appoint from time to time. The Biodynamic Agricultural College (BDAC) meets regularly for the purposes of management and course delivery.

Terms of Reference of the Biodynamic Agricultural College (BDAC)

At least one member or representative from the Biodynamic Association (BDA) council must be part of the Biodynamic Agricultural College (BDAC) council.

The BDAC is responsible for the overall management of the Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing. This includes curriculum development, quality assurance and approval of new trainers and work placements.

The BDAC collaborates with trainers on the different farms and gardens registered as Work-placement in the UK and Irish Republic.

It is the responsibility of each participating Work-placement (farm/garden) to manage the admission of learners, their ongoing welfare and on-farm activities.

The core group of the BDAC consist of: Kai Lange (co-ordinator, IQA and teacher), Page Dykstra (online coordinator), Mark Moodie (book keeper, assessor and teacher), Nir Halfon (assessor and IQA) and Jenny Rosenbrock (trustee and representative from the BDA).

Legal responsibility rests with the Biodynamic Agricultural College Council.

4. Crossfields Institute and Ofqual

Crossfields Institute (CI) is an educational charity, committed to the development of vision and values based programmes and qualifications where the unique methods of each practitioner can be developed and validated. The Institute specialises in supporting holistic and integrative education practitioners to meet regulatory standards, whilst maintaining educational principles, practice, vision and values. The Ofqual regulated Crossfields Institute certification enables a high level of ownership and flexibility for centres.

Programmes are developed by the Institute's Qualifications Development Team and quality assured by the Institute's Quality Assurance Team. Crossfields Institute (CFI) ensures all its approved centres meet its quality standards annually for compliance. A key benefit, as the education provider, is that CFI maintain intellectual property rights and control over who delivers the programme, how and in what context.

For more information on Crossfields Institute and Ofqual go to www.crossfieldsinstitute.com

Crossfields Institute is committed to providing a high quality, responsive, efficient and transparent service to its centres and learners. It is constantly reviewing and updating programme content to ensure its continuing relevance and fitness for purpose for all learners. The Institute upholds the values and practices of constructive feedback, self-evaluation, peer review and ethical professional conduct in all aspects of academic work, including curriculum design and delivery.

5. Contacts

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6. History of the Biodynamic Agricultural College Work Based Learning

The beginnings of the work based learning started in the 1980s as an unregulated work based training and has grown steadily since then. It takes place primarily on well-established biodynamic holdings. The farmer or gardener on such a Work-placement carries ultimate responsibility for the welfare and education of the BD learner. The Biodynamic Agricultural College BDAC coordinates the training and supplements the practical learning at the registered Work-placement with courses, designed to inspire a deepened understanding of biodynamic agriculture. BD learners are expected to take part in self-study and tutorials and to complete a certain amount of project work. Additional seminars on key subjects are arranged by the BDAC. The keeping of a daily work diary, portfolio of evidence and the independent completion of a project is an essential component of the training. The Work Based Learning was part of the Biodynamic Association (BDA) until it moved into the BDAC in 2015.

In 2010 the Work Based Learning became accredited through Crossfields Institute and reaccredited in 2022 as Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing.

The BDAC diploma learners can turn to the BDAC work based learning (WBL) coordinator should any individual training related issues arise.

Links are maintained with similar courses in the UK and other European countries. Their experiences are helpful in the process of continual improvement.

7. History of Rudolf Steiner, the inspiration for Biodynamic Agriculture

The gifted Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) founded and developed Anthroposophy and the Biodynamic movement. Anthroposophy aims to extend the intelligibility and methodological approach of the recently developed natural sciences into the phenomena of the subtle realms of nature, as well as the realms of soul and spirit. As such it is a spiritual philosophy and path of practice that embraces a profound and multi-levelled understanding of the human being, society, the natural world and the wider cosmos.

Through the development of methodologies founded on Goethe's work, Rudolf Steiner conducted ongoing research into the spiritual world. In presenting the results of his research, Steiner sought to awaken individuals to their own spiritual experiences and life questions and to encourage attentiveness to the expressions of spirit in daily life. Steiner studied science, edited Goethe's scientific writings and cultivated an extensive range of interests. Along with his spiritual research this led him to innovate in many fields including the philosophical, educational, medical and cultural. He worked with the Theosophical Society from 1902-1911 and founded the Anthroposophical Society in 1912, making his headquarters in Dornach, Switzerland. Today the principles of anthroposophy inspire work in many fields and institutions including schools, homes for children and adults with special needs, biodynamic farms, medical practices and educational centres for the visual and performing arts. The Biodynamic movement was inspired by a sequence of eight agricultural lectures by R.Steiner in 1924.

8. Qualification Aims and Objectives

Aims of the BDAC Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing

1) The BDAC Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing enables its learners to acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding to work as a confident, independent worker within a biodynamic enterprise.

This means that they:

- Can perform all regular work independently, without control of management and on their own initiative.
- Is able to find and consult resources to find solutions to unknown situations
- Can plan, coordinate and monitor the production land activities and can organise and instruct co-workers.
- Can recognise most disturbing factors to the production that disturb the balance of the farm; report his observations to management and together sort out adequate solutions.
- Will have knowledge of anthroposophy as the foundation for biodynamic agriculture and knowledge of himself, and in dialogue with others, to act upon their inspiration.
- To take responsibility for their labour, tools machines and people they work with.
- Understands and can work with health and safety requirements.
- Possesses good communication skills and is able to improve their own learning, performance and problem solving.
- Understands and can work with key principles of biodynamics and agroecology.

2) The Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing aims to prepare its learners for the vocation of the biodynamic farmer/grower.

This means that they:

- Develop and organise themselves in such a way that the land becomes their teacher.
- Takes up and understands the vocation of the farmer/grower as one that is born out of love and commitment to heal and develop the soil, plant, animal and human being.
- Acquires the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding to develop, design, plan and implement with confidence a biodynamic/agroecology enterprise.
- prepare learners to progress to further studies in farming, growing or biodynamic/agroecology related activities
- Support learners in their existing role in the work placement.
- Prepare learners to find employment.
- Understands that the world around us has a material and a spiritual reality.

3) The Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing also aims to:

- Achieve a mutually beneficial relationship between farmer/grower and the learner. The farmer provides learning conditions for the learner and the learner contributes to the work needs of the enterprise.
- Create a foundation for developing an independent understanding of the earth, life and human beings from a spiritual perspective.
- Offer a teaching climate in which the learner can become familiar with the inner attitude and perspective required for BD farming/gardening.

9. Progression opportunities

This qualification prepares learners to:

- Work in a biodynamic/agroecology farming or growing setting: as a head grower; arable-, herds- or fruit-manager; in farm management roles.
- Work in post-harvest roles such as biodynamic or organic food processing; biodynamic or organic certification; agro-ecology food advocacy.

- Progress into higher education courses such as a Foundation Degree in Agriculture and Rural Studies; Degrees in Agricultural Technology, Agriculture and Food or Rural Business Management.

10. Entry Requirements

General guidelines for accepting applications:

- *Age*
The applicant should be at least eighteen years of age, however over the age of twenty-one is recommended.
- *Education*
As this programme is taught at a level 3, applicants should be educated to “GCSE” level or be able to demonstrate that they can study at this level. Applicants for whom English is not the first language must be able to demonstrate that they are able to meet the requirements of this qualification. Applicants may be asked to have a verbal interview and complete a written assignment as part of a process to ascertain whether the applicant’s English level will enable them to access the demands of this qualification.
- *Physically able*
The applicant should be physical able with the potential of carrying out such tasks as are demanded by the nature of the work at the particular centres.
- *Interest and motivation*
The applicant should demonstrate an active interest in agroecology, the environment, community and a wholistic world view. They should have the interest and motivation to work with the land and/or with the animals, and be able to understand what it means to learn practically.
- *Attitude*
The applicant should be able to work independently and as part of a team.
- *Work-placement*
The applicant needs to make an independent agreement with a BDAC registered Work-placement for a two year work-experience. This should be for minimum 45 weeks per year and between 35-44 hours per week. Preferably this should be a fixed term employed position.

Due to the diverse nature of the individual Work-placement that participate in the BDAC each Work-placement may stipulate variations on the general guidelines for entry requirements. For example some Work-placement will require the learner to hold a valid and current driving licence. Others Work-placement will require of learners to work and live with people with special needs. Potential learners are asked to approach individual Work-placement to find out the detailed criteria for application. Should it be that the potential learner has special needs (disability, dietary, or living needs) these are to be negotiated with the individual Work-placement in question.

9. Application process

To apply for the Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing prospective learners should choose one of the Work-placements listed on the BDAC website and make direct contact with the farm or garden of their choice. See appendices for full list of training centres.

<https://bdacollege.org.uk/work-based-training/training-centres/>

Prospective learners should apply to the centre of their choice, either in writing or by email, giving details of their interests and experience. A preliminary visit is recommended. Once the prospective learner has secured and agreement with a Work-placement an application form for the Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing should be completed and posted to the BDAC training co-ordinator together with the registration fee (£500). See the appendices for a sample of the application form.

10. Probationary Policy

Your initial appointment will be subject to a probationary period of up to three month. During that time the Work-placement along with the Biodynamic Agricultural College will review and monitor your work, performance and progress.

Termination of Appointment

If at any time your work/performance/progress/attitude or any other matter is not deemed to be satisfactory by the Work-placement, the Work-placement reserves the right to terminate your appointment. An annual review visit renews the annual agreement between the BDAC and Work-placement.

11. Review of Trainers and Work-placements

Bi-annual review visits to Work-placements have been developed to quality assure the placement and trainer, to see how the farm is developing, how it caters for learners, how learners respond and to discuss any issues of common concern. It is also an opportunity to find out if the farmer/trainer and learner is managing or needs additional support. A record is made of the visit detailing any recommendations.

12. Learner Induction

The induction process is a key element in making you feel at home with the BDAC training and in ensuring that you are in a position to operate effectively and safely. Time will be taken to introduce you to the overall structure and key procedures of the programme. The purpose of the induction process is twofold:

- To familiarise you with the key policies and operating procedures and to note your undertaking of these.
- To make sure feel supported and part of the BDAC training scheme.

13. Annual Leave

This is the responsibility of each individual Work-placements. Learner's annual leave will be determined by the policies of the Work-placements where they are appointed. Please consult with your Work-placements for details.

14. Stress Management

This is the responsibility of each individual Work-placements. The BDAC recognises that excessive stress in the workplace is detrimental to learners and the organisation. The BDAC is committed to identifying any causes of excessive stress related to the **Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing** and their learners over which it has some control, and will take appropriate steps to reduce or remove these causes.

15. Programme Review Procedures

Introduction

This policy outlines the **Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing's** strategy for reviewing and updating programme content to ensure its continuing relevance and fitness for purpose at the outset of course delivery. We uphold the values and practices of constructive feedback, self-evaluation, peer review and ethical professional conduct. This applies to all aspects of academic work, including curriculum design and delivery. All learners have the right to receive programme content that is relevant and continually revised and have access to a wide range of contemporary resources. This policy preserves the integrity and reputation of the Work-placements, the BDAC and Crossfields Institute.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy on programme review and course evaluation is to:

- Maintain and improve the standards, currency, and overall quality of all programmes and courses.
- Receive and respond to peer, expert and learner feedback on the quality of programmes and courses.
- Assure the Awarding Body and other interested parties of the high standards, currency, and overall quality and soundness of the **Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing**.

Programme review

The **Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing** will be reviewed every year.

Programme reviews will be conducted by the BDAC and the CFI External Quality Assurer or other CFI appointed person.

The BDAC and Coordinator will provide all materials and staff time required by the review panel, and will meet the financial costs of programme reviews. Programme reviews will examine programme standards and currency, the appropriateness and quality of the courses of which programmes are comprised, the appropriateness and any other programme structures, overall quality and soundness of programmes. The chair of the review panel will provide Crossfields Institute with a written programme review report.

Course evaluation

Course evaluations will be conducted by a panel appointed by the BDAC. Course evaluations will examine course standards and currency, and the overall quality and soundness of courses. The course coordinator will provide Crossfields Institute with a written course evaluation report. All courses will be internally evaluated every year.

16. Teaching schedule

Each year three weeks of seminars will be offered in three blocks, October, January and March. In addition five online teaching days will be provided September, November, February, April and May.

All mandatory and 'small' optional units will be taught during these seminars. Optional 'experience' units should be covered during the Work-placement and with the help of the local tutor/farmer/grower.

17. Assessments and Progression

During the training learners evidence will be regularly assessed. It is the responsibility of the learner to collect all the evidence of their achievements in a portfolio in the order and format required. How achievement of individual a/c is evidenced is optional, however guidance is offered. Homework requested prior to seminar should be prepared and used as evidence for the portfolio.

Progression within the two year course is determined by submission of completed unit work and observing deadlines as requested.

18. Graduation and granting of the diploma

The learner will be allowed to progress through the course if regular portfolio evidence is submitted to the assessor and action points and homework are submitted. The final [pass/fail] assessment is based on the accumulation of min 600 or max 840 notional learning hours, including all mandatory units. The learner has got an additional twelve month following the two year work placement to complete the portfolio.

19. Qualification and Employment Prospects

This qualification **prepares** learners to:

Work in a biodynamic/agroecology farming or growing setting: as a head grower; arable-, herds- or fruit-manager; in farm management roles.

Work in post-harvest roles such as biodynamic or organic food processing; biodynamic or organic certification; agroecology food advocacy.

Progress into higher education courses such as a Foundation Degree in Agriculture and Rural Studies; Degrees in Agricultural Technology, Agriculture and Food or Rural Business Management.

20. Learner Self-Assessment

At the end of each year, learners are required to write a self- assessment report as outlined in unit 13 Reflective Practice. This is an important part of the general assessment and focuses on the learner's experience of the course and understanding of their progress. In addition learners will attend a tutorial to discuss their progress. The learner should subsequently submit a report of the tutorial, summarising the points covered in the conversation and the future steps agreed.

21. Attendance

Learners are appointed by their respective Work-placement. BDAC learners are covered by the policies and procedures of their individual Work-placements.

When someone is prevented from attending work due to ill health, they are required to follow the Sickness Absence Procedure as outlined by their Work-placement. In cases of long-term illness the BDAC should be informed.

Attendance of BDAC seminars is mandatory. If seminars are missed it is the responsibility of the learner to inform themselves of the seminars content, by contacting the BDAC coordinator and try to attend the equivalent seminar in the following year. Attendance will be monitored throughout the training and used in the overall assessment at the end of the year. An attendance level below 80% is considered insufficient to meet the course requirements. The tutors will take into account extenuating circumstances provided that the learner complete and submit the form 'Extenuating Circumstances' before the end of the year. A doctor's notes should be included.

Examples of extenuating circumstances that may be considered are:

- o Long-term illness or chronic conditions
- o Severe mental or emotional problems during the training

Upon receiving the form, the tutors may wish to meet with the learner. Following the meeting, the BDAC IQA will decide if the learner can progress to the next year. In some cases certain conditions may be stipulated. These may include extra coursework or attendance. It is in the tutors' best interest to help learner's progress.

22. Submission Deadlines

It is important that learners respect the given deadlines for submission of coursework and Assessment/ Assignments. Late submission may lead to a mark: *fail* of the Assessment/Assignment. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration provided that learners complete and submit the relevant form.

23. Learner Support and Guidance

Trainers at the Work-placement are the learners first place of support for the training. For further support the BDAC coordinator will be available by phone and e-mail. The BDAC IQA (Internal Quality Assurer) will visit the Work-placements biannually. Individual tutorials will be offered during seminars.

This learners hand book should give guidance to rules and procedures. The portfolio guidance should outline when units will be taught and how to evidence assessment criteria (a/c).

Since the course is essentially practical by nature, the task of trainers is to enable learners to have a thorough-going experience of the farming/gardening year and the opportunity to learn alongside skilled practitioners. By providing instruction and hands-on experience the trainer enables the learner to grow in knowledge and confidence. Work related meetings are helpful in order to discuss the ongoing practical work, any questions that may arise; and also to review the work recently carried out.

Work diary

Learners are encouraged to keep a work diary. The diary can be an essential part of the learner's evidence portfolio. Written records can be augmented by sketches, book references and photographs. It is also helpful to record any questions that arise and bring them to the tutorials.

The Tutorial

This is a recommended regular work-related meeting between the learner(s) and the work placement trainer. It is usually formal in time structure, but can be informal in setting and content. The tutorial has an important function within the training. Here the learner has the opportunity to relate biodynamic theory to daily practice through in-depth conversation with the farmer/trainer and fellow learners. It is a space where questions can be aired regarding possible inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies between espoused and applied values, where technical questions can be addressed, methodical approaches clarified and where team and relationship issues can be discussed. It can in this way often have a pastoral element too. Having such close and ongoing contact between learner and trainer has proved invaluable for both the social and learning environment.

Weather observation

Learners are encouraged from the very beginning to engage in daily weather observation. This helps to sharpen their observational skills, put them in touch with the atmospheric changes influencing soil activity, plant growth and animal behaviour, and connect them to their own ever-changing soul activity.

Learners are encouraged to continue with these observations throughout their training, and record them (e.g. rainfall, temperature, barometric pressure, cloud formation). A weather station is helpful. It is also possible for the weather observation to be done together as part of the morning work meeting. The implications of those observations for the practical work will then become immediately apparent to the learner.

Farm/garden profile

Early in their first year the learner is expected to put together a written profile of the farm/garden where training is taking place (unit 2, a/c 2.1). Trainers will need to assist in providing some of the necessary information and data.

Projects

In their second year learners are expected to undertake a Farm improvement project (unit 14). The learner will usually need assistance from the trainer to find an appropriate subject but the range of possibilities is very wide. The aim is for the learner to meet and penetrate their boundaries of knowledge regarding one specific area of study. For this reason the subject chosen often needs to be refined and narrowed down, with the help of the trainer(s). Some written work is usually expected, but elements of a practical, research, artistic or performance nature could all be incorporated. Some support and help from the trainer is usually needed, as well as study time to carry it out.

Portfolio of Evidence

Evidence of practical activities at the Work-placement will need witness statements to cover specific Assessment criteria. This will be requested by the learner and gathered in the learner's portfolio of evidence. The evidence is collated and indexed according to the specific units. Evidence in the portfolio will be assessed by the BDAC.

24. Payment of learners fees

BDAC Work Based Learning - Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing fees cover registration, administration, training and experience at the work-placement, seminar costs, incl. accomodation and lunches, portfolio guidance, assessments, quality assurance, accreditation and individual support through annual visits at the work-placement, per e-mail, phone and individual tutorials during seminars. They need to be paid in advance or in monthly instalments in agreement with the BDAC.

25. BDAC'sLiabilities

The BDAC cannot accept responsibility, and expressly excludes liability, for:

- o Any loss or damage to your property, including damage to any motor vehicle or cycle, at work placements or during BDAC seminars, unless caused by the negligence of the BDAC or its trainers.
- o Death or any personal injury suffered by you, unless caused by the negligence of the BDAC.

Although the BDAC will try to ensure that computer equipment and software available for your use has reasonable security and anti-virus facilities and protections, you use such computer equipment and software provided by the BDAC at your own risk. The BDAC shall not be liable for loss or damage suffered by you as a result of the use of any computer equipment or software provided or made available by the BDAC, including any contamination of software or loss of files.

26. Assessment Policy

Overview

BDAC's policy on assessment is to:

- i. ensure access and equality of opportunity whilst preserving the integrity of the programme/qualification
- ii. ensure there are no obstacles to demonstrating achievement
- iii. provide on-going support to candidates, including those with particular requirements
- iv. take account of all current legislation with regards to equality of opportunity

Good Practice and Fair Assessment

In order to create and maintain good practice and fair assessment BDAC will ensure that:

A. Tutor/Assessors

- A.1. Receive an induction into BDAC assessment methodology and quality assurance procedures
- A.2. Create assessment activities that take account of the diversity of learners, making

sure that evidence can be produced in varied ways

A.3. Guarantee the use of plain language in resources, assessment tasks and feedback

A.4. Make certain that the assessment plan enables evidence to be produced that allows learners to fulfil the assessment criteria.

A.5. Keep records of all assessment activities for a minimum of 3 years

A.6. Advise learners in accordance with the qualification or programme specification, with particular reference to learning outcomes

A.7. Devise and implement their assessment strategy so as to neither advantage or disadvantage any group of learners nor make unnecessary demands of learners

B. There is review of the assessment strategy and process as an integral part of the annual centre review and periodic programme/qualification review

C. Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs):

C.1. Verify that the assessment strategy for a unit/module is appropriate, reliable and covers all assessors and programme activity

C.2. Verify that individual assessment tasks meet both the principles set out above and specific programme or qualification requirements

C.3. Ensure that the records of tutors are clear and up to date

C.4. Ensure that the feedback from tutors to learners is unambiguous and applicable to the assessment criteria

C.5. Ensure all assessment evidence is valid

C.6. Give written feedback to assessors on all aspects of the assessment process

C.7. Ensure that the IQA procedure is open, fair and free from bias

C.8. Ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of IQA decisions

C.9. Ensure that all centre assessment methods are verified as fit for purpose IQA Policy

C.10. Quality assure an appropriately selected sample of assessor work from all programmes and qualifications, sites and teams, to ensure centre qualifications/programmes conform to national standards and external quality assurance requirements

C.11. Plan an annual quality assurance schedule, linked to assessment plans

C.12. Keep records of IQA activities for a minimum of 3 years

Please see the Crossfields Institute Assessor Toolkit and Internal Quality Assurance Handbook for further information on assessment practice and the roles of staff involved in the process.

D. The Centre/Programme Manager will:

D.1. Define, maintain and support effective internal quality assurance roles

D.2. Ensure that identified staff will maintain secure records of all internal quality assurance activity

D.3. Brief and train staff on the requirements for current IQA procedures

D.4. Promote internal quality assurance as a developmental process between staff

D.5. Provide coherent, standardised IQA documentation

D.6. Use the outcome of internal quality assurance processes to improve future assessment practice

E. Learners

E.1. Receive an induction into BDAC Assessment and Portfolio Building and understand criterion referenced assessment

E.2. Are aware of the centre's Complaints and Appeals Policy

E.3. Receive an assessment plan

E.4. Are aware of any time restrictions that might affect the achievement of the qualification or completion of the programme

E.5. Receive informative feedback from all assessment activities within a realistic timescale relating to the achievement/non achievement of the assessment criteria

E.6. Receive regular feedback to accompany their individual progression on the path towards achieving the overall programme or qualification

F. Crossfields Institute

F.1. As requested, Crossfields Institute external quality assurers (EQAs) must be given access to all assessment documentation and evidence that supports the award of qualifications/programmes.

G. Internally Devised Assessment

All Crossfields Institute qualifications/programmes use centre devised assessment. Fair and non-discriminatory assessment of all learners must be demonstrated by the assessment strategy and plan, which will be checked and agreed by the EQA/Lead EQA.

At the design stage it is the responsibility of the IQA to verify that both the assessment strategy and the assessment tasks adhere to the following principles:

- i) Authenticity
- ii) Validity
- iii) Reliability and consistency
- iv) Currency
- v) Sufficiency
- vi) Fitness for purpose
- vii) Inclusiveness

H. External Quality Assurance

External quality assurance is carried out by a Crossfields Institute appointed External Quality Assurer (EQA). The EQA will scrutinise the evidence for all parts of a qualification or programme offered by the centre.

They will:

- Sample assessment and learner evidence of achievement
- Ensure that rigorous processes are in place for the assessment, tracking and recording of individual learner achievements in accordance with Crossfields Institute requirements
- Check that levels of attainment are consistent over time and with other similar qualifications
- Sign off Recommendations for Award forms.
- Complete an EQA Report for Crossfields Institute

EQA Reports are made available to the centre and form an important source of evidence for the centre's own Quality Improvement Plan.

27. IQA Policy

Internal Quality Assurance Policy Aim:

- To ensure that internal quality assurance is valid, reliable and covers all assessors and programme/qualification activity.
- To ensure that the internal quality assurance procedure is open, fair and free from bias.
- To ensure that there is an accurate recording of internal quality assurance decisions.

In order to do this, BDAC will:

- ensure centre staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for the internal quality assurance process
- ensure effective internal quality assurer (IQA) roles are defined, maintained and supported
- ensure that all centre assessment methods are verified as fit for purpose.
- ensure internal quality assurance is promoted as a developmental process
- ensure that an appropriately structured sample of assessor work from all programmes and qualifications is sampled to ensure conformity of standards.

- ensure that an annual internal quality assurance schedule is planned, followed and reviewed, linked to assessment plans.
- ensure that BDAC define, maintain, and support effective internal quality assurance roles.
- ensure that identified staff maintain secure records of all internal quality assurance activity.
- provide standardised internal quality assurance documentation
- use the outcome of internal quality assurance to enhance future assessment practice.

28. Learners Recruitment Policy

1. Introduction

The BDAC Admissions and Recruitment policy is underpinned by the commitment to a fair admissions system, whereby applicants are considered solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, and are not discriminated against as a result of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, age, social background, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation or family circumstances.

The Policy complies with relevant equality and diversity legislation affecting the admission of learners and take account of sectoral best practice.

The BDAC commits itself to operate its admissions system in a way that is transparent and justifiable with procedures that are fair, clear, explicit and consistently applied for all learners on all programmes

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall responsibility for the BDAC's admissions and recruitment activity and implementation of the policy lies with the Training Coordinators.

All BDAC departments and centres have a role and responsibility in relation to the recruitment and successful admission of learners.

The Admissions process refers to all activity involved in attracting, recruiting, selecting, admitting and enrolling learners. All staff involved in supporting the admissions process will have been adequately trained to undertake their role.

3. Promotion, Recruitment and Selection

All BDAC marketing material will be accurate, kept up to date and be available at the correct point in the recruitment cycle. The purpose of this material is to assist enquirers and applicants in their decision-making process.

Selection policies and procedures will be clear to enquirers/applicants and followed fairly, courteously, consistently and expeditiously.

4. Information for Applicants

Applicants will be expected to know the obligations placed on them if they accept an offer of a place on the programme.

The BDAC reserves the right to remove an offer of a place if:

- information provided by an applicant proves to be false ;
- the application is for a programme where there is a requirement that an individual is registered with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and the applicant's registration has ceased;
- an applicant is shown to have been involved in activity that is not compatible with being a learner on the programme for which the applicant has applied.
- significant changes to advertised programmes (between an offer being made and registration) must be conveyed to applicants as a matter of priority.

5. Complaints and Appeals

Applicants will have the right to complain about the way their application has been processed. There will be a process that allows applicants to appeal against the decisions taken by the BDAC.

Please see Appeals and Complaints Procedure for further details.

29. Complaints Policy

Introduction

This document sets out BDAC's Complaints Policy and procedure and is aimed at learners, staff, applicants, visitors and any interested parties who are engaged either directly or indirectly with BDAC's activities.

We value all our stakeholders, learners, staff and visitors, and aim to provide excellent service and training in all aspects of what we do.

Therefore, it is important, should you feel you have encountered a level of service that is below what is expected that you raise any concerns with us immediately so that we may address them and learn lessons.

Scope

This policy covers complaints learners, stakeholders, staff, or members of the public may wish to make in relation to the activities of BDAC or any of its work placement's. Complaints may be for any number of reasons and may include either academic or non- academic matters (for example if you are dissatisfied with some aspect of our service).

It is not to be used to cover appeals in relation to decisions made by BDAC.

These areas are covered by our Appeals Policy. Complaints should be submitted using the form at the end of this policy. Should a complaint be submitted which is in fact an enquiry or an appeal we will respond to inform the relevant party that the issue is being considered, where appropriate, in accordance with the approach outlined in our Customer Service Statement or our Appeals Policy.

If you are unhappy about the way an assessment was delivered and conducted and you suspect malpractice or maladministration may have occurred you should send your concern to us in accordance with the arrangements in our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Making a Complaint

As a learner, you are encouraged to raise your concern at an early stage with an appropriate member of staff at the BDAC. As a first stage, please refer to the BDAC's Complaints Policy either in the Learner Handbook or on the BDAC website.

If your tutor or Programme Leader cannot help you, ask to speak to the Head of BDAC. If this is not possible, or if you are dissatisfied with the help provided by the person concerned, please refer the matter to Crossfields Institute, once you have exhausted the centre's own complaints process.

Complaints should be made using the complaints form at the back of this policy, and on our website, but you may also call to speak to a member of the Crossfields Institute Quality and Development Department staff on 01453 808118, they are always there to assist where possible. Alternatively you can email Crossfields Institute at qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com.

In exceptional circumstances, you can make the complaint directly to Crossfields Institute if you feel there was a significant breach by the centre of our various procedures (contact details are listed at the end of this policy).

We would normally expect to receive details of the complaint within one month of the event you are complaining about and it should be addressed to the contact details outlined at the end of this policy.

Complaint Details

When you wish to make a complaint, please giving us your full name, contact details including a daytime telephone number along with:

- a full description of your complaint (including the subject matter and dates and times if known)
- any names of the people you have dealt with so far
- copies of any papers or letters to do with the complaint

Sometimes a complainant will wish to remain anonymous. However, it is always preferable to reveal your identity and contact details to us, and if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences please inform us that you do not wish for us to divulge your identity.

While we are prepared to investigate issues which are reported to us anonymously we shall always try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate investigation before taking up the matter with those to whom the complaint/allegation relates.

Complaints Process

We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 2 working days, letting you know who is investigating your complaint.

The Head of Quality will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will either investigate the matter or allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not an issue relating to the complaint has occurred.

We aim to investigate the complaint within 10 working days. If your complaint is more complex, or involves people who are not available at the time, we may need to extend this. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification (in some instances we may recommend a meeting). At the end of the investigation we shall write/email to inform you of our decision.

What if I am not happy with the reply?

If you are still unhappy with the decision taken by BDAC in reviewing the complaint you can, where relevant, take the matter through our Appeal arrangements which are outlined in our Appeals Policy. If after you have exhausted our Appeals arrangements you are still unsatisfied with the outcome, you can complain/appeal directly to Crossfields Institute.

Review arrangements

We will review this document annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements. We will also revise this policy as and when necessary in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (such as to align with any complaints process established by the regulators) and any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of complaints received.

30. Appeals Policy

Introduction

This document sets out BDAC's Appeals Policy and procedure and is aimed at learners for the WBL diploma training.

We value all our learners and aim to provide professional portfolio evidence assessment and internal quality assurance.

Therefore, it is important, should you feel you have encountered a level of assessment, quality assurance or handling of a complained that is below what is expected that you can file an appeal with us immediately so that we may address them and learn lessons.

Scope

This policy covers appeals learners may wish to make in relation to decisions made by BDAC assessors or IQA's.

Should an appeal be submitted we will respond to inform the relevant party that the issue is being considered, where appropriate.

Making an Appeal

As a learner, you are encouraged to raise your concern at an early stage with an appropriate member of staff at the BDAC.

If your tutor or assessor cannot help you, ask to speak to the BDAC WBL training coordinator, Kai Lange. If this is not possible, or if you are dissatisfied with the help provided by the person concerned, please refer the matter to Crossfields Institute (CFI), once you have exhausted the centre's own appeals process.

Appeals to CFI should be made using the appeals form on CFI website, but you may also call to speak to a member of the CFI Quality and Development Department staff on 01453 808118, they are always there to assist where possible. Alternatively you can email Crossfields Institute at qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com.

We would normally expect to receive details of the appeal within one month of the event you are complaining about and it should be addressed to the contact details outlined at the end of this policy.

Appeals Details

When you wish to make an appeal, please giving us your full name, contact details including a daytime telephone number along with:

- a full description of your appeal (including the subject matter and dates and times if known)
- any names of the people you have dealt with so far
- copies of any papers or letters to do with the appeal

Appeals Process

We will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within 10 working days, letting you know who is investigating your appeal.

The Head of Quality will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will either investigate the matter or allocate a relevant member of staff to lead the investigation and establish whether or not an issue relating to the appeal has occurred.

We aim to investigate the appeal within 10 working days. If your appeal is more complex, or involves people who are not available at the time, we may need to extend this. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification (in some instances we may recommend a meeting). At the end of the investigation we shall write/email to inform you of our decision.

What if I am not happy with the reply?

If after you have exhausted our Appeals arrangements you are still unsatisfied with the outcome, you can appeal directly to Crossfields Institute.

Review arrangements

We will review this document annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements. We will also revise this policy as and when necessary in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback (such as to align with any complaints process established by the regulators) and any trends that may emerge in the subject matter of complaints received.

31. Equal Opportunities

The BDAC work based learning recognises that it is essential to provide equal opportunities to all persons without discrimination. Each individual centre has its own equal opportunities policy that sets out its position on equal opportunities in all aspects of its activities. A copy of this policy will be made available to you. This policy provides guidance and encouragement to act fairly and prevent discrimination on the grounds of a person's gender, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, HIV status, age, disability, political or religious beliefs and unrelated criminal convictions or other specific factors which result in discrimination.

32. Race Equality

The BDAC affirms that minority ethnic individuals are entitled to the same equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities as the majority population. The BDAC strives to ensure that, whatever the heritage and origins of members of the geographical community of the BDAC; everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect. Each individual centre has its own race equality policy that sets out its position on race equality in all aspects of its activities. A copy of this policy will be made available for you.

The BDAC strives to ensure equality and equity having regard to issues of gender, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, HIV status, age, disability, political or religious beliefs and unrelated criminal convictions or other specific factors which result in discrimination.

We will work towards the elimination of racism whether overt, covert, or by omission, and we will ensure that individuals and communities have equal access to our learning programmes and facilities.

33. Disability Policy Statement

The BDAC strives to make its courses as inclusive as possible for all potential trainers. We wish to support disabled individuals to reach their full potential and to have equal opportunity for professional career development. Each individual centre has its own disability policy that sets out its position on disability in all aspects of its activities. A copy of this policy will be made available to you.

34. Conflicts of Interest

Introduction

The BDAC is concerned about conflicts of interest that may arise. It recognises that conflicts of interest, which are not effectively managed, may jeopardise the BDAC's aims and objectives.

Examples for conflict of interest

- if the BDAC assessor or IQA is personally related or in another close relationship with the learner or the work placement
- if the BDAC assessor or IQA has BDAC-independent financial or professional relationships with the learner or work placement

Conflict of interest Process

Learners, BDAC-assessors and -IQA should raise any Conflict of Interest at the time of registration or otherwise at the earliest possible time to the BDAC -assessor, -IQA and -management and if relevant to the CFI EQA. This should be done in writing to be kept as record by the BDAC IQA, with dates and a detailed description of the specific conflict of interest. Any relevant action need to be explained, argued and recorded.

35. Procedure for Reporting a Wrongdoing

As a training provider the BDAC is concerned to uphold its values and principles as an organisation in accordance with its core goals and its stated strategy for achieving those goals.

Consequently the BDAC is reliant on its trainers and learners to actively seek to maintain these values and principles at all times. This means sharing with the BDAC's trainer group any concerns you may have while carrying out your commitments to the course. Each individual Work-placement has its own procedure for reporting a wrongdoing that sets out its position on reporting of a wrongdoing in all aspects of its activities. A copy of this procedure will be made available for you.

36. Grievance Procedure

Whilst providing training services with the BDAC **Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing**, it is hoped that all trainers will be working in an environment in which they are comfortable. However, from time to time individuals may experience situations and circumstances that give rise to unhappiness or discomfort. The BDAC wishes to assist learners in resolving any such issue. To further this each individual centre has its own grievance procedure that sets out its position on grievance in all aspects of its activities. A copy of this procedure will be made available for you.

37. Dignity at work

The BDAC is committed to, and acts to ensure dignity at work and study. The BDAC will take steps to protect its trainers and learners from harassment, bullying or victimisation, whether this arises from race, sex, sexual preference, age, appearance, political or religious views or on any other grounds.

If you believe you have been treated in a way that threatens your dignity you should in the first instance try to deal with the matter informally, where necessary involving a senior trainer. Frequently all that will be needed is an explanation that behaviour is damaging or hurtful, followed by an apology from the perpetrator.

Where the matter cannot be dealt with in this informal manner, trainers or learners may make use of the individual BDAC's grievance procedures.

38. Organisation Rules

Introduction

It is the contractual duty of every trainer to observe the following rules and to behave at all times in a reasonable way towards fellow trainers, contractors, visitors, learners and their parents or guardians. A breach of your contract or of these rules will be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action including dismissal.

The Rules

BDAC property: You must take proper care when using BDAC property and you must not use BDAC property for any unauthorised purpose or for private gain.

Use of premises: You must not carry out on BDAC premises any work or activity other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of appointment.

BDAC facilities: You should not make personal use of the BDAC telephone, e-mail, internet or fax facilities without prior permission except in an emergency.

Gross misconduct: You should not commit any act of gross misconduct. Any such act will result in your dismissal without notice. Gross misconduct includes but is *not* limited to the examples set out below, offences of a similar nature and attempts to commit such offences.

Examples of gross misconduct

Indecent, violent or offensive behaviour whether committed at or outside work

Inappropriate conduct with a learner

Misuse of or deliberate damage to BDAC property

Fraud, theft or dishonesty

Being on duty whilst unfit due to the influence of drugs and/or alcohol

Bullying

Conduct (whether committed at or outside work) which is likely to damage the BDAC's reputation

Discrimination (including harassment or victimisation) on grounds of sex, marital status, race, disability, sexual orientation or religious belief

Disregarding health and safety rules/requirements and endangering yourself or others

Wilful neglect or refusal of duty

Misuse of confidential information

Other instances of misconduct: The following is a non-exhaustive list of offences which amount to misconduct falling short of gross misconduct:

Unauthorised absence from work

Lateness

Inappropriate standard of dress

Smoking on premises (except in designated smoking areas)

Time wasting

Contravention of minor safety regulations

Disruptive behaviour

39. Smoking Policy

With effect from the 1st July 2007 all of the premises where the BDAC is delivered are smoke free workplaces. In the interests of providing a pleasant working environment for all and in order to meet legislative requirements, the BDAC prohibits smoking on the premises at any time except in designated external smoking areas, and smoking will not be allowed in any enclosed workplace or vehicle being used in connection with the BDAC in the course of its duties.

The BDAC is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its trainers, learners and visitors. It recognises that it has both a moral and legal duty to ensure that trainers, learners and visitors to the BDAC have the right to work, study or visit without being exposed to second hand smoke relating to anything that can be smoked which includes tobacco, cigarettes, pipes (including water pipes such as shisha and hookah pipes), cigars and herbal cigarettes. When smoking outside in designated areas all trainers should ensure that they dispose of cigarette butts and other litter in the receptacles provided.

40. Alcohol & Drugs Policy

The BDAC is mindful of the welfare of its entire learner body is concerned that the use of alcohol and/or drugs by its learners should not impair their health and social life. Moreover, to the extent that misuse of alcohol and/or drugs may have detrimental effects on a trainer's attendance and work performance or upon a learner's ability to effectively take part in their course, the interests of the BDAC and its other trainers and learners are invoked.

The BDAC regards an individual's dependency on either alcohol or drugs as an illness. The same provisions, allowance and recommendations for treatment will be made as for other illnesses.

The BDAC has considered it appropriate to draw up an alcohol and drug policy.

For the purpose of the policy, alcohol dependence is defined as:

"The habitual drinking of intoxicating liquor by a learner, whereby the learner's ability to perform their duties is impaired or their attendance at work is interfered with, or they endanger the safety of others".

And drug dependence is defined as:

"The habitual taking of drugs by a learner other than drugs prescribed as medication, whereby the learner's ability to perform their duties is impaired, or their attendance at work is interfered with, or they endanger the safety of others".

The policy is intended to apply to all trustees, trainers and learners of the BDAC.

The BDAC will assist any learner who is dependent on alcohol or drugs to find out about and assess their problem and to direct them towards obtaining confidential counselling. Learners who suspect or know that a peer has an alcohol or drug problem may wish to encourage him/her to seek help.

41. Malpractice Policy

Introduction

This policy is aimed at all learners and work placements who are registered on BDAC diploma qualifications and who are involved in suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration. It is also for use by BDAC staff to ensure they deal with all malpractice and maladministration investigations in a consistent manner.

The policy sets out the steps all work placements, learners and other personnel must follow when reporting suspected or actual cases of malpractice/maladministration and our responsibilities in dealing with such cases. It also sets out the steps we will follow when reviewing each case.

BDAC's Responsibility

It is important that all staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications, and all learners, are fully aware of the contents of this policy and that the centre has arrangements in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.

Failure to report suspected or actual malpractice/maladministration cases, or have in place effective arrangements to prevent such cases, may lead to sanctions being imposed on a centre (see our Sanctions policy for details of the sanctions that may be imposed).

If you wish to receive guidance/advice from us on how to prevent, investigate, and deal with malpractice and maladministration then please contact us (details below).

The BDAC's compliance with this policy and how it takes reasonable steps to prevent and/or investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration will be reviewed by Crossfields Institute periodically through our ongoing centre monitoring arrangements.

Should an investigation be undertaken into your centre, the head of centre must:

- Ensure the investigation is carried out by competent investigators who have no personal involvement in the incident or interest in the outcomes
- Ensure the investigation is carried out in an effective, prompt and thorough manner and that the investigator(s) look beyond the immediate reported issues to assure that arrangements at your centre are appropriate for all qualifications
- Respond promptly and openly to all requests relating to the allegation and/or investigation
- Cooperate and ensure their staff cooperate fully with any investigation and/or request for information

Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice, which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- the assessment process;
- the integrity of a regulated qualification;
- the validity of a result or certificate;
- the reputation and credibility of BDAC; or CFI
- the wider qualifications community.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards a certain learner or groups of learners.

Definition of Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice, which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration within a centre (eg inappropriate learner records).

Examples of maladministration

The categories listed below are examples of centre and learner maladministration. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Unreasonable delays in responding to requests and/or communications from BDAC
- Withholding of information, by deliberate act or omission, from us which is required to assure BDAC's ability to deliver qualifications appropriately
- Misuse of our logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of a BDAC's relationship with Crossfields Institute and/or its recognition and approval status with Crossfields Institute
- Failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.

Examples of malpractice

The categories listed below are examples of centre and learner malpractice. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are only intended as guidance on our definition of malpractice:

- Denial of access to premises, records, information, learners and staff to any authorised Crossfields Institute representative and/or the regulatory authorities
- Failure to carry out internal assessment, moderation or internal quality assurance in accordance with our requirements
- Deliberate failure to adhere to our learner registration and certification procedures.
- Deliberate failure to continually adhere to our centre approval and/or qualification approval requirements or actions assigned to your centre
- Deliberate failure to maintain appropriate auditable records, eg certification claims and/or forgery of evidence
- Fraudulent claim for certificates
- The unauthorised use of inappropriate materials / equipment in assessment settings (eg mobile phones)
- Intentional withholding of information from us which is critical to maintaining the rigour of quality assurance and standards of qualifications
- Deliberate misuse of CFI logo and trademarks or misrepresentation of a centre's relationship with Crossfields Institute and/or its recognition and approval status with Crossfields Institute
- Collusion or permitting collusion in exams/assessments
- Learners still working towards qualification after certification claims have been made
- Persistent instances of maladministration within the centre
- Deliberate contravention by a centre and/or its learners of the assessment arrangements we specify for our qualification
- A loss, theft of, or a breach of confidentiality in, any assessment materials
- Plagiarism by learners/staff
- Copying from another candidate (including using ICT to do so).
- Personation -assuming the identity of another candidate or having someone assume your identity during an assessment.
- Unauthorised amendment, copying or distributing of exam/assessment papers/materials
- Inappropriate assistance to learners by centre staff (eg unfairly helping them to pass a unit or qualification)
- Deliberate submission of false information to gain a qualification or unit
- Deliberate failure to adhere to, or to circumnavigate, the requirements of our Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy.
- False ID used at the registration stage
- Creation of false records
- Impersonation of a learner for assessment

- Cheating
- Cash for certificates (ie the selling of certificates for cash)
- Selling papers/assessment details
- Extortion
- Fraud
- Threatening or abusive behaviour that threatens the safety of staff and/or is intended to put undue influence on the outcomes of an assessment/award.

Making an Allegation of Malpractice or Maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately notify Crossfields Institute. In doing so they should put them in writing/ email and enclose appropriate supporting evidence (centres can submit details of potential/actual cases of malpractice via the Malpractice form in our Mercury online system). Letters should be sent or emailed to the Director of Operations or Lou.Doliczny@crossfieldsinstitute.com.

All allegations must include (where possible):

- centre's name, address and number
- learner's name and Crossfields Institute registration number
- work placement/BDAC/Crossfields Institute personnel's details (name, job role) if they are involved in the case
- details of the Crossfields Institute qualification affected or nature of the service affected
- nature of the suspected or actual malpractice and associated dates
- details and outcome of any initial investigation carried out by the centre or anybody else involved in the case, including any mitigating circumstances

The person making the allegation must also declare any personal interest they may have in the matter to us at the outset.

If a centre has conducted an initial investigation prior to formally notifying CFI, it should ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. We would expect that such investigations would normally involve the Head of Centre (if there is an investigation into allegations of malpractice or irregularities against the Head of the Centre or the management of the centre then such investigations should be carried out by the Chair of the Governing Body of the centre or their nominee).

However, it is important to note that in all instances the centre must immediately notify CFI if they suspect malpractice or maladministration has occurred as we have a responsibility to the regulatory authorities to ensure that all investigations are carried out rigorously and effectively.

Confidentiality and whistle blowing

Sometimes a person making an allegation of malpractice or maladministration may wish to remain anonymous, although it is always preferable to reveal your identity and provide us with your contact details. However, if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences that may occur should your identity be revealed to another party then please inform us that you do not wish us to divulge your identity and we will work to ensure your details are not disclosed.

We will always aim to keep a whistleblower's identity confidential where asked to do so, although we cannot guarantee this and may need to disclose your identity should the complaint lead to issues that need to be taken forward by other parties. For example:

- the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies
- the courts (in connection with any court proceedings)
- other third parties such as the relevant regulatory authority (Ofqual in England).

The investigator(s) assigned to review the allegation will not reveal the whistleblower's identity unless the whistleblower agrees or it is absolutely necessary for the purposes of the investigation (as noted above). The investigator(s) will advise the whistleblower if it becomes necessary to reveal their identity against their wishes.

A whistleblower should also recognise that he or she may be identifiable by others due to the nature or circumstances of the disclosure (the party which the allegation is made against may manage to identify possible sources of disclosure without such details being disclosed to them).

Once a concern has been raised we have a duty to pursue the matter. It will not be possible to prevent the matter being investigated by subsequently withdrawing their concern as we are obliged by the regulators to follow-up and investigate allegations of malpractice or maladministration.

In all cases, the Director of Operations will keep you updated as to how we have progressed the allegation and the whistle-blower will have the opportunity to raise any concerns about the way the investigation is being conducted with the investigator(s). However, we won't disclose details of all of the investigation activities and it may not be appropriate for us to disclose full details of the outcomes of the investigation due to confidentiality or legal reasons. While we cannot guarantee that we will disclose all matters in the way that you might wish, we will strive to handle the matter fairly and properly.

Please see our Whistleblowing Policy for further information in relation to our whistleblowing arrangements.

Responsibility for the Investigation

In accordance with regulatory requirements all suspected cases of maladministration and malpractice will be examined promptly by BDAC and Crossfields Institute to establish if malpractice or maladministration has occurred and we will take all reasonable steps to prevent any adverse effect from occurring as defined by the regulator Ofqual.

All suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration will be passed to our Director of Operations and we will acknowledge receipt, as appropriate, to external parties within 2 working days.

Our Director of Operations will be responsible for ensuring the investigation is carried out in a prompt and effective manner and in accordance with the procedures in this policy and will allocate a relevant member of staff (eg a member of our Quality Team) to lead the investigation and establish whether or not the malpractice or maladministration has occurred, and review any supporting evidence received or gathered by BDAC and Crossfields Institute.

At all times we will ensure that BDAC and Crossfields Institute personnel assigned to the investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.

Notifying Relevant Parties

In all cases we will tell the person who made the allegation who will be handling the matter, how they can contact them, what further assistance we may need from them and agree a timetable for feedback. (See section "Confidentiality and Whistleblowing" for possible limitations in relation to the feedback and the section below – "Investigation timelines and summary process" – for details of our anticipated response times).

In cases of suspected or actual malpractice or maladministration at a centre, the Director of Operations will notify the Head of your BDAC involved in the allegation,

except when the Head of BDAC or management is under investigation; in which case communication may be with the Chair of Governors, Local Authority officials or other appropriate authorities) that we will be investigating the matter.

In the case of learner malpractice, we may ask BDAC to investigate the issue in liaison with CFI own personnel. CFI will only ask the BDAC to investigate the matter where we have confidence that the investigation will be prompt, thorough, independent and effective.

In all cases we may withhold details of the person making the allegation if to do so would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

CFI may engage and communicate directly with members of BDAC staff who have been accused of malpractice if appropriate (for example if the staff member is no longer employed by the BDAC) or communicate directly with a learner or their representative (if there is a contradiction in the evidence provided during an investigation or where the BDAC is suspected of being involved in malpractice).

CFI Director of Operations will inform the appropriate regulatory authorities if CFI believe there has been an incident of malpractice or maladministration, which could either invalidate the award of a qualification, or if it could affect another awarding organisation. In particular CFI will keep them informed of progress in large and/or complex cases.

Where the allegation may affect another awarding organisation and their provision CFI will also inform them in accordance with the regulatory requirements and obligations imposed on CFI by the regulator Ofqual and/or seek to undertake a joint investigation with them if appropriate. If CFI do not know the details of organisations that might be affected CFI will ask Ofqual to help us identify relevant parties that should be informed.

If fraud is suspected or identified CFI may also notify the police.

Investigation timelines and summary process

Where possible, we aim to complete the investigation within 10 working days of receipt of the allegation. Please note that in some cases the investigation may take longer; for example, if a centre visit is required. In such instances, we will advise all parties concerned of the likely revised timescale.

The fundamental principle of all investigations is to conduct them in a fair, reasonable and legal manner, ensuring that all relevant evidence is considered without bias. In doing so investigations will be underpinned by terms of reference and based around the following broad objectives:

- To establish the facts relating to allegations/complaints in order to determine whether any irregularities have occurred.
- To identify the cause of the irregularities and those involved.
- To establish the scale of the irregularities and whether other qualifications may be affected.
- To evaluate any action already taken by the centre.
- To determine whether remedial action is required to reduce the risk to current registered learners and to preserve the integrity of the qualification.
- To ascertain whether any action is required in respect of certificates already issued.
- To obtain clear evidence to support any sanctions to be applied to the centre, and/or to members of staff, in accordance with our Sanctions Policy.
- To identify any adverse patterns or trends.

In carrying out any investigation BDAC and Crossfields Institute will be sensitive to the effect on, and reputation of, a centre and/or those members of staff who may be the subject to investigation. We will strive to ensure that the investigation is carried out as confidentially as possible and the organisation/person who is the subject of the allegation will have the opportunity to raise any issues about both the proposed approach and the conduct of the investigation with the investigator(s) during the investigation.

The investigation may involve a request for further information from relevant parties and/or interviews with personnel involved in the investigation. In any interviews carried out with the person(s) accused of malpractice/maladministration they can choose to be accompanied by a work colleague, trade union representative, or other party.

In addition we will:

- Ensure all material collected as part of an investigation is kept secure. All records and original documentation concerning a completed investigation that ultimately leads to sanctions against a centre will be retained for a period of no less than five years. If an investigation leads to invalidation of certificates, or criminal or civil prosecution, all records and original documentation relating to the case will be retained until the case and any appeals have been heard and for five years thereafter.
- Expect all parties, who are either directly or indirectly involved in the investigation, to fully co-operate with us.

Either at notification of a suspected or actual case of malpractice or maladministration and/or at any time during the investigation, we reserve the right to impose sanctions on the centre in accordance with our Sanctions Policy in order to protect the interests of learners and the integrity of the qualifications. The Director of Operations will be responsible for regularly reviewing the application and maintenance of sanctions to ensure they continue to be appropriate and proportionate to the incident(s) and risk of future incidents occurring.

CFI also reserve the right to withhold a learner's, and/or cohorts, results for all the Crossfields Institute programmes/qualifications or units they are studying at the time of the investigation.

If appropriate, CFI may find that the complexity of a case or a lack of cooperation from BDAC means that we are unable to complete an investigation. In such circumstances we will consult the relevant regulatory authority in order to determine how best to progress the matter.

Where a member of BDAC or Crossfields Institute's staff is under investigation we may suspend them or move them to other duties until the investigation is complete.

Throughout the investigation our Director of Operations CFI be responsible for overseeing the work of the investigation team to ensure that due process is being followed, appropriate evidence has been gathered and reviewed and for liaising with and keeping informed relevant external parties.

Investigation Report

If the Director of Operations believes there is sufficient evidence to implicate an individual/centre in malpractice/ and/or maladministration s/he will:

- Inform them (preferably in writing) of the allegation
- Provide them with details of the evidence we found to support our judgment

- Inform them of the possible consequences
- Inform them that information in relation to the allegation and investigation may be, or has been, shared with the regulators and other relevant bodies (eg police)
- Provide them with an opportunity to consider and respond to the allegation and our findings
- Inform them of our Appeals policy should they wish to appeal against our decision

After an investigation, the Director of Operations will produce a draft report for the parties concerned to check the factual accuracy. Any subsequent amendments will be agreed between the parties concerned and ourselves. The report will cover the following areas:

- Identify where the breach, if any, occurred.
- Confirm the facts of the case (and any mitigating factors if relevant)
- Identify who is responsible for the breach (if any)
- Contain supporting evidence where appropriate (eg written statements)
- Confirm an appropriate level of remedial action to be applied.

CFI will make the final report available to the regulatory authorities and other external agencies as required.

If it was an independent/third party that notified us of the suspected or actual case of malpractice, CFI may also inform them of the outcome – normally within 10 working days of making our decision - in doing so CFI may withhold some details if to disclose such information would breach a duty of confidentiality or any other legal duty.

If it is an internal investigation against a member of our staff the Director of Operations will agree the report with the relevant members of SMT and appropriate internal disciplinary procedures will be implemented. In some circumstances the police or other external authorities may need to be alerted.

Investigation Outcomes

If the investigation confirms that malpractice or maladministration has taken place we will consider what action to take to:

- Minimise the risk to the integrity of certification now and in the future.
- Maintain public confidence in the delivery and awarding of qualifications.
- Discourage others from carrying out similar instances of malpractice or maladministration.
- Ensure there has been no gain from compromising our standards.

The action we take may include (this list is indicative only and is not meant to form an exhaustive list):

- Impose actions in relation to the centre with specified deadlines in order to address the instance of malpractice/maladministration and to prevent it from reoccurring such as:
 - o Undertaking additional/increased visits to a centre to provide a greater level of support and/or monitoring depending on their needs and performance.
 - o Requiring BDAC staff to undergo additional training or scrutiny by the centre if there are concerns about their ability to undertake their role in the delivery of Crossfields Institute qualifications effectively.
 - o Not permitting BDAC staff to be involved in the delivery or assessment of Crossfields Institute qualifications
- Impose sanctions on BDAC – if so these will be communicated to you in accordance with our Sanctions Policy along with the rationale for the sanction(s) selected.
- Take action against a learner in relation to proven instances of maladministration or malpractice which may include some or all of the following (which may be communicated to the learner by Crossfields Institute and/or BDAC):
 - o Issuing a written warning that if the offence is repeated further action may be taken
 - o Loss of all marks/credits for there lated work/unit
 - o Disqualification from the unit(s)/qualification
 - o Placing a ban from taking any further qualifications with us (perhaps for a set period of time)

- In cases where certificates are deemed to be invalid, inform the centre concerned and the regulatory authorities why they are invalid and any action to be taken for reassessment and/or for the withdrawal of the certificates. CFI will also ask BDAC to let the affected learners know the action CFI are taking and that their original certificates are invalid and ask BDAC – where possible – to return the invalid certificates to Crossfields Institute. CFI will also amend our database so that duplicates of the invalid certificates cannot be issued and expect BDAC to amend their records to show that the original awards are invalid.
- Amend aspects of our qualification development, delivery and awarding arrangements and if required assessment and/or monitoring arrangements and associated guidance to prevent the issue from reoccurring.
- Inform relevant third parties (eg funding bodies) of our findings in case they need to take relevant action in relation to the centre.
- Carry out additional, related investigations if we suspect the issue may be more widespread at the centre and/or at other centres.

In proven cases of malpractice and/or maladministration by BDAC Crossfields Institute reserves the right to charge the centre for reissuing of certificates and/or additional quality assurance/centre monitoring visits. The fees for which will be the current Crossfields Institute prices for such activities at the time of the investigation.

In addition, to the above the Director of Operations will record any lessons learnt from the investigation and pass these onto relevant internal colleagues to help Crossfields Institute prevent the same instance of maladministration or malpractice from reoccurring.

If the relevant party(ies) wishes to appeal against our decision to impose sanctions, please refer to our Appeals Policy.

Review Arrangements

The CFI Director of Operations will review this policy annually as part of our annual self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as and when necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies, changes in legislation, or trends identified from previous allegations.

In addition, this policy may be updated in light of operational feedback to ensure our arrangements for dealing with suspected cases of malpractice and maladministration remain effective.

If you would like to feedback any views please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

Contact us

If you've any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact our Director of Operations, Lou.-Doliczny@crossfieldsinstitute.com or telephone 01453 808118.

42. Health and Safety

Centres participating in the BDAC are located within the grounds of the centres detailed in the appendices. Each centre has its own Health and Safety policy. As such the BDAC and all its trainers and learners are subject to the general health and safety policy of the BDAC in so far as it affects the premises and working conditions of the BDAC. In so far as block course and seminars are concerned the Biodynamic Agricultural College Health and Safety Policy will apply. The BDAC has its own site-specific policies and procedures that refer to its own particular tasks and methods of operation.

Breach of Health and Safety Policy

In certain circumstances, breaches of these Health and Safety at Work Policy may constitute gross misconduct and may result in instant dismissal and possibly civil or criminal proceedings. In any event a failure to comply with these Health and Safety Policy will render a trainer liable to disciplinary action.

A copy of the centre's Health and Safety policy will be made available for you.

43. Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy

Definition of reasonable adjustments

A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. They are made to an assessment for a qualification to enable a disabled learner to demonstrate his or her knowledge, skills and understanding of the levels of attainment required by the specification for that qualification.

Reasonable adjustments must not affect the integrity of what needs to be assessed, but may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements, for example allowing a learner extra time to complete the assessment activity
- adapting assessment materials, such as providing materials in large format, Braille or audio format
- providing assistance during assessment, such as a sign language interpreter or a reader
- re-organising the assessment room, such as removing visual stimuli for an autistic learner, or using a different room that is more accessible
- changing the assessment method, for example from a written assessment to a spoken assessment
- using assistive technology, such as screen reading or voice activated software
- providing different colour backgrounds to screens for onscreen assessments or asking for permission for copying to different coloured paper for paper-based assessments
- providing and allowing different coloured transparencies with which to view assessment papers

Reasonable adjustments are approved or set in place before the assessment activity takes place; they constitute an arrangement to give the learner access to the programme or qualification. The use of a reasonable adjustment will not be taken into consideration during the assessment of a learner's work.

Crossfields Institute and BDAC are only required by law to do what is 'reasonable' in terms of giving access. What is reasonable will depend on the individual circumstances, cost implications and the practicality and effectiveness of the adjustment. Other factors, such as the need to maintain competence standards and health and safety, will also be taken into consideration.

How to request a Reasonable Adjustment

There are two routes through which a learner may be granted reasonable adjustment, these are:

1. Reasonable adjustments permitted at the discretion of BDAC
2. Reasonable adjustments permitted by Crossfields Institute

Please consult section 1 and Appendix 1 of the Crossfields Institute Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy to check if approval needs to be gained from Crossfields Institute <http://www.crossfieldsinstitute.com/resources/>. Please note: **Most reasonable adjustments are made by the BDAC, and do not need approval from Crossfields Institute.** They must be logged, and information about reasonable adjustments made must be provided to the EQA, and to the Head of Quality on request.

If BDAC has any queries regarding the appropriateness of the reasonable adjustment they should contact the Crossfields Institute Head of Quality. Requests for reasonable adjustments should be submitted no later than 10 working days before the assessment.

If the request needs to be made to Crossfields Institute

- This Reasonable Adjustment Application Form (see Appendix) should be used by BDAC to apply for reasonable adjustment on behalf of the individual learner.
- The form should be submitted as soon as possible after registration and not later than ten working days before assessment is due to take place.
- Crossfields Institute will respond to the Reasonable Adjustment request within 3 working days of receipt.

This application should be submitted to:

Head of Quality
Crossfields Institute
Stroud House
Russell Street
Stroud
GLOS
GL5 3AN

Or by email to: qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com

A copy of the form, with any accompanying evidence, must be retained for at least 3 years from the end of the year to which it relates

44. Data Protection Policy Statement and Procedure

The Biodynamic Agricultural College is required to hold, maintain and process certain personal data about participants for the purposes of satisfying its operational and legal obligations.

Type of data collected may include:

- Names, addresses, e-mails and phone numbers
- Personal features (on photographs and pictures)
- Learner and staff attendance records
- Qualifications and experience
- Dates of birth
- CVs of staff and key centre staff
- The Biodynamic Agricultural College retains the registration and certification details of all learners indefinitely to provide evidence of the learner's achievements as and when the learner or nominated third party (such as employer or educational establishment) requires them. This includes the learner's name, date of birth, name of work placement and Learners portfolio records. This information is stored in The Biodynamic Agricultural College 'Dropbox' files. This information will never be shared with a third party without the express consent of the learner.

Subject Consent

The need to process data for normal purposes must be communicated to all data subjects. In some cases, if the data is sensitive, for example information about health, race or gender, express consent to process the data must be obtained.

Principles of Data Use

The Biodynamic Agricultural College fully endorses and adheres to the eight principles of the Data Protection Act. These principles specify the legal conditions that must be satisfied in relation to obtaining, handling, processing, transportation and storage of personal data. Employees and any others who carry out these operations on behalf of The Biodynamic Agricultural College must adhere to these principles. These eight principles specify that information must:

- Be fairly and lawfully processed and that the information shall not be processed or used unless certain conditions are met.
- Be processed for limited purposes and in a specified manner compatible with that purpose.
- Be adequate, relevant and not excessive for those purposes; and only to the extent that it is needed to fulfil operational needs or to comply with any legal requirements.
- Be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
- Not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose.
- Be processed in accordance with the data subject's rights, and ensuring that the rights of people about whom information is held can be fully exercised under the Act. (These include: the right to be informed that processing is being undertaken; the right of access to one's personal information; the right to prevent processing in certain circumstances; the right to correct, rectify, block or erase information which is regarded as wrong information.);
- Be kept safe and secure from unauthorised access, unlawful processing, accidental loss or destruction or damage by using the appropriate technical and organisational measures.
- Not be transferred to a country outside the European Economic Area, unless that country has equivalent levels of protection for personal data.

Prevent unauthorised access to personal or sensitive data, whether in paper or electronic form;
Ensure its method of storing personal or sensitive data in any form is secure including the keeping of sensitive data in a secure room or secure lockable storage device and controlling access by personnel to such locations where data is stored;
Ensure the hardware and software used in processing the data is reliable and protected against viruses and other electronic intruder devices;
Put password protection on computers and central server systems on which data is stored and ensure that only authorised personnel are given details of the relevant password(s);
Prevent computer screens from being overlooked by unauthorised persons;

Ensure that all individuals who have access to the data are reliable and are trained how to comply with the Act;

Have in place methods for detecting and dealing with breaches of security including the ability to identify which individuals have worked with specific data and having a proper procedure in place for investigating and remedying breaches of data protection procedures;

Have a secure procedure for backing up and storing back-ups separately from originals; and

Have a secure method of disposal for back-ups, disks and printouts. Processing any personal data, all staff should consider the checklist set out below:

Data Processing Checklist

- Do you really need to record the information?
- Is the information 'ordinary' or is it 'sensitive'?
- Does The Biodynamic Agricultural College have the data subject's consent?
- Are you authorised to collect/store/process the data?
- Unless the data have been obtained from a reliable source, have you checked with the data subject that the data is accurate?
- Are you sure that the data are secure?
- If you do not have the data subject's consent to process, are you satisfied that it is in the best interests of the learner or the staff member to collect and retain the data?

Data Security

The need to ensure that data is kept securely means that precautions must be taken against physical loss or damage, and that both access and disclosure must be restricted. All staff are responsible for the following:

Data Retention

The Biodynamic Agricultural College will retain some items of information for longer periods than others. The following information about Trustees, staff and learners will be kept indefinitely on the the Biodynamic Agricultural College database:

Name

Date of birth

Gender

Periods of service or employment

Learner obligations

• Learners are advised at registration about the information that the Biodynamic Agricultural College will collect, use and retain about them, and those to whom such information will be disclosed. Learners must ensure that all personal data provided to the Biodynamic Agricultural College is accurate and up to date. They must ensure that any changes, of address, for example, are notified. The Biodynamic Agricultural College cannot be held accountable for errors arising from changes about which it has not been informed.

- Learners who come into contact with personal data through the Biodynamic Agricultural College for the purposes of research or study, in pursuit of an academic programme or qualification and under the direct supervision of a member of staff will be covered by the Biodynamic Agricultural College's notification to the Information Commissioner. In such cases, staff must notify learners about, and learners must abide by, the relevant provisions of this guidance.
- The Biodynamic Agricultural College is not responsible for notification of personal data processed by learners for their own use. Personal information is not disclosed either orally or in writing, intentionally or otherwise to any unauthorised third party. (Staff should note that unauthorised disclosure might be a disciplinary matter.)

Right of Access to Information

All individuals who are the subject of personal data held by the Biodynamic Agricultural College are entitled to:

- Ask what information the Institute holds about them and why.
- Ask how to gain access to it.
- Be informed how to keep it up to date.

Be informed what the Biodynamic Agricultural College is doing to comply with its obligations under the 1998 Data Protection Act.

The Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provide an individual with the

right to access personal data relating to him / her which is held by The Biodynamic Agricultural College. This applies to data held electronically and also manual records that are held in a relevant filing system. Any individual who wishes to exercise this right should make the request in writing to the Data Protection Officer. The Biodynamic Agricultural College will charge an administration fee of £10 for each request received, and will only release any information upon receipt of a written application, along with proof of identity and the administration fee. The requested information will be provided within 40 days of receipt of the completed form, unless there is sufficient reason for delay. The right of access applies to all individuals: The Biodynamic Agricultural College staff, Trustees, and any other individual for whom The Biodynamic Agricultural College holds personal data.

Certain information (for example confidential references given by a third party) will not be disclosed to staff without obtaining the referee's consent to disclose the information.

Publication of Organisational Information

Information that is already in the public domain is exempt from the 1998 Act. This would include, for example, information on staff contained within externally circulated publications such as any The Biodynamic Agricultural College course publicity material. Any individual who has good reason for wishing details in such publications to remain confidential should contact the Biodynamic Agricultural College.

Disclosure outside of the EEA

The 1998 Act places restrictions on the transfer of personal data outside the European Economic Area (EEA), unless the country or territory involved ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

The Biodynamic Agricultural College may, from time to time, desire to transfer personal data to countries or territories outside of the European Economic Area in accordance with purposes made known to individual data subjects. For example, the names and contact details of members of staff on a website may constitute a transfer of personal data world wide. Accordingly, the consent form signifies an individual's consent to the inclusion of such data on the authorised the Biodynamic Agricultural College website. If an individual wishes to raise an objection to this disclosure then written notice should be given to the Data Protection Officer.

Other personal data, even if it would otherwise constitute fair processing, must not, unless certain exemptions apply or protective measures taken, be disclosed or transferred outside the EEA to a country or territory which does not ensure an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects. If, after careful consideration, it is regarded as essential that the transfer of personal data outside the EEA should take place - and if the transfer does not qualify as one of the circumstances when this principle does not apply - the consent of the data subject must be sought. Members of staff should note that: this restriction has particular implications for international relationships, research projects and information placed onto websites.

Staff must take special care in connection with requests for the transfer of personal data outside the European Economic Area (EEA). In particular, staff should not: disclose personal data requested by non-EEA governments, agencies and organisations for the purposes of assessing the names, numbers and whereabouts of foreign nationals studying overseas without the specific and informed consent of the data subjects concerned. Staff should not disclose personal data requested by non-EEA governments for the purpose of determining liability to attend National Service, without the specific and informed consent of the data subjects concerned.

Emails

It is recognised that email is used for such communications and that such emails should form part of the Biodynamic Agricultural College's records. All staff and learners need to be aware that:

- The 1998 Act applies to emails which contain personal data about individuals which are sent or received by members of the Biodynamic Agricultural College
- Subject to certain exceptions, individual data subjects will be entitled to make a data subject access request and have access to emails which contain personal data concerning them, provided that the individual data subject can provide sufficient information for the organisation to locate the personal data in the emails;

Further information

This policy is intended for guidance, not as an authoritative statement of the law. Further information and advice is available from the Data Protection Officer.

45. RPL Policy

RPL is a process that enables learners to receive recognition for skills, knowledge and understanding that they already possess and which meet the standards for a specified qualification.

RPL is an assessment process that enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any valid assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting all or part of a qualification if this is allowed in the qualification specification.

The qualification specification will outline whether equivalences, exemptions and/or RPL are acceptable and if so what type and how this can be claimed.

The 5 Stages of RPL

Stage 1: Application

The BDAC will make an RPL request on behalf of a learner to the Head of Quality at Crossfields Institute. The request should be sent by email to qualityassurance@crossfieldsinstitute.com The Head of Quality (or deputy if absent) will then review the request to ensure it meets any stated and acceptable opportunities agreed within the qualification specification and will feed back the outcome of the review to the centre with a clear rationale for the decision. The decision will be given to the centre within 10 working days of receiving the request.

Requests for, and assessment of, RPL should be made as soon as possible once the learner is registered on a qualification. They should not be left until delivery and assessment activities have come to an end, as this could seriously disadvantage the learner if their request is rejected.

Stage 2: Assembling an RPL claim

RPL learner activity The learner will:	RPL Tutor/Assessor activity The tutor/assessor will:
Reflect on relevant prior learning and achievement to identify evidence	Provide guidance to the learner
Establish an action and assessment plan	Identify and agree an action plan and assessment strategy with the RPL learner
Agree timescale and submission date with tutor/assessor	Provide guidance of timescale and submission date
Identify gaps in achievement	Map achievement and identify gaps
Provide evidence of achievement in a portfolio, for example this may be paper-based, electronic, video recorded evidence etc.*	Determine and set the standard

This stage should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity once a learner is registered on a qualification, in order that they will not be disadvantaged if their RPL claim is not awarded.

Step 3: Assessing an RPL claim

RPL learner activity The learner will:	RPL Tutor/Assessor activity The tutor/assessor will:
Review action and assessment plan	Assess the evidence and check its authenticity
Provide additional evidence if required	Provide the learner with timely feedback
Make a final submission	Arrange Internal Quality Assurance

This stage should be completed within 10 working days of the agreed date for submission of the RPL claim.

Step 4: Validating an RPL claim

RPL learner activity The learner will:	Internal Quality Assurer activity The IQA will:
Receive feedback on the portfolio submitted	Ensure that the evidence is valid and has been correctly assessed
	Provide feedback to tutor/assessor in the form of an IQA report
	Arrange external quality assurance (EQA) of the RPL claim

This stage should be completed within 10 working days of receipt of the assessed portfolio by the IQA.

Stage 5: External Quality Assurance (EQA) of an RPL claim

The IQA will notify the External Quality Assurer (EQA) of the RPL claim and make arrangements with them for monitoring and review of the process outlined above.

The EQA will request relevant evidence, including feedback to the learner and IQA report, and will judge if the claim meets the assessment requirements and conditions set out in the qualification specification.

The EQA will either release or withhold the claim in accordance with their judgement, and will report to the IQA accordingly. They will do this within 10 working days of receiving all required evidence. This process will apply even where a qualification is otherwise given direct claims status. A claim for certification that includes an element of RPL must always be referred to the EQA before the claim is made, or it risks being invalidated.

Detailed Outline of the 5-Step Process

Additional information to support the 5-Stage Process

Stage 1 – Application

All learners working towards Crossfields Institute qualifications must be registered for their qualification with Crossfields Institute. (Learners registered on CACHE qualifications must be registered with CACHE (which is done by Crossfields Institute as the centre)). Requests for registering RPL learners can be made at any time. The learner will be registered for the qualification in the usual way. Crossfields Institute does not accept simultaneous applications for a learner to be registered and to receive certification, thus commitment to the RPL process must be made early on.

Stage 2 – Assembling an RPL claim

Reflecting on Experience

The starting point for any learner wishing to claim for RPL is to reflect on their experience in order to identify relevant achievement. They should think about evidence of knowledge and experience gained:

- At work
- In any relevant voluntary work and leisure activities
- In formal or informal education and training – for example, adult education courses or in-company training
- From independent study
- From home-based activities, such as care of the young, the elderly or the sick, or involvement in the family business.

RPL learners will need to understand the relevant assessment requirements associated with the units they are claiming. Then they will be able to work towards assembling evidence to support these claims.

Identifying Gaps in Achievement

The assessment requirements of Crossfields Institute qualifications are listed clearly on the unit or module descriptors in the qualification specification. Copies of these documents must be used to identify and keep track of what has been achieved and what is still required of the learner.

Providing evidence of achievement – the portfolio

Learners will need to provide evidence to show that they have covered the requirements of the units or modules. This will take the form of a portfolio, prepared by the learner, which sets out the qualification assessment requirements claimed, together with any supporting evidence. The learner should divide their portfolio into sections according to units or modules. The unit or module tracker (which also serves as the

evidence tracking sheet) must be at the front of each section. The portfolio MUST be page numbered and cross-referenced to the unit or module descriptor, in order to make for straightforward assessment and quality assurance of portfolios.

Professional discussions or oral assessment can be used to contribute towards portfolio evidence. They must be documented and can be supported by audio/video recordings.

Separate evidence is not required for each assessment criterion. Where possible, learners should be encouraged to present a small number of complex pieces of evidence that demonstrate the achievement of a number of unit or module assessment requirements.

Staff Guidance and Support

RPL learners will probably require considerable tutor/assessor encouragement and guidance in compiling their RPL evidence. Guiding RPL learners is a staff-intensive activity. While one-to-one contact is essential, there are advantages in holding workshops – both in economy of staff time and in helping to overcome any sense of isolation felt by the learners. Additional support with the RPL process may be provided by the centre or by Crossfields Institute.

Most learners will be unfamiliar with the process of putting together an RPL claim. It is important that learners receive adequate advice and guidance on how to proceed. This will involve:

- Encouraging reflection and self-evaluation
- Helping to identify possible sources of evidence
- Helping to identify possible evidence of achievement
- Advising on the structure and presentation of evidence
- Explaining assessment requirements

Stage 3 – Assessing an RPL claim

The RPL tutor/assessor has the responsibility for ensuring that all the requirements of the Crossfields Institute qualification have been met before submitting the assessed portfolio for internal and external quality assurance. The assessor should assess the RPL evidence, using the assessment criteria in the qualification. In considering the evidence, the assessor needs to ask if it is valid, authentic, current, relevant and sufficient (see below for definitions).

If the assessor judges that the evidence submitted is not sufficient to meet the requirements of the unit or module, it will be necessary to seek additional evidence. This may be done by the learner:

- Undergoing an oral assessment
- Completing an appropriate assignment • Completing a written test
- Carrying out a demonstration
- A combination of the above

Stage 4 – Internal Quality Assurance of an RPL claim

Once the portfolios are complete and have been assessed by the RPL assessor, they must be passed on to the relevant Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) for the qualification at the centre. The role of the IQA is to ensure that the evidence provided meets the requirements and standards of the units or modules being claimed, and is comparable with other claims for the qualification. If the IQA judges that the evidence is valid, and that the assessment decisions are accurate the IQA records their process using an IQA report and notifies the EQA. If the evidence or assessment decisions are not valid, the IQA will advise the tutor/assessor of what is missing or invalid and discuss what opportunities there may be for the learner to collect and submit additional evidence to meet the requirements. It is the IQA's responsibility to contact the EQA (or Crossfields Institute if an EQA has not been allocated to the qualification at the centre) when the portfolio(s) are ready to be Externally Quality Assured and claimed.

Stage 5 – External Quality Assurance carried out by a Crossfields Institute appointed EQA

A Crossfields Institute appointed EQA will fulfil the external quality assurance process appropriately for each qualification. There will be no distinction between RPL evidence and other forms of evidence submitted to meet the requirements of a qualification.

The evidence the learner provides is judged against the following key criteria:

Validity: Does the evidence match the competences that should be evident on successful achievement of the qualification? Are the skills, knowledge, understanding and expertise being demonstrated by the learner at the appropriate level?

Sufficiency: Is the amount of evidence sufficient? Does it cover all the aspects required?

Authenticity: This refers to the ownership of the evidence. Assessors need to be confident that the work submitted is directly attributable to the learner.

Reliability: Does the evidence accurately reflect a level of knowledge, understanding and/or performance that can be consistently demonstrated or produced?

Currency: Assessors must be sure that the evidence submitted by a learner is recent enough to be considered a measure of their current levels of knowledge, understanding and competence.

The learner will either be recommended for award of credit and certification OR the portfolio with feedback will be returned to the RPL tutor/assessor and learner with a request for further evidence and assessment.

46. Statement of understanding

I have read and understood the contents of the BDAC Work Based Training Learner Handbook and agree to adhere to the principles and policies as specified herein.

Date:

Name:

Signature:

Please return the completed form to BDAC Work Based Training co-ordinator

Kai Lange, Nash, Hartley Bridge, Horsley, GL6 0QB

47. APPENDIX 1 WBL diploma overview

The Crossfields Institute Level 3 Diploma in Biodynamic Farming and Growing

Diploma all mandatory units + min one , max two units from each optional block		TQT: Min 600 - Max 840 GLH: Min 275 - Max 345		Teaching plan for LO	
Unit Number	Unit Title NEW	TQT total qualification time	GLH	Seminar	Work placement
Mandatory		360	205	Year a & b	
Foundation module					
Unit 1	Change and challenge in farming	20	10	September - b	
Unit 2	The farm organism	20	10	April - a	2
Unit 3	Soil life and phenomenology	20	10	March - a	
Unit 4	Farm fertility and compost	30	20	March - a	2,3
Unit 5	Biodynamic preparations	30	20	January - b	3
Unit 6	Soil cultivation and care	30	20	March - a	1,2
Unit 7	Land-based machinery	30	20	January - a	3.4
Unit 8	Plant life and phenomenology	30	20	October - a	
Unit 9	Seed production	20	10	April b	
Unit 10	Animal life and phenomenology	30	20	October - b	4
Unit 11	Environmental rhythms & astronomy	30	20	March - b	4
Unit 12	Enterprise planning	20	10	January - a	
Unit 13	Reflective practice	10	5	May - a & b	
Unit 14	Farm improvement project	40	10	November - b	2,3
optional units		240 or 480	70 - 140		
Environment care module		One or two			
Unit 15	Water resources	20	10		All
Unit 16	Energy and carbon	20	10	February - a	3
Unit 17	Farm ecosystem	20	10	January - a	2
Unit 18	Sustainable resources	20	10		2
Unit 19	Climate and weather	20	10	January - a	

Human development module		One or two			
Unit 20	Culture and agriculture	20	10	May - a	
Unit 21	Biodynamics and anthroposophy	20	10	February- b	
Unit 22	Nutrition and food	20	10	January- b	
Unit 23	Land based therapeutic care	20	10	November - a	2
Unit 24	Local community project	20	10		All
Experience module		One or two			
Unit 25	Vegetable Growing	200	50		All
Unit 26	Fruit Growing	200	50		All
Unit 27	Flower Growing	200	50		All
Unit 28	Herb Growing	200	50		All
Unit 29	Seed Growing	200	50		All
Unit 30	Protected Growing	200	50		All
Unit 31	Grassland and Fodder	200	50		All
unit 32	Arable Production	200	50		All
unit 33	Cattle Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 34	Sheep Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 35	Goat Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 36	Pig Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 37	Poultry Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 38	Dairy Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 39	Bee Husbandry	200	50		All
unit 40	Working with Draught Animals	200	50		All
unit 41	On-Farm Processing	200	50		All

Definitions

The Diploma is structured in such a way that the learner can *learn by doing*. The Programme comprises 14 mandatory and 27 optional units of learning. Each unit is allocated with an amount of notional learning hours.

Guided supervised learning hours

In order to achieve the value, it is important that they keep track of the guided supervised learning hours. The Diploma is designed to offer an opportunity to implement immediately what has been taught. This process also counts towards the overall value target and must be assessed. The Programme Coordinator and other colleagues assigned to the programme are there to provide support in the process of keeping track of guided supervised learning hours. Guided supervised learning hours are Implementation of learning which is practiced in the presence / supervised by trainer or programme appointed person who is in a position to assess the practice. Practice will be assessed as per learning outcomes and assessment criteria as they appear in the units.

Assessment and Verification

The Diploma is based on portfolio assessment. This means that you need to familiarise yourself with the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of set out in the units.

Evidence of learning

As the learners journeys through the programme, they must be advised to collect different types of evidence of what they have been taught and how they have implemented it at work. The trainer must guide and help learners identify what kind of evidence they may wish to collect at any given time. Examples of evidence include, but are not limited to:

Written assignments

Presentations

Drawings/paintings with captions

Role play

Producing an artefact

A recorded event

A recorded conversation

Notes from a meeting

Journal entries and more

The portfolio will be assessed on how relevant the evidence is to the learning outcomes and assessment criteria listed in Units and whether it demonstrates an understanding of the content.

Portfolio

A portfolio is a collection of evidence of learning (examples as above), which is tracked by learners as they progress through the programme. The evidence needs to be carefully numbered against the learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the units. You will receive a portfolio building induction in order to pass it on to learners

The trainer in each subject area will assess the respective assignments and evaluate the progress.

The portfolio itself is verified and checked internally by an Internal Quality Assurer (IQA). This happens once a term at a minimum. The IQA samples portfolios and look at whether learners are being assessed fairly by trainers and whether they are meeting the programme requirements. This is a good way of finding out at an early stage whether they require support in one area or another.

Tips and essential ingredients of a portfolio

Evidence Tracking Sheet – this is the same as the unit descriptor but with an extra column for page references on where to find the evidence (cross-referencing). The same evidence can be used for different assessment criteria (even across units), hence the importance of cross-referencing. **Learners must keep the Evidence Tracking Sheet up to date (in pencil, in case changes are needed) so that the IV may sample the work/portfolio throughout the year.**

Page numbering of the portfolio – the page numbers on the portfolio must correspond to the page number indicated on the Evidence Tracking Sheet.

Presentation – please ensure that both trainer and verifier can navigate easily through learner portfolio.

Certification

Towards the end of the programme an External Assessor from Crossfields Institute will sample and check the portfolios. If the work is up to the standards required for the award (the learning outcomes and assessment criteria as set out in the Units) the External Assessor will recommend that learners are certified. Upon successful completion of the Diploma, Crossfields Institute will issue the certificate and the trainer will formally graduate the learners.

Role of Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)

Each term an IQA samples and checks learner's portfolio for completion of units, evidence that Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria are all met and supported with appropriate evidence. The IQA also gives feedback to trainers and learners if there is additional work required. At the end of the year, the IQA prepares for and liaises with External Assessor

Learner programme evaluation

In order to maintain and improve the quality of the programme delivery, we invite learners to give formal feedback to the trainer and on the programme as a whole. In the handbook you will find the forms used for evaluations. As you will see, they can choose to submit the forms anonymously. The forms will be read and discussed by the trainers at the end of each term and the evaluation will be processed at the end of the course. If the suggestions and idea for improvements can be implemented, the trainers will create an implementation plan and learners will be informed if anything is due to change as a result.

48. APPENDIX 2 evaluation form

Processing details: Upon completion, this form must be handed to the learner. Copies must be filed in the tutor and learner files for quality assurance purposes.

Name of learner:

Name of trainer:

Programme:

Date:

Study Year:

Overall impression (academic/social/practical areas):

Strengths:

Areas where improvement is recommended:

Suggestions or recommendations:

Any other comments:

Trainer signature.....Learner signature,.....

48. APPENDIX 3 Witness Statement

Witness:

Unit Name:

Code:

The learner,, has achieved

the assessment criterion/criteria.....via the following

assessment method(s):.....

.....
.....

Describe what was witnessed and how the assessment criterion/criteria were fully achieved:

.....
.....
.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Witness Signature:

Learner Signature:

Date:

49. APPENDIX 4 Feedback on Learner's work / Observation record/ Tutorial record and review

Tutor/Assessor:	Learner:
Date:	Location:
Relevant unit: Assessment criteria:	

<p>Feedback or Observation from Tutor/Assessor:</p>
<p>Action Points:</p>
<p>Tutor/Assessor's Signature:</p> <p>Learner's Signature:</p>

50. Appendix 5 -Reasonable Adjustment Application Form

<p>Section 1 should be completed by, or on behalf of, the learner requesting a Reasonable Adjustment</p>	
<p>Centre Name</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Centre Number (if known)</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>
<p>Learner Name</p>	<p>Click here to enter text.</p>

Site Address	Click here to enter text.
Qualification/Programme Title	Click here to enter text.
Qualification/Programme Code	Click here to enter text.
Unit Titles:	Click here to enter text.
Unit Number/Code:	Click here to enter text.

1. Please indicate why you are requesting a Reasonable Adjustment;

Click here to enter text.

2. Please provide details of any support or changes that are being requested:

Click here to enter text.

3. Please provide any details of supporting information (if available), and attach a copy. This may include:

- Type of adaptive technology or support to be used
- Previous adjustments that have been made for this learner (in other programmes, qualification or centres)

Click here to enter text.

Section 2 should be completed by the tutor/assessor/programme coordinator

Tutor/assessor/programme coordinator name	Click here to enter text.
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1. Please Provide details of the adjustments you are requesting, identifying the assessment criteria or learning outcomes of a programme or qualification to which they apply:

Click here to enter text.

Declaration:

I confirm that the information provided above is accurate:

Signature*:		Date:	Click here to enter a date.
Position in Centre:	Click here to enter text.		
E-mail:	Click here to enter text.	Contact Number:	Click here to enter text.

Please return the form as a Word document and not as a pdf file. Thank you

Section 3 For completion by Crossfields Institute	
Reasonable Adjustment request reviewed by: Click here to enter text.	
Application received date: Click here to enter a date.	Application acknowledged date: Click here to enter a date.
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Not approved
Date: Click here to enter a date.	
Rationale for decision: Click here to enter text.	
Action if required: Click here to enter text.	

Handbook read and signed by Programme Team Coordinator/trainer:

Kai Lange , January'23

