



## The Cambridge Validation Charter

The Cambridge Validation Charter outlines the terms of engagement between potential Cambridge Validation Associates and the University of Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). It indicates the expectations from both sides in the early phase of discussions. It does not take the place of any of the later legal documentation but gives an early indication of how the validation process works.

CIE shares the University of Cambridge's mission of contributing to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

### **CIE Validation Services – independent Quality Assurance for the design, delivery and assessment of education programmes**

CIE offers the opportunity for providers of education programmes to have their qualifications independently quality assured using the expertise of CIE, leaders in educational assessment for more than 150 years.

The programme and the intellectual property rights of the qualification remain under the ownership of the education provider. CIE evaluates the syllabuses and teaching/learning materials for relevance and appropriateness within the sector, considers the academic and assessment standards within the organisation and reviews learning opportunities which exist for the students.

The validation activity, like all assessment activity carried out under the Cambridge Assessment umbrella, follows the Cambridge Approach of best practice principles in the design, administration and evaluation of assessment processes.

The Cambridge Approach has been designed to build confidence and trust and ensuring that assessments are fair, have ethical underpinning and operate to the highest standards.

### **Which types of qualification does CIE validate?**

CIE works with well-established and successful education providers whose qualifications include a clearly defined assessment element. They are organisations that support educational excellence and whose aims are compatible with the general principles of CIE, as outlined in its Code of Practice.

CIE validation does **not** provide any exemption towards degree programmes, including those offered by the University of Cambridge. CIE only validates awards which are within the CIE remit of assessment expertise.

Validated qualifications can be offered by a variety of education providers including those offering vocational training, professional training or corporate training programmes. For further information on the types of organisations and the

qualifications CIE already validates, please refer to the CIE website or contact the Validation Services team.

## **The process**

There is a standard process in place for any education provider requesting validation from CIE, which takes approximately 5 months, although it may take longer.

### **1 Proposal stage:**

- enquiries are made using information from the organisation and public information to assess their suitability against a number of predetermined criteria. This includes the normal due diligence process.
- these include the organisation's business plan for the qualification proposed for validation and the content and scope of the programmes to be validated
- at this stage the number of students will be considered and also the financial considerations which are likely to arise

### **2 Review of standards (UK based)**

For the second phase of the process, CIE specialists review materials to be submitted for validation:

- syllabus (outline and summary of topics to be covered in a course)
- support materials for trainers and students
- sample assessment materials

### **3 Review of standards (on location)**

For the third phase of the process, a visit is made to the organisation to consider:

- standards of the faculty
- assessment standards
- the integrity and security of the assessment process
- learning opportunities and the infrastructure within which candidates study

### **4 The contract**

The contract is normally set for 3 years and includes an annual Quality Assurance visit by CIE representatives and expert consultants in the field. Areas covered in the contract include rights and obligations, payment terms, the awards covered by the validation process and also any guidance which CIE wishes to give on use of the Cambridge name and logo.

The contract is governed by English law and English courts.

## **Fees**

There is a standard fee structure for validation of an organisation's award. This includes;

- an initial review fee
- an annual evaluation fee
- an entry fee per student/module

These fees are agreed in advance and are specified in the contract. A time schedule for payment is also agreed.

**Cambridge Validation Associate status**

Once the contract is signed, the education provider can then promote the relationship as a Cambridge Validation Associate offering Cambridge Validated Awards. Students who are successful in the assessments delivered by a Validation Associate would then be eligible to receive a certificate, which is signed and printed by CIE and carries the logos of the Cambridge Validation Associate and CIE. Cambridge Validation Associates may use the CIE logo in their marketing activity to promote the relationship. CIE provides guidelines on the use of the logo which must be followed at all times.

**Annual Quality Assurance**

In addition to the regular review by CIE of assessment materials and marked student work, a team from CIE will visit the Validation Associate to monitor standards and suggest improvements. The Quality Assurance visit also offers professional development opportunities.

**Joining the CIE network**

Validation associates join the CIE network and benefit from additional educational support, advice and guidance to help them raise the standards of their organisations in both assessment and learning.

July 2009