

# Why you should book a Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework (SIQAF) review

## Transcript

Video link: [Why you should book a Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework \(SIQAF\) review \(youtube.com\)](#)

**Nerise Oldfield-Thompson, Operations Manager, BASE**  
**[00:00:00]**

Welcome to the Supported Internship Quality Assurance Framework presentation on why you should book a SIQAF Peer Review. My name's Nerise Oldfield-Thompson. I'm the operations manager for the British Association for Supported Employment and working collaboratively on the Internships Work programme with DFN Project Search, National Development Team for Inclusion, and the Department for Education and what we aim for from today is that we will have encouraged providers to sign up for a peer review.

So, we'll start by looking at actually, what is the SIQAF? So, the SIQAF is a quality assurance toolkit developed to support organisations delivering supported internships.

And also, to support organisations who are starting off on delivering supported internships that they can use as a guide to help them develop and support their organisation. Any provider can download and use and further on in the slides there's some useful resources you can tap into.

The SIQAF supports reflection, self-assessment, and quality assurance.

It has been designed to be used annually.

There are 6 core sections covering leadership, planning, partnership, preparedness, progress and results. From working on your self-assessment, it will support you developing an action plan.

And it's very much designed for a provider to lead the process but involving all other partners.

As part of the internships work programme, providers can access fully funded peer reviews for the SIQAF.

And what that entails is: two trained peer reviewers will come to your site and they will spend 1 1/2 days with you at your programme doing the 360 degree look at evidence, speaking to supported interns, staff, employers, etcetera to help validate your self-assessment score.

From this, the assessors will write a report and support you with an action plan with some recommendations on what you can do to go forward and to continuously improve.

Here are some myth busting about SIQAF reviews.

So, they are a process to support you. It is not an audit or an inspection. We're trying to support you with compliance against the SIQAF. It's an opportunity to have fresh eyes, review your programme and provide you with good practise examples.

It's an opportunity to grow the quality for supported internship programmes. Please note that the scores from peer reviews are for your programme and your partners, the reviewers and the project managers eyes only. We will not be reporting these wider. However, the trends and common themes across reviews will be extracted and shared with the Department for Education and the Internships Work partners and just to support us with that continuous improvement on the SIQAF.

You're now going to hear from providers from two separate programmes that have participated in a SIQAF peer review.

### **Matt Snow, Supported Internship Manager, Phoenix School** **[00:02:58]**

We had SIQAF just over 12 months ago. I think the main benefit from our perspective was having eyes looking down on us that aren't necessarily associated with Project Search. It was nice to have a fresh set of eyes, looking at our practises and how we operate away from the Project Search model just to see what we can do to make our supported internship even better and take our ideas back to Project Search as well to benefit not just ourselves but also other programmes.

### **Lee Bones, Job Coach Manager, Kaleidoscope** **[00:03:30]**

And we provide the job coach element to the programme here at QMUL and so we found the SIQAF Audit a really good tool to kind of track our progress. And in terms of looking at kind of pre programme, during the programme, and after the programme as well and having a chance to review kind of the work that we're doing, documentation, and our partnership as well. And it was a useful tool to kind of bring all that together and to track the progress and to continue to deliver sustainable job outcomes for young people in the programme.

### **Renato Marques, Principal, Phoenix College** **[00:04:12]**

I thought it was very interesting to be seen under a different framework. Normally we work with schools, so we look at Ofsted framework. It was nice to have a different look through what we do. For me, the main learning is that we are doing really well, I think they were very impressed with what the programme does. And what I've done differently since the inspection, I think, it was so since the audit, I think I've been looking at this steering group meeting in a different way because they already have highlighted the importance of those meetings and how we were using those meetings for strategic and operational things. So, I think we have already changed a bit of how we organise ourselves.

### **Mubidi Munye, Tutor, Queen Mary University of London** **[00:05:00]**

So, I thought the audit was very useful for us, they helped us pinpoint areas of development heavily focused around TSI for myself.

**Debbie Robinson, Manager, Kaleidoscope**  
**[00:05:12]**

The audit brought to light the need for us to further invest in incorporating TSI Elements into the job coaching skills and since then they've seen the benefits of coaching with the end goal in sight, that being of our interns becoming more independent where they can be. And we've had several of our programmes involved in the SIQAF audits, I think we've had three to date and we've got another two coming. The benefits of having that different or separate perspective on what we do and how we do it and then sharing with us how we can do things differently to improve what we're delivering to our interns and making sure that we're achieving the outcomes, it's really quite positive.

The audit itself was quite detailed and they were looking at lots of different angles, different perspectives of the programme and interviewing lots of different people. Which I think helps them to kind of triangulate their view and then give us that really important, detailed feedback at the end. Followed up by a written report that we can then look at, review. And we've used all of that information that was shared with us to write a strategic plan, which we're part way through and have an action plan coming out of that of all the things that we want to look at, develop as a partnership. So, I think it's made us stronger in the long run and there's more to come. So, we will be using that document from the review to feed into developing a much stronger, proactive programme which supports not only the interns and their families, but us as a team of staff as well.

**Lee Bones, Job Coach Manager, Kaleidoscope**  
**[00:07:02]**

If you want to make your service and your site a bit more stronger and test the model that you are delivering, then definitely go through the SIQAF audit which will firm up your kind of outcomes and making sure that you're following the model as well.

**Matt Snow, Supported Internship Manager, Phoenix School**  
**[00:07:24]**

From our perspective, though audits can be intense and difficult to prepare for, can be much stressful times. However, the way this one was conducted, it wasn't stressful, it wasn't making it, making the team worry or panic because a lot of the stuff that was requested is something that we do in practise anyway. So, it was just reinforcing our knowledge on knowing that we are actually doing a good job. And if you want a bit of encouragement and support to make, take your stuff the next level then I'd strongly recommend.

**Renato Marques, Principal, Phoenix College**  
**[00:07:56]**

I would say that it's always good to compare yourself against the criteria. Sometimes you don't know that you're doing so well in some areas, or you could improve this certain or in other areas.

Working in education we are used to audits. I would definitely recommend that and then as Matt said, I think it was an audit that it was respectful and run with the provider rather than just being through the top. So, we definitely recommend that.

## **Debbie Robinson, Manager, Kaleidoscope**

**[00:08:27]**

Many things, but generally speaking it was a good experience, and I would encourage anybody else who's thinking about doing it. Just go ahead and request one.

## **Margaret, Employment Contract Manager, Pure Innovations**

**[00:08:38]**

I'm Margaret. I'm the Pure employment contract manager and also with me today is Stuart, who's the assistant internship manager at Pure and Michael Owen from Trafford College Group. And we're just going to talk a little bit about when we took part in the SIQAF.

The area that we did the peer review on was the Trafford hospital. So, it's a 3-way partnership with a large employer, which was, as I said, the hospital. And we have a classroom on site, we have a signed project champion who's called Jamie, by the way, at Trafford Hospital, we embed the projects alongside all their employability initiatives that they're running. They might be running some used schemes there. So, we interlink with them and look for placements and also the hospital they provide a paid opportunities at any time throughout the internship for the young people working in the different areas. The local education provider we work with, as I said before, is the Traffic College group who Michael works for. They deliver the employability course, they look at all the pastoral support and safeguarding, they provide all the tailored support in the classroom, and they also deliver some English and maths.

And Pure Innovations, they're the supported employment providers. So, we negotiate the large employer, we support the employment and intern, we complete any job analysis or any job shaping or any reasonable adjustments that need to be provided in the workplace. Look at any specialist training and for example such as training and systematic instruction or breaking any tasks down into easier tasks, we negotiate any paid outcomes, and we monitor the interns in employment until they go into open sustainable employment.

So, we decide to take part in the peer review and be part of the SIQAF audit and also have an external part, two BASE auditors come in and assess us because we wanted to share our expertise and look at some of the areas that we're doing well in and any areas that we needed to develop.

What's working with the three-way partnership of all those all working together with the employer, with the college and with Pure and also looking at what support the local authority give us from Trafford, how we're working with them and looking at how to recruit maybe more young people as well that we've covered those areas.

It also helps us decide and define what our priorities were going forward and the journey of it. We looked at everybody's journey of an intern from when we received the referral or they expressed an interest or we held an open day to them actually going into paid employment. Monitoring that journey, monitoring how sustainable their employment was and the number of hours people working. It also highlighted anything that we were missing, maybe some of the partnership work maybe involving some of the parents and carers more in some of the meetings and also lots of them improving. And we also got a chance to all express our viewpoint and look at other people's opinions across from the peer reviewers who came, the external peer reviewers from BASE. The final score was 82% on the Trafford internship.

## **Michael Owen, Trafford College Group** **[00:12:21]**

The SIQAF came not long after we'd had an Ofsted visit, so the opportunity to go through a lot more paperwork we embraced fully. One of the things from the Ofsted report, and I've just there's a quote there from the Ofsted report that "leaders have developed an effective curriculum that meets the needs of most of the learners with high needs. Learners benefit from highly individualised programmes in vocational and technical subject areas. They developed a high-level vocational and technical skills which prepare them well for further learning or employment." I believe that was as a direct result of the visit. I brought our inspector to the same site that we had the SIQAF.

## **Nerise Oldfield-Thompson, Operations Manager, BASE** **[00:13:12]**

We would like to personally thank our colleagues at Phoenix School, QMUL, Kaleidoscope, Project Search, Trafford College Group and Pure Innovations for their honest feedback on doing the SIQAF. So just to recap on some of the things that they said about the benefits of doing the SIQAF.

It will support you to get more young people jobs in your local area.

It shows you what a good quality supported internship programme looks like.

It is a simple and easy to use self-assessment tool.

It can help identify areas that are working well and those that require improvement. From this you can develop smart action plan for your continuous improvement journey.

It will give you evidence to advertise the quality of your programme to potential interns, parents, carers, commissioners and employers.

Obviously, it will evidence the quality of your programme during your Ofsted inspection. It's a tool that you can use to improve your partnerships, communication.

Of course, it encourages collaborative working as a team partnership with the one common goal of achieving employment for our young people

And it can be used as a guide when developing your SI provision, even if you're new to development and SI provision, you could use the SIQAF to support you.

Both of the providers we've heard from today have mentioned Ofsted. And one of the things that we particularly wanted to look at was how their education inspection framework fits with the SIQAF.

We've done a mapping exercise to demonstrate this. We've looked at the education inspection framework against leadership and management, quality of education, intent, implementation and impact, behaviours and attitudes, and personal development. We then map the SIQAF against this, which you can see in the table in front of you.

In order to support you with your continuous improvement journey for your supported internships, here's a link to a few resources that you may find useful. The first one is actually the link to the SIQAF, with the second one is the education inspection framework mapping exercise against the SIQAF. The third one is about the supported internship quality assurance framework on the BASE website and the final one is the government document on supported internships.

We hope that you found these slides and the films interesting and that you're keen to book your free peer review. We've got until March 2025 to support providers through peer reviews, which are fully funded under the internships work programme. So please book your SIQAF peer review today and contact.

[Amy.martin@base-uk.org](mailto:Amy.martin@base-uk.org)

Amy looks forward to hearing from you.

Links:

- <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/publication/siqaf>
- [EIF-Against-SIQAF-Mapping-Publication-Mar-2024.pdf \(ndti.org.uk\)](#)
- <https://www.base-uk.org/supported-internship-quality-assurance-framework-siqaf>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supported-internships-for-young-people-with-learning-difficulties/supported-internships>