

POLICY / PROCEDURE TITLE		DATE OF APPROVAL
HE Assessment Policy		October 2024
APPROVED BY	VERSION NO.	VALID UNTIL
NCG HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee	4	October 2027

OWNER	Academic Registrar		
GROUP EXECUTIVE LEAD	Deputy Principal, HE		
DOCUMENT TYPE	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Group Procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Local Procedure <input type="checkbox"/>		
PURPOSE	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the HE assessment policy and procedures are implemented across the institution and collaborative partners, and that the relevant requirements of awarding bodies and designated quality bodies are met.		
APPLICABLE TO	This policy applies to all staff teaching on higher education (HE) programmes / awards and students undertaking a higher education programme / award with NCG, the institution and collaborative partners.		
EQUALITY ANALYSIS COMPLETED [POLICIES ONLY]	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
	(If EA not applicable, please explain)		
KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This policy sets out the NCG approach to HE assessment. 2. The policy outlines the overarching standards and principles that inform the approach adopted by NCG to HE assessment. 3. The policy details assessment best practice from an institutional perspective. 		
EXPECTED OUTCOME	Readers are expected to understand the organisational position on HE assessment, know their responsibilities in relation to the policy and comply with the terms of the policy.		

MISCELLANEOUS	
LINKED DOCUMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Assessment Framework • HE Moderation Process • Higher Education Alternative Assessment Process and Procedure • HE Quality and Standards Reference Manual • HE Staff Approval Policy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HE Academic Misconduct Procedure and Process• HE Academic Regulations• HE Mitigation Policy and Process
KEYWORDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment• Examination

Equality Impact Assessment

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT			
	Yes	No	Explanatory Note if required
EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in Section 2?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be YES
EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Disability / Difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/ phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this must be NO
EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The answer to this could be yes or no as positive action is lawful. However, an explanation must be provided for clarity.
EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?	The policy author has consulted with peers and appropriate groups of people in the Group.		

1. General Policy Statement

- 1.1.** This policy applies to all staff teaching on higher education (HE) programmes/awards and students undertaking a higher education programme/award with NCG, the institution and collaborative partners.
- 1.2.** Its purpose is to ensure that the HE assessment policy and procedures are implemented consistently across the institution and collaborative partners, and that the requirements of awarding bodies and designated quality bodies are met.
- 1.3.** This policy should be read in conjunction with the HE Assessment Framework which details the processes and systems which are used jointly with the HE Assessment Policy to provide a structure to assure the quality and standards of HE assessment design and standards as well as feedback to students.

2. Assessment Policy

2.1. Academic Standards

The institution, in conjunction with its collaborative partners, is responsible for the academic standards and quality of the programmes it designs and delivers and is therefore accountable for:

- 2.1.1.** Designing, approving, supervising and reviewing the assessment strategies for programmes and awards.
- 2.1.2.** The consistent implementation of rigorous assessment practices, which ensure that the academic/professional standard for each award element is set and maintained at the appropriate level and that student performance is properly judged against this.

2.2. Principles

The principles, procedures and processes of assessment should be explicit. The key principles that underpin this assessment policy are:

- 2.2.1. Validity** - ensures the assessment measures what it claims to measure.
- 2.2.2. Reliability/Consistency** - refers to the accuracy with which an assessment measures the skill or attainment it is designed to measure.

A reliable assessment consistently gives the same results under similar conditions.

- 2.2.3. **Fairness** - a fair and timely assessment, in addition to being valid and reliable, provides equity of opportunity for students in line with current equality legislation.
- 2.2.4. **Transparency** - a transparent assessment policy and guidelines will ensure clarity and understanding by all relevant stakeholders.
- 2.2.5. **Quality** - a key principle in ensuring the credibility and status of awards. Quality will be assured through adherence to the regulations and requirements of awarding and professional bodies and to institutional policy and guidelines, through adherence to the requirements of designated quality bodies and national award standards, through programme approval and validation mechanisms, and through consistent monitoring and evaluation processes.
- 2.2.6. **Engagement** - refers to the process of engaging staff and students in understanding the purpose of assessment and the institutional contexts in which assessment takes place. The development of such is essential to everyone involved in assessment practice insofar as learning is most effective when students and staff share an understanding of academic and professional standards and the regulatory environment which frames those standards. An active engagement with assessment practice and its relationship to the learning process should be integral to module and programme design and approval. Students are better able to achieve complex and sophisticated outcomes from their learning experiences when they have the opportunity to understand, shape, and internalise expected standards of assessment. Engagement with assessment helps foster autonomous and reflective student learning and enables staff to review and enhance their own practice as professional educators.
- 2.2.7. **Setting of Assessment** - all assessment should be designed and planned to ensure:
 - a) The module descriptor (module specification and delivery detail) is aligned to the principles of assessment and is used appropriately in

linking the student learning outcomes with assessment criteria for the programme/award.

- b) The number of assessments and relevant weightings are consistent and comparable across elements contributing to a programme/award and are validated either at the programme validation event or amended through the Annual Planning process or periodic programme review.
- c) Students are made aware at the start of their programme and of each academic year of the number and frequency of assessments and of planned submission dates via programme documentation which clearly indicates assessment deadlines and resit opportunities/dates.
- d) The assessment briefs are prepared carefully in line with the approved documentation.
- e) All assessment briefs have contextualised grading criteria.
- f) Moderation of assessment briefs takes place prior to publication to students.
- g) Assessment materials are internally moderated before publication. Assessment materials for final-level qualifications are also externally moderated. For programmes accredited by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), assessment conforms to the grading criteria within the awarding body Academic Regulations for setting examination papers and the conduct of examinations.
- h) Appropriate guidance is available for the organisation of group assessments.
- i) Assessment design is regularly reviewed to ensure that the amount and timing of assessment enables effective and appropriate measurement of students' achievement of intended learning outcomes.
- j) Formative assessment, both formal and informal, provides students with tasks and the opportunity to receive developmental feedback to improve future summative assessments. The work does not count towards the student's achievement on their programme.

- k) Summative assessment measures achievement of the learning outcomes linked to the required level and standard of the programme. The work is graded, and the grade recorded.
- l) Assessment will be designed in consultation with students via a range of appropriate channels. Assessment design will enable effective engagement with students to provide them with an opportunity to share and develop their own knowledge in an academic environment. Collaboration between staff, students and others should be encouraged in assessment design.
- m) Any changes to the assessment schedule must be communicated to students at least seven calendar days in advance of the original assessment deadline date.
- n) In the design of assessment, due consideration is to be given to the integration of alternate and inclusive assessment methods.
- o) In addition to the prior consideration of alternate and inclusive assessment methods, students with declared disabilities or a specific learning need are to be given the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes and competence standards through an Alternative Assessment Plan (AAP), where such a support mechanism has been agreed and put in place, in line with the NCG Higher Education Alternative Assessment Process and Procedure (or equivalent process and procedure for partner providers, where applicable).
- p) Academic support and guidance are accessible and appropriate for students with declared disabilities or a specific learning need.

2.3. Conduct of Assessment

All assessment will be conducted with rigour, fairness, and robustness. Assessment will be conducted through:

- 2.3.1. Ensuring that the schedule and amount of assessment will be consistent across the institution and collaborative partners.
- 2.3.2. Ensuring that processes are developed and in place so that assessment for a programme/award provides effective and appropriate

measurement of the achievement of students of the intended learning outcomes and that they effectively support learning.

- 2.3.3. Assessments that enable students to achieve at an appropriate level and provide opportunities for students to stretch and challenge themselves to do their best work.
- 2.3.4. Assessment briefs and other assessment materials that clearly identify the learning outcomes being assessed and the criteria that will be used to measure achievement.
- 2.3.5. Written assessment briefs (within module guides) which are fully discussed with the student group well in advance and before assessment takes place.
- 2.3.6. The provision of information and guidance about plagiarism and academic misconduct (see internal policy), including in relation to the use of artificial intelligence (AI), and other related regulatory requirements.

2.4. Submission of Assessment

All submission of assessment will take place in line with the institution internal procedure. The procedure requires that:

- 2.4.1. A student's submission must be their own work.
- 2.4.2. The submission of all written work for summative assessment must be via Turnitin.
- 2.4.3. Arrangements for other assessments such as video submission, presentation and practical work must conform to the HE Moderation process, be managed by the curriculum teams, and meet the requirements of the awarding body and the PSRB (if applicable).
- 2.4.4. Evidence of submissions is collected and stored by the curriculum team for five years when, under those circumstances described in article 2.4.3. above, the retention of student work is not possible within the Turnitin platform.
- 2.4.5. Students should normally be provided with a submission receipt for each electronic or hard copy assessment submitted.

- 2.4.6. The appropriate awarding body regulations cover the following: late submission arrangements and regulations, as well as the process and procedures for claiming extenuating circumstances.

2.5. Marking and Grading

The institution requires that for all programmes/awards:

- 2.5.1. There are clear criteria for the marking and grading of assessments which are made known to the student at publication of the assessment brief.
- 2.5.2. Robust mechanisms are in place for marking and for the moderation of marks.
- 2.5.3. There are clear criteria for the aggregation of marks and grades in line with the requirements of the awarding body.
- 2.5.4. Awarding body regulations are implemented fairly and consistently in relation to reassessment, progression, final awards and classifications.
- 2.5.5. All marks/grades are formally recorded on the Staff Advantage/Programme Tracker platform (or equivalent mark recording system) prior to being released to the student.
- 2.5.6. Summative marks/grades/competences are only confirmed to the student after the full internal and external verification and assessment board processes have taken place.
- 2.5.7. The process for appeal against assessment decisions lies with the awarding body as outlined in the appropriate regulations. Students are made aware of this in the student handbook.

2.6. Internal Moderation

- 2.6.1. Internal moderation will be conducted according to internal procedures and will demonstrate robustness across the institution.

2.7. Feedback to Students on Performance

- 2.7.1. Clear, specific and timely feedback will be provided to students on all assessed work within 20 working days to promote learning and facilitate improvement.
- 2.7.2. Formative assessment feedback will be provided to the student to indicate strengths and areas for development and to provide clear information about what the student needs to do to improve their performance. No mark will be provided for formative feedback.
- 2.7.3. Summative feedback will be produced and stored electronically. For written work submitted through Turnitin, feedback will be provided electronically. The feedback produced for assessments which are submitted outside of the Turnitin process must also be produced, provided and stored electronically. More detailed information regarding good practice in relation to feedback is provided within the HE Assessment Framework and implementation document.
- 2.7.4. Students will be offered the opportunity to engage in formative assessment. No mark/grade will be given, though formative feedback will be provided.

2.8. Recording Documentation and Publication of Assessment Results

- 2.8.1. The institution requires that all assessment decisions are recorded and documented accurately and systematically. The decisions of relevant examination boards and committees will be published as quickly as possible, consistent with rigour of assessment and accuracy.
- 2.8.2. Awarding body documentation will be completed in a timely fashion (normally within five working days of assessment board decisions) and returned to the appropriate examination section for forwarding to awarding bodies).

2.9. Monitoring and Review of Assessment

- 2.9.1. All assessment strategies and their implementation will be reviewed annually. The institutional policy is that all approved programmes/awards contain the full range of assessment for the programme/award. All approved programmes/awards must specify

how the marks obtained shall be used to calculate an overall aggregate (expressed as a percentage) when assessing the award of the qualification or reaching decisions about progression.

- 2.9.2. The range of assessment methods should be appropriate to the subject area. All assessment is intended to demonstrate that the learning outcomes for a module on a programme/award have been achieved and should be applied with rigour. Information is collected by institutions on the disclosure of support needs and is used appropriately to monitor the applications, admissions and academic progress of students with declared disabilities or a specific learning need.

2.10. Staff Development and Training

- 2.10.1 The institution requires that all staff involved in the assessment of students are competent to undertake their roles and responsibilities and undergo institutional staff approval. Assessors will be appropriately qualified and meet the requirements of the awarding body and the designated quality body.

2.11. Regulatory Requirements of Awarding and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

- 2.11.1. The institution requires that all staff are aware of and operate under the specific regulatory requirements of its awarding bodies and, where appropriate, Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies. The institution has developed appropriate internal policies and procedures that cover major requirements including:
- a) Modifications to processes and procedures because of regulatory changes
 - b) Modifications to guiding principles from PSRBs
- 2.11.2. The institution will ensure that all programme/awards respond proactively to external examiner reports and that issues are included within the annual monitoring and review processes comprising:
- a) Progression and award classifications
 - b) Assessment boards

- c) Documentation, recording of outcomes and publication of results
- d) Monitoring and review of assessment

3. Linked Policies

- a) HE Staff Approval Policy
- b) HE Mitigation Policy and Process

4. Linked Procedures

- a) Higher Education Assessment Framework
- b) Higher Education Alternative Assessment Process and Procedure
- c) HE Academic Misconduct Procedure and Process

5. Statement on Implementation

Upon approval, this policy will be uploaded to the policy portal and communicated to staff via The Business Round-Up.

6. Statement on Equality and Diversity

NCG is committed to providing equality of opportunity. Further details of our aims and objectives are outlined in our [Equality Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Strategy](#).

This policy has been assessed to identify any potential for adverse or positive impact on specific groups of people protected by the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate either directly or indirectly. In applying this policy, we have considered eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good relations between people from diverse groups.

7. Statement on Consultation

This policy / procedure has been reviewed in consultation with the members of the HE Learning Teaching and Enhancement Committee.

VERSION CONTROL				
Version No.	Documentation Section/Page No.	Description of Change and Rationale	Author/Reviewer	Date Revised
4	Passim	As part of a routine periodic review of policy, small and non-substantive changes have been made to the policy text in the interests of clarity, correctness and currency.	Tom Cuthbertson	20/09/24