

# Assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and Moderation Policy



Policy Title	<b>Assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and Moderation Policy</b>
Policy Category	Compliant
Owner	Assistant Director of Quality
Group Executive Lead	Executive Director of Quality
Date Written	September 2023
Considered By	Policy Review Council
Approved By	Executive Board
Date Approved	September 2023
Equality Impact Assessment	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics
Freedom of Information	This document will / will not be publicly available through the Group's Publication Scheme.
Review Date	September 2026
Policy Summary	The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the assessment practice is consistent across the Group and that all outcomes/criteria for a programme / course are met within the assessment process.

Applicability of Policy	Consultation Undertaken	Applicable To
Newcastle	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form	Yes	Yes
Carlisle	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster	Yes	Yes
Lewisham	Yes	Yes
Southwark	Yes	Yes
West Lancashire	Yes	Yes
Professional Services	Yes	Yes

<b><u>Changes to Earlier Versions</u></b>	
<b><u>Previous Approval Date</u></b>	<b><u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u></b>
January 2018	Extension of renewal until August 2021
March 2019	Inclusion of EBID assessment, detailing of linked policies and reference to potential requirement in determining TAG's. Equality impact statement included.
September 2021 - Reviewed September 2023	Updated title and content to align to current sector terminology and inclusion of details around T-level's. Inclusion of details for the provision for reasonable adjustments for learners. Detailed grounds and procedures for academic appeals procedures

## Assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and Moderation Policy



Linked Documents	
NCG Code of Professional Conduct	Sets out the principals, values and standards governing the professional behaviour of all colleagues that should be followed in this policy.
NCG Whistleblowing and Disclosure Policy	This provides safeguards to protect staff delivering or working for NCG who raise genuine concerns about malpractice in connection with the Organisation and should be followed within this policy.
NCG Disciplinary Policy	Provides a framework for potential for which potential misconduct in managed fairly, consistently and promptly, which may arise from any potential malpractice within this policy.
NCG Student Positive Behaviour Policy	If malpractice is confirmed and disciplinary action is taken, the policy will set out the options for the student appeals process.
NCG Non-Examination Assessment Policy	The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all JCQ and awarding body guidelines are clearly understood and followed in the completion of non-examination assessments.
NCG HE Assessment Policy	The implementation of the assessment, internal verification and moderation policy plan must ensure that the principles as described in the policy.

Equality Impact Assessment

	Judgement	Explanatory Note if required
<b>EIA 1 - Does the proposed policy/procedure align with the intention of the NCG Mission and EDIB Intent Statement in 2.0?</b>	Yes	Yes – ensuring our learners receive exceptional education
<b>EIA 2 - Does the proposed policy/procedure in any way impact unfairly on any protected characteristics below?</b>	No	
<b>Age</b>	No	
<b>Disability / Difficulty</b>	No	
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	No	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>	No	
<b>Race</b>	No	
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	No	
<b>Sex</b>	No	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	No	
<b>EIA3 - Does the proposed policy/processes contain any language/terms/references/phrasing that could cause offence to any specific groups of people or individuals?</b>	No	
<b>EIA4 - Does the policy/process discriminate or victimise any groups or individuals?</b>	No	
<b>EIA 5 - Does this policy/process positively discriminate against any group of people, or individuals?</b>	No	
<b>EIA 5 - Does this policy/process include any positive action to support underrepresented groups of people, or individuals?</b>	No	
<b>EIA 6 - How do you know that the above is correct?</b>	<p>This policy has been reviewed by the QTLA forum and NCG Executive NCG, prior to approval by NCG Corporation.</p> <p>The membership of these groups is indicative of the wider population within NCG.</p>	

## 1. Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy applies to all staff and learners undertaking further education and training, including T-levels and apprenticeships, in all colleges of NCG. Staff involved with the delivery and assessment of higher education will follow the NCG Higher Education Assessment Policy and Moderation Process.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the assessment practice is consistent across the Group and that all outcomes/ criteria for a programme / course are met within the assessment process.

This policy and its associated procedures are equally applicable to non-regulated qualifications, i.e., those that follow The Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) Cycle.

## 2. Policy Statement

### Key Principles of Assessment

- Assessors of education and training, T-levels and apprenticeships will be appropriately qualified as per awarding organisation and Training organisations requirements.
- Assignment briefs and other assessment materials will clearly identify the learning outcomes/criteria to be achieved.
- Assessments will be written to allow learners to achieve at an appropriate level and provide opportunities for all learners to attempt all levels of criteria. Assessment materials will be internally quality assured (IQA) for adherence to the qualification specification before distributing to learners.
- Learners will be made aware at the start of their course of the number and frequency of both internal and external formative/summative assessments, with planned dates. For short or roll on roll off programmes or National Vocational Qualification and other assessment in the workplace, all assessment will be confirmed with the learner on an individual basis and will be in line with the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and/or learner's assessment plan.

- Learners will be required to undertake initial assessment of prior or existing skills and knowledge at the start of the programme to ensure that the content and assessment is appropriately challenging and at the right level.
- Written assignment briefs / assessments will be adequately introduced to the learners and employers where appropriate, before assessment takes place; teachers are expected to ensure that sufficient delivery and learning has previously taken place to provide the learners with appropriate education and training prior to assessment, in line with local procedures. In the Employer Set Project (ESP) in T-levels, candidates should not be entered for the assessment until they have covered all the knowledge and skills covered in the Core content of the qualification, so that they are in a position to complete the Employer-Set Project assessment successfully.
- NCG has a duty to provide reasonable adjustments for our learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities to support their access to education, and ensure they are not disadvantaged during teaching, learning and assessment in comparison to their peers. Reasonable adjustments should be discussed and confirmed with learners at the earliest opportunity (typically at enrolment) to ensure that timely adjustments and/or support can be implemented. On occasions where reasonable adjustment requirements are not immediately disclosed or develop / become apparent during a learner's course of study, these should be addressed and supported as soon as is practicable. The aim is to ensure assessment is fair and consistent, with arrangements allowing the learners to show what they know and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment.
- If potential assessment support is required, assessors must notify the appropriate college exams team to check the guidance of the relevant awarding body and liaise with the awarding body to apply for the agreement of special access arrangements. This may extend to employers where a substantial work-based placement is required, for example in T-levels. An adjustment may not be determined as reasonable if it impacts the integrity of an assessment or involves immoderate or excessive costs.

- Examples of reasonable adjustments to assessments (including exam-access arrangements) may include:
  - Scribes, reader or word processor
  - Supervised rest breaks
  - Private or smaller exam rooms
  - Additional reading and assessment time
  - Timetabling to meet learner needs
- Where programmes / courses allow, interim feedback will be provided to the learner prior to the formal verification processes on the understanding that assessment outcomes (marks / grades / standards met / not met) may subsequently change. Interim feedback will clearly reference the successful/unsuccessful attainment and highlight the relative strengths and/or areas for further improvement with straightforward guidance on what the learner needs to do to improve further, to ensure that they are able to realise their potential.
- All assessment outcomes will be formally recorded prior to being released to the learner.
- Final confirmation of summative outcomes (marks / grades / competences) will be communicated to the learner after the full internal and / or external quality assurances processes have been concluded (whichever is appropriate). For some colleges this will be after the assessment board processes have taken place or following release of Awarding Organisation results e.g. A level / GCSE.
- Results must be stored and secured electronically for at least the duration required by the awarding organisation - NCG colleges are advised to archive results through secure, electronic backup facilities, to be stored for a specified period of time, in accordance with the NCG Non-Examination Assessment Policy.
- During their induction, learners will be made aware of the grounds and how to make an appeal against any assessment outcomes via the Academic Appeals Procedure. Learners are shown this during induction activities and/or provided

a copy, for example in their student/course handbook. This would be revisited at regular points throughout the academic year. Awarding Organisation (AO) documentation will be completed in a timely fashion (within AO defined timescales), following assessment board decisions or IQA/EQA meetings and returned to the relevant exam section to be forwarded to awarding bodies.

- Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) – In the event that there is a requirement in determining Tag's, the NCG Centre Policy and Process notes for Assigning Teacher-Assessed Grades should be read and followed in conjunction with this policy. This process note sets out the steps required by staff when completing TAGs for academic and vocational qualifications in an exam series.

### Assessment Boards

The organisation that awards qualifications through a process of assessment and examinations and for colleges with internal assessments, will have a formal assessment / achievement / course board, or equivalent. Minutes of assessment boards will be kept by School / Department / Curriculum / Operational area as appropriate and be available for audit as required.

## 3. Internal Quality Assurance / Moderation

### 3.1. General Arrangements

Whilst each college must have their own assessment and IV procedures specific to their provision, the key principles underlying internal verification are that:

- Each course or group of courses has a named lead IQA / moderator and an appropriate number of IQA's /moderators.
- All IQA's / moderators must have copies of Awarding Body centre guidance and codes of practice and be aware of the sanctions for non-compliance with the approved centre criteria.

- Where IQA takes place in the workplace, any health and safety issues which are noted during the IQA visit are reported to the college's health and safety representative to action as appropriate.
- A sampling plan will be produced either at course, assessor, programme or centre level on a risk-based approach in line with awarding organisational guidance. College procedures must align to these specifications if documentation is reformatted locally.
- Individual assessment briefs are internally checked before being distributed to learners (stage 1), where assessment is not prescribed by the awarding organisation. If any issues are identified by the Internal Verifier, they should be addressed by the Assessor prior to issue to learners. The process will then proceed to check the accuracy and validity of assessment decisions on submission of the learner work (stage 2).
- Records will be kept of the IV / moderation process and made available for audit.

### 3.2. Sampling

A representative must follow the CAMERA principle (candidates, assessors, methods of assessment, evidence types, records and assessment sites). This should ensure a selection of assessments / assignments from all assessors across all units / modules / levels and across all assessment sites will be internally verified or moderated to check that:

- Before the distribution of assessment brief (part 1):
  - the assessment brief is fit for purpose.
  - evidence requirements are met and standards maintained.
  - the assessment is valid, authentic, current, sufficient, reliable and fair.
  - that assessors clearly understand what evidence is required to meet the assessment outcomes / criteria.
  - the process provides the opportunity for appropriate feedback to learners.
- After submission of the assessed learner work (part 2):

- the assessment decision is valid, authentic, current, sufficient, reliable and fair.
- that the feedback to learners is suitably robust and provides guidance for learner development.

### 3.3. Standardisation

Standardisation / moderation should take place when a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person; standardisation must be carried out before any formal assessment and IQA has taken place. Standardisation is the process to discuss and mutually assess a sample of learner work to reach a consensus. This will be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided in the qualification specification.

An audit of the IQA and standardisation / moderation processes in each School/ Department / Curriculum / Centre / Operational area will take place at least once each year with formal reports presented to the senior management team in each Division.

The outcomes and any actions resulting from IQA / moderation are followed up, acted upon, reported and signed off in the relevant curriculum areas / department's regular IQA / moderation meetings.

### 3.4. Academic Appeals against internal assessment decisions

Appeals are conducted following the colleges local procedures and the awarding bodies requirements. The procedures are in place to confirm the colleges compliance with the JCQ's General Regulations. Students can only appeal against an internal assessment result or decision of an internal Achievement Board for the following reasons:

- The student's performance in an assessment suffered through illness or other compelling circumstance which could not have been reasonably reported at the time of the assessment. Students who appeal on this basis will be required to show why the circumstance could not have been reported earlier.

- There were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment, which adversely affected the result achieved.
  - There is evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment on the part of one or more members of staff conducting the assessment.
  - The Achievement Board did not consider all previous reported circumstances that may have significantly affected the student's performance. Students are reminded that such circumstances must be recorded at the time they arise.
  - Identified reasonable adjustments were not implemented.
- \* There may be regulatory amendments in extraordinary circumstances, e.g., Covid-19.

### 3.5. Academic Malpractice and Whistleblowing

Should the assessor and/or verifier discover evidence of academic misconduct by the learner and/or assessor, then this will follow the process contained within NCG's Malpractice Policy.

Should any learners or staff have concerns associated with wider or widespread professional conduct, then they will follow the process set out in the NCG Whistleblowing and Disclosure Policy

## 4. Equality and Diversity Statement

- 4.1. This policy will be implemented in accordance with the NCG Equality Strategy and with consideration of the guidelines of awarding organisations in relation to equality of opportunity.
- 4.2. The Colleges will manage cases of assessment in accordance with the NCG Student Positive Behaviour Policy and the commitment to equality and diversity made in that policy.

### **NCG is committed to:**

- Ensuring appropriate consideration for specialist examination and assessment facilities for students with special educational needs and / or disabilities.
- Providing clear and timely information for students on examination regulations in relation to candidates with disabilities and candidates who require special consideration.
- Ensuring assessments are set that provide equal opportunity for all candidates to demonstrate their achievement of the required learning outcomes.

Where the Academic Appeals Procedure applies to any learner with special educational needs and / or disabilities, the college will make particular reference to any reasonable adjustment that has been made or should be made for that individual. College procedures should be reviewed regularly, in line with JCQ General Regulations updates to ensure they support, and in no way restrict, the implementation of reasonable adjustments for learners. An adjustment may not be determined as reasonable if it impacts the integrity of an assessment or involves immoderate or excessive costs.

### **5. Linked College Procedures**

- Newcastle College QPRO 06 Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance Procedure and Academic Appeals Procedure (FE)
- 'NSFC Assessment Procedure' and 'NSFC Work Scrutiny Procedure'.
- Carlisle College IQA Procedure
- Kidderminster College Assessment and Verification Procedure

### **6. Location and Access to the Policy**

The Assessment and Internal Verification and Moderation Policy is located as follows:

- NCG Intranet: Group Services: Group Policies and Procedures