NWSLC

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE AND SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

# Assessment, Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy 2026

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Title of Policy & Procedure Author: Vice Principal Quality

Target Audience: Staff / Students

Policy Location: Website / Staff SharePoint

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Executive Approval Date: October 2026 Next Approval: October 2029

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## Document History

| Version Number | Amended By | Date of Revision | General Revision Description |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.0 | | | Initial issue |

# 1 Introduction

1.1 North Warwickshire & South Leicestershire College is committed to providing high quality, fair, inclusive and consistent assessment practices that support student achievement and maintain the integrity of its qualifications.

1.2 This Policy forms part of the College's Quality Cycle and sets out the principles and expectations for assessment, Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and assessment appeals across further education, access to higher education and higher education programmes. It provides a consistent framework to ensure assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair, inclusive and aligned with the awarding organisation and regulatory requirements.

1.3 The College is committed to ensuring that all assessment decisions are made transparently, consistently and in accordance with awarding organisation requirements. All students have the right to appeal against an assessment decision or grade in accordance with the College procedure (outlined in Appendix 1) which complies with the requirements of relevant awarding organisations and the regulatory authority of Ofqual. The purpose of this policy and procedures is to provide staff and students clear and comprehensive instruction on how to appeal against an assessment decision.

1.4 This Policy is aligned with the College's Academic Integrity, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy, by promoting consistent assessment practice, high standards of academic quality and an equitable experience for all students.

1.5 The Policy recognises the requirements of awarding organisations, statutory and regulatory bodies validating partners, external quality assurers, external examiners, regulatory frameworks, guidance and governance. Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance arrangements will reflect these requirements where applicable.

1.6 The Policy does not cover the situation in respect of external examinations where relevant awarding organisation policies and procedures will apply.

1.7 The College operates a three-tier approach to assessment and quality assurance:

i. Assessment – ensuring assessment is planned, delivered and judged fairly and consistently.

ii. Internal Quality Assurance (IQA); Internal Verification (IV) – monitoring and improving assessment practice through regular standardisation, sampling and quality assurance activities as set out in the relevant awarding organisation's expectations.

iii. External Quality Assurance (EQA); Standards Verification (SV) – working collaboratively with awarding organisations, external quality assurers, external examiners and validating partners to maintain standards and continuous improvement.

# 2 Definitions

## 2.1 Definition of Assessment

2.1.1 Assessment is the process of evaluating and making judgements about evidence of a student's knowledge, skills and competence against defined learning outcomes and assessment criteria. It includes all College assessed work which contributes towards external awarding organisation's assessment decisions.

## 2.2 Assessment Appeal

2.2.1 Assessment appeal is the procedure that enables every student to appeal against any internal assessment of their work impartially, consistently and transparently in accordance with the grounds for appeal.

## 2.3 Internal Quality Assurance

2.3.1 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) also known as Internal Verification (IV) is the practice and of monitoring and assuring the quality, consistency, fairness and reliability of assessment decisions and practices and that they meet awarding organisation standards. Staff who undertake IQA will be suitably qualified and / or experienced assessors and occupationally competent as is deemed appropriate by the relevant awarding organisation.

## 2.4 External Quality Assurance

2.4.1 External Quality Assurance (EQA) also known as Standards Verification (SV) is the independent quality assurance undertaken by awarding organisations, external quality assurance, external examiners or validating partners to confirm that assessment decisions and internal quality assurance processes meet national standards and regulatory requirements.

## 2.5 Standardisation

2.5.1 Standardisation is the process through which assessors and quality assurance staff develop a shared understanding of assessment standards and apply assessment criteria consistently.

## 2.6 Reasonable Adjustments

2.6.1 Reasonable Adjustments are agreed changes made to assessment arrangements to reduce or remove a disadvantage experienced by a student due to a disability or other defined need, without compromising the integrity of the assessment. Reasonable adjustments will be implemented in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner requirements.

## 2.7 Special Considerations

2.7.1 Special Consideration is an adjustment to assessment arrangements or outcomes for a student who has temporarily experienced illness, injury or other circumstances outside of their control which have affected their ability to undertake or complete an assessment. Special consideration will be applied in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner requirements.

## 2.8 College

2.8.1 College is North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College.

# 3 Related Policies and Documents

3.1 This Policy should be read alongside other policies and procedures including:

- Academic Integrity, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy;
- AI Usage Policy;
- Awarding organisation regulations or procedures applicable to the qualification concerned;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- JCQ Malpractice Policies and Procedures;

- Registration and Certification Policy and Procedure;
- Special Education Needs and Disability & Additional Learning Support Policy;
- Student Conduct Expectations Policy;
- Whistleblowing Policy;
- Other policies, procedures and documents may be identified from time to time as circumstances change and may be added to this list.

# 4 Rationale

4.1 The College must meet its obligation to ensure that its assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and appeals practice and procedures are conducted in accordance with national standards, relevant regulatory frameworks and awarding organisation requirements, thereby maintaining the validity, reliability and integrity of qualifications.

4.2 The College seeks to maintain the integrity of its assessment procedures by operating a robust Internal Quality Assurance framework to promote consistency in assessment decisions, support continuous improvement, assure the quality of assessment practice and provide confidence to all stakeholders that standards are being maintained.

4.3 The College recognises every student's right to appeal against an assessment decision where they believe assessment processes have not been applied fairly, consistently or in accordance with the awarding organisation requirements.

4.4 The College recognises the important role of External Quality Assurance in maintaining national standards. The College will work collaboratively with awarding organisations, external quality assurers, external examiners, validating partners and regulatory bodies to support continuous improvement and ensure compliance with qualification requirements.

# 5 Core Principles and Responsibility

## 5.1 Assessment Principles

5.1.1 The Assessment at the College will be: valid, reliable, fair, honest, inclusive, transparent, consistent, timely, authentic, free from discrimination of any kind and compliant with awarding organisation requirements.

## 5.2 Internal Quality Assurance Principles

5.2.1 The College supports the quality assurance process and shall ensure that the requirements of all awarding organisation regulations are followed.

Internal Quality Assurance will:

i. Ensure consistency of assessment decisions;

ii. support assessors through developmental feedback;

iii. use planned sampling strategies;

iv. be risk based where appropriate and promote continuous improvement;

v. Prepare programmes for external quality assurance.

## 5.3 External Quality Assurance Principles

5.3.1 The College and staff will:

i. Cooperate fully with Awarding Organisations;

ii. Support External Quality Assurers and External Examiners;

iii. Implement recommendations promptly;

iv. Maintain accurate assessment and IQA records;

v. Share outcomes to improve practice across programmes.

## 5.4 Appeals Principles

5.4.1 Appeals will be:

i. Accessible;

ii. Transparent;

iii. Timely;

iv. Independent where appropriate;

v. Evidenced-based;

vi. Free from bias.

## 5.5 Responsibility

5.5.1 The College recognises the essential contribution of appropriately qualified staff, managers and quality assurers in maintaining the quality, consistency and integrity across all programmes.

5.5.2 Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance activities will be undertaken by occupationally competent and appropriately qualified assessors and internal quality assurers as stipulated by the relevant awarding organisation. Staff will maintain their professional competence through continuing professional development and engage with awarding organisation requirements.

5.5.3 All College campuses, delivery locations and partner delivery arrangements shall operate consistently in accordance with this Policy and relevant awarding organisation requirements.

5.5.4 Students have the right to appeal against an assessment decision where they believe assessment processes have not been applied fairly, consistently or in accordance with the awarding organisation requirements. Assessment appeals shall be made in accordance with section 6.3 of this Policy and Appendix 1 which shall apply to assessment decisions made wherever College students are taught.

5.5.5 Internal Quality Assurance activities on competence-based programmes shall be planned, risk-based, and proportionate to programme and awarding organisation requirements. Internal Quality Assurance will include regular standardisation, sampling, monitoring of assessment decisions and developmental feedback to support consistent assessment practice and continuous improvement. Internal Quality Assurance activity documentation and standardisation records will be retained for the purpose of external quality assurance activity and audits. A standardisation template is provided in the Moodle Teachers Hub where the awarding organisation does not provide one.

5.5.6 All assessment activities, assignment briefs and assessment materials shall be designed to meet the qualification specifications, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and the awarding organisation requirements to enable students to demonstrate achievement fairly and authentically.

5.5.7 Assessment decisions awarded to students shall be valid, reliable, fair, consistent and meet the appropriate national standard.

5.5.8 Assessment decisions, feedback and internal quality assurance activity shall be accurately recorded, tracked, securely retained and monitored throughout a programme of study.

5.5.9 Students shall receive clear information about assessment requirements, assessment schedules, academic integrity, including when and how Artificial Intelligence (AI) may be used in assessment, how permitted use must be acknowledged and referenced, and the requirement for students to submit work that is demonstrably their own. Clear information will also be provided to students about assessment misconduct and malpractice including possible penalties and sanctions, feedback arrangements, internal and external quality assurance processes and their right to appeal following the College's assessment, misconduct and appeals Policy, process and procedures at the earliest stage of their programme.

5.5.10 The College's core values lie at the heart of all College activity. The College nurtures a culture of honesty, mutual trust and accountability and expects all members of the College community (staff and students) to be responsible for ensuring academic and assessment integrity is embedded and upheld.

5.5.11 The College supports a 'whole community' approach in protecting assessment quality. The College will support collaboration between curriculum teams, Internal quality assurers, the Quality Team and awarding organisations to continually enhance assessment practice and improve student experience.

5.5.12 Students will be supported to understand assessment expectations, academic integrity, academic writing, study skills and good academic practice through:

i. Induction;

ii. Programme level guidance and tutorial support via the academic coordinator Support External Quality Assurers and External Examiners;

iii. Academic study workshops in the Learning Resource Centre at each Campus. iv. guidance and resources on Moodle;

iv. Guidance on the permitted use of AI in assessment, including qualification-specific requirements, appropriate acknowledgement and referencing of AI-generated content, and the consequences of AI misuse;

v. External websites.

5.5.13 The College will utilise appropriate digital systems and technologies, including the use of diagnostic tool 'Turnitin' to support the effective management of authentic assessment, timely feedback, secure record keeping and quality assurance activities in accordance with awarding organisation requirements. Turnitin is available to staff and students via Moodle, this

programme enables students to check assessments before they are submitted to help prevent unintentional plagiarism. The tool also supports staff in the identification / detection of assessment misconduct including detection of the use of AI.

5.5.14 All members of the College community (staff and students) are responsible for reporting cases of potential or confirmed academic and/or assessment misconduct and malpractice as outlined in the College's Academic Integrity, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

5.5.15 The College will engage with External Quality Assurance activities undertaken by the awarding organisations, external quality assurers, external examiners, external partners and validating partners. Recommendations arising from such activities will inform quality improvement planning and the continuous enhancement of assessment and quality assurance practice.

# 6 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

## 6.1 Implementation of Assessment and Quality Assurance

6.1.1 The implementation of this Policy is coordinated by the Quality Team which report directly to the Vice Principal - Quality. The Quality Team will support curriculum areas in implementing effective assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and assessment appeals that meet awarding organisation requirements and College quality standards.

6.1.2 The Quality Team consists of staff with sufficient authority to monitor the effectiveness of the Policy. The Quality Team will monitor the effectiveness of assessment and Internal Quality Assurance through quality assurance activities including audits, monitoring, Quality Monitoring Reviews (QMRs), review of EQA reports, assessment appeals and quality improvement planning.

6.1.3 Curriculum teams are responsible for implementing assessment and Internal Quality Assurance arrangements appropriate to their programmes. Assessment practices will reflect qualification specifications, awarding organisation requirements. Assessment of non-competence based programmes should conform to the College's quality standards. Internal Quality Assurance activities will be planned to ensure assessment is valid, reliable, fair and consistent.

6.1.4 The role of the Lecturer/Assessor is to ensure that students:

i. Are fully briefed on assessment schedules, requirements, methods, procedures and appeals;

ii. Have access to an individual learning and assessment plan;

iii. Who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported in both internal and external assessment procedures, and where required have appropriate reasonable adjustments implemented in accordance with awarding organisation requirements to ensure equitable access to assessment and opportunity to succeed;

iv. Work is assessed regularly, consistently and fairly using the relevant national standards and in line with awarding organisation requirements;

v. Receive an assessment decision/grade and clear, constructive and developmental feedback within 10 working days of the submission deadline or agreed extension.

vi. Feedback will be provided in accordance with NWSLC Feedback framework and will support learning, identify progress towards achievement of learning outcomes using awarding organisation criteria/grading procedures;

vii. Assessment records, including assessment outcomes and feedback will use appropriate documentation, be securely stored, accurately maintained and retained in accordance with College procedures and awarding organisation requirements;

viii. Take responsible steps to assure the authenticity of assessed work and only accept work for assessment where they are satisfied, in accordance with the awarding organisation requirements, that work is the student's own.

## 6.2 Implementation of Quality Assurance

6.2.1 Written assignments will be submitted by the published deadline through Turnitin, where this is the designated submission method for the programme. Where required by the awarding organisation, students must complete the appropriate declaration of authentication confirming that work submitted is their own and has been appropriately acknowledged. Staff must follow the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner requirements where concerns about authenticity or AI misuse arise before or after authentication has taken place.

6.2.2 Turnitin will be used to support consideration of similarity, academic integrity and the appropriate use of AI. Turnitin similarity scores, AI writing indicators or other automated indicators, will not, in isolation, be treated as evidence that assessment malpractice has occurred. Any concerns relating to academic integrity will be managed in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation and JCQ requirements, as well as the College's Academic Integrity, Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

6.2.3 All programmes and assessors will be included in planned Internal Quality Assurance activities. IQA sampling will be planned and sufficiently representative, taking account of the CAMERA principles – Candidates, Assessors, Methods of assessment, Evidence, Records and Assessment sites. A minimum sample will include 10% or three samples of learner evidence, whichever is greater, and will be increased where risk, previous findings or awarding organisation requirements indicate that additional sampling is necessary. An appropriate sample of assessment decisions and feedback will be reviewed by an internal quality assurer to ensure the assessment decisions are fair, valid, reliable and consistent and feedback is sufficiently developmental.

6.2.4 IQA sampling will be planned, proportionate and risk-based, taking account of the awarding organisation requirements and previous IQA findings. IQA activity and outcomes and reports will be recorded and stored. Any actions identified will be communicated to the assessor, addressed within agreed timescales and followed up to ensure completion.

6.2.5 Programmes will be subject to External Quality Assurance in accordance with the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner. This may include review by an External Quality Assurer (EQA), Standards Verifier (SV), External Examiner (EE), or Moderator. The College and curriculum teams will engage positively with External Quality Assurance activities undertaken by awarding organisations and will provide access to assessment and IQA evidence as required. Outcomes and recommendations from External Quality Assurance will be disseminated appropriately and inform quality improvement planning, staff development and ongoing insurance of assessment practice.

## 6.3 Implementation of Assessment Appeals

6.3.1 The College will operate a fair, transparent and timely assessment appeals procedure that enables students to request a review of an assessment decision where there are valid grounds for appeal. Students should normally seek to resolve concerns with their assessor in the first instance, before progressing through the formal appeals process. Appeals will be managed in accordance with the awarding organisation or validating partner requirements and the College's published Assessment Appeals procedure (Appendix 1).

6.3.2 Where a concern cannot be resolved with the assessor, students may progress their appeal through the stages set out in the Assessment Appeals Procedure (Appendix 1). This includes independent review and, where permitted escalation to the relevant awarding organisation or validating partner once the College's internal process has been exhausted. All appeals will be considered impartially and based on the available evidence.

6.3.3 The Lecturer/Assessor will ensure that students are informed of their right to appeal, the grounds on which an appeal may be made and the process to be followed.

6.3.4 The Quality Team will provide oversight of assessment appeals to ensure consistency of decision-making, compliance with awarding organisation requirements and the effective implementation of this Policy.

6.3.5 Outcomes arising from assessment appeals will be monitored to identify themes, informed quality improvement activities and support the continuous enhancement of assessment and internal quality assurance practice.

6.3.6 Those involved in considering an assessment appeal must have no previous involvement in the assessment decision, ensuring that appeals are considered impartially and objectively.

## 6.4 Monitoring and Review

6.4.1 Monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of the Assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy is undertaken at a variety of levels.

6.4.2 Awarding organisation representatives shall scrutinise the Policy and associated procedures to ensure that national guidelines are followed. Awarding organisation assessment audits will be undertaken and the resulting reports shall be scrutinised by the Vice Principal - Quality and followed up by the Quality Team to inform quality improvement planning.

6.4.3 The Vice Principal - Quality will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the College's assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and all formal assessment appeals arrangements and ensure that significant issues are addressed through appropriate quality improvement processes.

6.4.4 Vice Principals, Heads of Department, Curriculum Area Leads and members of the Quality Team will monitor assessment practice, Internal Quality Assurance activity, and formal assessment appeals within their areas of responsibility, taking appropriate action where improvements are identified.

6.4.5 The College will retain records of all formal assessment appeals applicable to this Policy for a period of three academic years or in accordance with awarding organisation requirements where this differs.

6.4.6 This Policy will be reviewed every three years, or as otherwise directed by the Principal, College Policy or legislative changes.

6.4.7 Findings arising from Internal Quality Assurance, External Quality Assurance, formal assessment appeals, student feedback and awarding organisation activity will be used to inform staff development, quality improvement planning and the continuous enhancement of assessment practice across the College.

# 7 Equality Analysis

7.1 By virtue of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 (and subsequent amendments), the College has a duty to have due regard to the need to:

i. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other prohibited conduct;

ii. advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups;

iii. foster good relations between people from different groups.

7.2 In implementing this Policy and associated procedures, the College will ensure that assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and assessment appeals are undertaken fairly, consistently and without discrimination. Equality considerations will be embedded within decision-making processes, and reasonable adjustments will be implemented where appropriate to ensure equitable access to assessment.

7.3 Where necessary a full equality impact assessment will be undertaken.

# 8 Data Protection Impact Assessment

8.1 Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) are an essential part of the College's accountability obligations under the UK GDPR. Conducting a DPIA is a legal requirement for any type of processing, including certain specified types of processing that are likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. Under UK GDPR, failure to carry out a DPIA when required may leave the College open to enforcement action.

8.2 Where required, A DPIA, relating to any relevant areas within this Policy and Procedure, will be undertaken to enable the systematic analysis, identification and minimisation of data protection risks and to demonstrate how the College complies with its data protect obligations. The College will ensure that personal data relating to assessment, Internal Quality Assurance and assessment appeals is processed lawfully, fairly and securely in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act (2018).

# Appendix 1: Higher Education and Further Education Assessment Appeals Procedure (3 Stages)

**Stage 1: Review with the Assessor**

1.1 In the first instance the student wishing for a review of an assessment decision should speak to the assessor. The assessor should give a full explanation of the assessment process and how the grading was determined.

1.2 Following the discussion the assessor may if they consider it appropriate, give the student the opportunity to re-submit work by an agreed deadline, providing that this is within the constraints of the Awarding Organisation.

1.3 If the student is not satisfied with the explanation, the assessor should ensure that the student has a copy of the Assessment Quality Assurance and Appeals Policy, knows the names of the staff who may be involved and is aware of the Student Support Services available.

1.4 A written record of the outcome at the review, dated and signed by both parties should be placed in the student's file.

**Stage 2: Independent Re-Assessment of Work**

2.1 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 they should within 5 working days of receipt of the outcome of Stage 1, speak to the relevant College Curriculum Area Lead, requesting a reassessment of the work. A written record of the request dated and signed should be placed in the student's file.

2.2 Within 10 working days of receipt of the request, the re-assessment should take place. The reassessment should be done by the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) / Internal Verifier (IV) and a second assessor.

2.3 A written record of the agreed assessment, giving as full an explanation as possible should be signed by the IQA/IV and second assessor. A copy should be given to the student and a further copy placed in the student's file.

**Stage 3: Appeal**

3.1 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, they should within 5 working days of receipt of the outcome of Stage 2, lodge an appeal with the Vice Principal - Quality. A copy of the appeal shall be placed in the student's file.

3.2 The Vice Principal Quality should inform the External Quality Assurer (EQA) / Standards Verifier (SV), or Moderator that an appeal against assessment has been made.

3.3 The Vice Principal Quality should arrange for a panel of two people to hear the appeal, neither of whom has been previously involved in earlier stages. The panel should meet to hear the appeal within 10 working days of the appeal being lodged.

3.4 The panel should consider all the evidence, including the original assessment and re-assessment. The student may be accompanied. The assessor will give their evidence to the panel followed by the student's appeal. The panel may wish to call the second assessor and Internal Verifier.

3.5 A signed and dated record of the decision of the panel should be given to the student within 5 working days of the meeting and a further copy placed in the student's file.

**Stage 4: Further Action**

4.1 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 3, they may use the College Complaints procedure or use the relevant Awarding Organisation's Appeals/complaints procedure.

Contact the Relevant Regulatory Authority Ofqual http://www.ofqual.gov.uk