

**ASSESSMENT & INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY**  
**Part A - Internal Assessment & Verification Policy**  
**Part B – Internal Assessment Appeals Procedure**

**INTERNAL ASSESSMENT & VERIFICATION POLICY - Part A**

**1. Introduction**

The South Thames Colleges Group is committed to providing learners with an assessment process that is fair and addresses the basic principles of authenticity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability, currency and sufficiency. It aims to promote learning and achievement by providing access to assessment and accreditation services, ensuring equality of opportunity for all learners within a clear structure.

The Internal Assessment and Internal Verification Policy provides a framework which covers all internal initial, formative and summative assessment, accreditation of prior learning, work-based assessment, internal verification, moderation, and standardisation procedures, from entry through to final achievement.

**2. Scope**

This policy applies to all teaching staff, support staff, assessors, internal verifiers and learners at the Group. This Policy applies to all further education delivered by the Group.

**3. Definitions**

The following definitions apply to all practices covered by this policy:

- **Assessment/Assessment for learning** is the measurement or evaluation of learners' knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values, against explicitly stated criteria for success.
- **Non-Examination Assessments (NEA)** measure subject specific knowledge and skills that cannot be tested by timed written papers. There are assessment stages and rules which apply to each stage. These rules often vary across subjects. The stages are task setting, task taking and task marking
- **Quality Assurance** is the process whereby the assessment carried out (internally) by assessors is checked for consistency and quality by other teachers or managers or (externally) by professionals nominated by the awarding organisations. Usually applied to vocational qualifications
- **Moderation** is the process whereby the assessment carried out (internally) by assessors is checked for consistency and quality by other teachers or managers or (externally) by professionals nominated by the awarding authorities
- **Standardisation** is the process whereby it is ensured that all assessment decisions made by assessors and internal quality assurers are made to the same standards (assessed reliably) and meet awarding body requirements
- An **Awarding Body** is any external body which has the authority to award accreditation for a qualification (e.g. Pearson, City & Guilds, NCFE)
- A **conflict of interest** is a situation in which any individual or organisation has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if this is not properly managed. Conflicts of interest can arise where teachers/trainers/assessors/any staff who are involved in the assessment and/or examination process have interests that conflict with their professional position e.g. if a relative or friend is a student at South Thames Colleges Group

#### 4. Aim

The aim of this policy is to give quality assurance in assessment processes by establishing quality control mechanisms for assessment through a system of internal quality assurance, verification, moderation and standardisation.

#### 5. Principles

Assessment procedures will ensure that:

- Learners are informed of their progress and maximise their chances of success in their learning
- Assessment feedback to learners is recorded and explicit in relation to assessment content and criteria and how learners may improve their performance within the assessment rules and regulations as laid down by the awarding body
- Assessed work of all types is returned to learners within a reasonable, effective and pre-determined timescale (normally two weeks)
- Teaching/assessment staff are informed of the effectiveness of their teaching and learners' learning
- In accordance with the Group's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and the regulations of awarding bodies, all learners' needs are considered and those with learning difficulties are supported, in accordance with the regulations of awarding bodies
- The assessment process is valid, reliable, current, sufficient, authentic, safe and fair and meets the requirements of the qualification
- Assessment decisions, including grades where appropriate, are recorded regularly, accurately and systematically, using Pro-Monitor
- Records are sufficient to allow audit of assessment and are retained for the period of time as directed by awarding bodies
- Communication within assessment teams and with awarding bodies is effective
- Communication to learners about assessment content, assessment criteria, mark schemes and grade boundaries is clear, explicit, and where helpful, uses standard formats
- Grading criteria regarding marking and submission conforms to Group and awarding body guidelines including compliance with guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following a referral/resubmission decision
- Equipment and accommodation for assessment comply with health and safety regulations and meet awarding body qualification approval requirements
- Learners are aware of their rights and responsibilities
- Learners can gain unit accreditation/certification where appropriate
- There is adequate monitoring and reviewing of procedures
- All programmes offered have sufficient qualified lecturers, assessors and internal quality assurers/verifiers/moderators who meet the qualification requirements as set by the awarding body. Changes of staff are communicated in a timely manner to awarding bodies as required under their rules and regulations
- Assessors and internal quality assurers/verifiers or moderators and teaching staff undertake appropriate continuous professional development and updating activities including those required to maintain compliance with the requirements of an awarding body
- At induction learners receive adequate assessment plans or individual learning plans, which are regularly reviewed
- Where appropriate the expectation is that learners will complete additional work set by their teachers and assessors outside the learning environment (e.g. classroom or workshop)

- For all types of courses an appropriate range of assessment methods are used, supported by a well-planned and comprehensive sampling process as well as appropriate standardisation activities
- Assessors, quality assurers/verifiers as well as moderators and staff undertaking standardisation, have sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their role
- There are no conflicts of interest which would impact on the ability of assessors and quality assurers/verifiers to make assessment decisions which meet the qualification standard. If unavoidable conflicts of interest exist, mitigation is put in place to ensure they are managed appropriately and reported as required to the awarding body
- Qualified assessors and internal quality assurers countersign decisions of unqualified assessors and internal quality assurers as required by the awarding bodies
- Rigorous efforts are made to prevent plagiarism, including inappropriate use of AI, or other forms of deception by learners as well as teachers/assessors
- There is a well-planned and comprehensive sampling process which ensures that every unit, grade, assignment, assessor and learner (where possible) are sampled
- Assignment briefs are internally verified before issue to learners to ensure that they will achieve the intended outcome and offer sufficient challenge to all learners
- Appropriate standardisation activities take place at least once per term
- Learners must meet formal assessment deadlines for an assessor to accept evidence for assessment (or for resubmission). Where learners have legitimate reasons for not being able to meet a deadline, the procedures for late submission set down by the awarding body will apply
- For all centre-assessed GCE/GCSE coursework, non-examination assessments and portfolios the Group will:
  - Notify awarding bodies of a consortium of centres with joint teaching arrangements for GCE and/or GCSE qualifications to allow the candidates for each specification to be treated as a single group for the moderation of centre-assessed work
  - Use only current assessment materials/tasks to assess candidates' knowledge and skills when the awarding body provides such materials
  - Before submitting marks to the awarding body inform candidates of their centre assessed marks and allow a candidate to request a review of the Group's marking

The Group will follow the procedures set down by awarding bodies to agree and implement adequate arrangements for access and support in the assessment process for candidates with special assessment needs.

All assessments are supported by a transparent assessment appeals procedure (see [INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEALS PROCEDURE \(non GCSE, GCE qualifications\) - Part B](#) this policy document).

In accordance with awarding body requirements, the South Thames Colleges Group has a Malpractice Policy (see [Malpractice & Maladministration Policy](#)) which complies with guidance issued by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The policy and the associated documents to which it relates together outline the rights and responsibilities of:

- Awarding bodies
- Group staff
- Learners

and the procedures to be followed in the event of breaches of policy, regulation or procedure.

Policy Title: Assessment and Internal Verification Policy	Staff Member Responsible: Director Quality & Learning Standards
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## 6. Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a member of staff has competing interests or loyalties. A failure to declare any conflict of interest between a personal, professional or business interest that will impact on assessment practice is deemed malpractice. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances in relation to assessment activity, for example:

- When an individual has a position in one organisation which conflicts with their interests in another organisation
- When an individual has personal interests that conflict with their professional position
- Where someone works for or carries out work on the Group's behalf, who has friends or relatives involved in receiving teaching/training or assessment from the Group
- Where learners on work experience/industry placement are a friend of or related to the person who writes an assessment on the learner's progress/performance whilst on work experience/industry placement

Every teacher/assessor has responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the above and most importantly that an individual discloses any activity if there is any doubt whether or not it represents a conflict of interest.

All actual/potential conflicts of interest must be reported using the form in the Cascade HR system. An automated alert will be sent to the Exams Managers who will review the actual/potential conflict of interest. Where appropriate the Exams Managers will inform the awarding body. An action plan will be required to meet the identified risk and compliance with this will be monitored.

An individual must not take on any such activities that could be deemed to compete or conflict with Group activities.

## 7. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Assessment

Learners **cannot** be credited for any work they produce for assessment which is not their own. Therefore, the benefit of them using AI is likely to be limited and they risk committing malpractice if AI is misused which can lead to serious sanctions being applied.

Learner work submitted for assessment must be in their own words and not copied or paraphrased from another source such as AI and must reflect their own independent work. Learners must demonstrate their own knowledge, skills and understanding as required and set out in the qualification specification.

While AI is becoming a useful tool in the workplace, for the purposes of demonstrating knowledge, understanding and skills for qualifications, it is important learners develop the knowledge, skills and understanding of the subjects they are studying and do not rely on AI.

However, there are opportunities for misuse by learners when submitting assessment materials.

AI misuse is where a student has used AI but has not appropriately acknowledged its use and has submitted work for assessment when it is not their own. Examples of AI misuse include, but are not limited to:

- Copying or paraphrasing sections of AI generated content so that the work is no longer the learner's own
- Copying or paraphrasing whole responses of AI-generated content

- Using AI to complete parts of assessment so that work does not reflect the learner’s own work, analysis, evaluation or calculations
- Failing to acknowledge use of AI tools when they have been used as a source of information
- Incomplete or poor acknowledgement of AI tools
- Submitting work with intentionally incomplete or misleading references or bibliographies

Teachers must ensure that all learners completing qualification assessments receive guidance on permissible uses of AI in generating assessment evidence and how it must be referenced.

Teachers should also consider the methods of assessment used to limit the opportunities for learners to use AI generated evidence inappropriately.

Submission of unacknowledged AI material by learners is a form of plagiarism and will be treated as such under the Malpractice in Internal Assessment Policy set out below.

### 8. Associated documentation

The following documentation provides guidelines for Group assessment practice:

- Staff guidance on Internal Verification, Standardisation and Moderation and associated paperwork from the relevant awarding bodies
- Examinations and Assessment Policy
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments (JCQ Policies and Procedures 2025/26). This document can be found at: [2024-25 JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies & Procedures](#)

### 9. Responsibility for implementation

The Director of Quality Learning Standards is responsible for the audit and monitoring of assessment practices across the Group.

Heads/Deputy Heads of School and Curriculum Managers are responsible for implementing and ensuring the quality of assessment practices in their areas and for ensuring there are sufficient trained staff to carry out requisite assessment, verification, standardisation and moderation activities.

### 10. Monitoring and Review of the policy

The implementation of the Assessment, Internal Verification & Moderation Policy is monitored by quality assurance audit and External Verifier and Moderation reports.

College Principals will monitor the implementation of the policy at curriculum level.

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Group Leadership Team.

### 11. Breach of the policy

Each College will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the Group’s policy by its staff and/or management.

Any instance of breach of the policy will be investigated and, where appropriate, action may be considered under the Group’s Disciplinary Code for staff.

### 12. Access to the policy

The Policy will be published on the Group website.

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## INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEALS PROCEDURE (non GCSE, GCE qualifications) - Part B

### 1. Introduction

The South Thames Colleges Group is committed to providing learners with an assessment process that is fair and addresses the basic principles of authenticity, consistency, transparency, validity, reliability, currency and sufficiency.

### 2. Initiating an appeal

An appeal against an assessment decision is taken seriously by the Group. In order to attempt an informal resolution to an appeal, learners should, in the first instance, speak to the person who assessed their work in order that they can explain their judgement. If learners are unwilling or unable to speak to this person, they should submit their appeal in writing then pass it to the Head of School for their curriculum area. The assessed work, the assessment brief and the assessment decision should be attached to their statement.

### 3. Assessment Appeals Procedure

There are two procedures described in this document:

- Appeals against internal assessment
- An appeal by the complainant where they are dissatisfied with the way in which their appeal has been dealt with

### 4. Appeals against internal assessment

A learner is entitled to appeal against an assessment decision if they feel that the work has not been accurately assessed. Wherever an assessment appeal is lodged, the College Principal should be notified by the person to whom the assessment appeal was made. Any appeal should be lodged within 10 working days (2 weeks) of the notification of the assessment decision.

The following stages should be followed:

#### Stage 1 - Informal

Where possible, the disagreement should be settled informally. The learner should, wherever possible, discuss the assessment decision with the person who assessed the work, who should explain the decision made or the marks awarded and consider the learner's objections.

#### Stage 2 - Written

In the event that a mutually agreeable decision is not reached or the learner is unable or unwilling to talk to the assessor, the learner should submit a written appeal to the Head of School.

The Head of School will instruct their Deputy/Curriculum Manager to investigate and hold a meeting with the Internal Verifier for the programme, the Head of Quality (QA & Data) and the assessor who marked the work. This group will review the work and the Head of School should provide written feedback within 5 working days (1 week) after receiving the appeal.

The Deputy Head of School/Curriculum Manager may involve another member of staff to carry out this role if they do not have the correct subject specialism to make a judgement on the assessment of the learner work.

**Stage 3 - Formal**

If no resolution has been reached at Stage 2, the College Principal will convene a formal Assessment Appeals Panel consisting of:

- College Principal
- The Head of School
- The Internal Verifier/Lead Internal Verifier or another suitable member of teaching staff in the subject area (not the assessor)

The panel may seek advice from Head of Quality (QA & Data) or the awarding body and call for the work to be re-marked by a third party if required. A written decision should be given within 15 working days of the appeal to Stage 3 of the process.

**Stage 4**

Where no resolution is achieved, learners can require the Group to submit the work to the awarding body who will reassess the work under dispute.

**Stage 5**

Where a learner is not satisfied, they can contact the Appeals Tribunal of the given awarding body.

There is no further stage of appeal to Qfqual, but you may submit a complaint to Qfqual about the way the awarding body dealt with the appeal.

**6. Complaints regarding the appeals process**

Where a learner is dissatisfied with the way in which the appeal has been dealt with, they may complain in writing to their College Executive Principal who will review the investigation and provide a written response to the complainant within 20 working days. The response will provide a written explanation and information on how the Group will deal with the matter if the appeal is upheld.

**7. Monitoring and Review**

The Appeals Procedure is monitored by the Director of Quality & Development.

The College Principal will monitor the implementation of the procedures at curriculum level.

The procedures will be reviewed bi-annually by the Director of Quality & Development.

**8. Access to the Procedure**

The Procedure will be published on the Group website.