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**1. This is a procedure which falls under the Assessment Policy and should be read in conjunction with that Policy**

**Introduction**

The Senior Quality and Compliance Officer (SQCO) is the first point of contact for any issues, questions or queries relating to any aspect of Quality Assurance for all Higher Education and Further Education programmes. The Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) processes and policy referred to in this document apply to all Further Education programmes where College staff assess, mark or grade student work prior to external Quality assurance by an Awarding Organisation, regardless of type of course or student. Higher Education Assessment rules, regulations and procedures are detailed within the relevant HE Procedure. This policy does not replace policies, rules and regulations issued by Awarding and Partner Organisations (such as Universities and Employers) and must run in conjunction with Awarding Organisation (AO), Professional Body or Partner Organisation requirements.

Regardless of the terminology used by external organisations, the College classes all internal quality assurance, verification, and moderation activities as IQA activity.

IQA can be translated into 4 key processes covering all aspects of assessment practice:

**Verifying Assessment**

- Monitoring assessment practice
- Confirming assessment schedules/plans
- Checking methodology and criteria linked to schemes of work/training plans
- Sampling assessments
- Standardising assessment judgements

**Standardisation of Internal Quality Assurance**

- Planning and facilitating standardisation meetings including follow up of any actions
- Assuring assessment materials, tasks, and resources
- Contributing to quality assurance for students / candidates
- Management of AO visits and follow up on good practice, recommendations, and actions
- Evaluating provision in the light of feedback from teams, students, and other stakeholders for example employers
- Other monitoring activities

**Developing and supporting Assessors and Internal Verifiers**

- Induction to the assessment and Quality Assurance process
- Providing information and feedback to Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)
- Informing and contributing to Continuing Professional Development
- Ensuring that all Assessors and IQAs hold up-to-date and relevant Assessor and IQA qualifications or are working towards them.
- Ensure that QoE team have been informed of any new staff or other persons involved in the delivery of the qualification
- Ensuring that all Assessors and IQAs are registered with, and approved by, the AO where necessary

**Coordinating requirements for external quality assurance and moderation**

- Work with the Quality of Education (QoE) team to schedule and coordinate visits
- Agree/confirm arrangements through the QoE team
- Provide updates and information to students, staff, and AOs
- Ensure deadlines are met.

It is important that the Head of Curriculum has formal and regular contact with IQAs, to focus on the internal quality assurance process and outcomes of all programmes within the Curriculum Area.

IQA activity does not replace internal standardisation activity which should be scheduled to either take part during an IQA session or as a separate activity (within or across teams and programmes).

### **Information to Students**

From the start of their programme, it is essential that students understand how to appeal against assessment decisions and that they know where to find this information. **Appendix 2** is a flow chart which should be given to students either electronically or in paper format at the start of their course. It should also be included in all student handbooks. Where assessment is portfolio based it is suggested that the flow chart be included as evidence of Fair and Reliable Assessment. Inclusion of this chart will support External Quality Assurance visits.

## **2. Principles of Internal Quality Assurance**

An effective system will benefit students by ensuring fair and reliable assessment decisions, free from discrimination, which take into account students' assessment needs. An effective system will also ensure that students understand the assessment process. **Appendix 3** models sampling for all qualifications. The process must be completed before any marks/grades are returned to students so that IQA for a course is an iterative process leading to summative assessment points.

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) is to verify the consistency and quality of assessment usually within a vocational or subject area. The expectations are outlined in **Appendix 5**. There may be occasions when a programme is run across College and will become the responsibility of a single IQA or a team of IQAs. In such cases, SQCO will agree who will act as Lead IQA for the programme.

It is the responsibility of the Heads of Curriculum to notify the Senior Quality and Compliance Officer (SQCO) when presenting new programmes at course file, by completing the Course Approval Form.

The QoE team will follow the Awarding Organisation's processes and procedures to ensure that approval is in place before students are enrolled onto new programmes.

If a Curriculum Area wishes to withdraw from a programme with an Awarding Organisation, the Senior Quality and Compliance Officer (SQCO) must be notified immediately.

The SQCO will liaise with the Awarding Organisation and all other stakeholders to ensure that a withdrawal plan is put in place which is in the best interests of all stakeholders and complies with the Centre Agreement held for that Awarding Organisation.

## **3. Verifying Assessment**

The IQA is responsible for ensuring assessments are in line with national standards and Awarding Organisation requirements. The College IQA plan includes documents to allow IQAs to provide evidence of their planning for sampling and must be completed by the deadline.

### **Characteristics of a sample**

IQA is a key process for ensuring consistent assessment of national standards, syllabus and scheme specifications. Sampling plans will be used by External Quality Assurers (EQAs) to inform their own

sampling strategy. An EQA may choose to sample students at short notice and has the right to insist on the chosen sample, therefore, the sample is 'safer' if some work from all students is included.

### **Size of Sampling Plan**

The sample should include a sufficient percentage of each Assessor and to consider any new members of staff to the team. For an existing qualification with experienced Assessors the sample size should be 20% of the total cohort with a minimum sample size of 5. For a new qualification or new Assessors, the sample size should be 50-100% of the total cohort. Small Cohorts of 5 or less should have 100% sampled. The College planning document includes documentation to allow IQAs to record their decisions.

Where issues arise from internal sampling, for example a high number of grades are changed, the IQA should increase the sample size up to 100%.

### **Characteristics which may be considered when devising a sampling plan**

IQA systems must ensure the validity, reliability and sufficiency of evidence presented for assessment.

<b><i>Characteristic</i></b>	<b><i>Features which should be taken into account when selecting a sample</i></b>
The number and type of candidates	Age; gender; ethnic origin; with/without disability; candidates with special assessment needs
The number of Assessors and their experience	IQA involves a balance between supporting Assessors and ensuring the quality of their assessment decisions. This includes: Experienced / inexperienced; qualified or unqualified; assessment load; occupational background. Judgements by inexperienced or newly appointed Assessors should be sampled more frequently than established Assessors. Where issues are identified with the work of an established Assessor the sample size should be increased. Where Assessors are working towards Assessor and IQA qualifications all judgements must be countersigned by an experienced and qualified Assessor.
The contents of the qualification	IQA is a key process for ensuring consistent assessment of national standards, syllabus and scheme specifications and must include those that occur frequently / rarely; any that are critical to an occupational or license to practice role; those which are problematic or difficult to interpret. Every Learning Outcome/Assessment Criteria must be sampled
Assessment methods	Can include; electronic assessment including multimedia; observation of work practice; questioning; written tests; projects and assignments; witness testimony; prior achievements; artefacts or products of work
The type of records of assessment	Assessment and IQA plans, Standardisation/IQA Assessor reports; EQA reports, candidate tracking documents
The number and range of assessment locations	In the workplace; off the job; different sites; laboratories; workshops, classrooms

### **3.1 Pre-assessment sampling to ensure:**

- The Assessor has made satisfactory plans to assess students
- Assessment guidelines and assessment plans cover all aspects of the qualification's specifications
- Assessment guidelines and assessment plans meet students' assessment needs
- Assessment instruments are fit for purpose and allow the full range of grades to be obtained
- Assessment is holistic and does not break the criteria down into such small tasks that students are being given too much guidance to achieve higher grades.

#### **Interim sampling to evaluate:**

- Assessment decisions prior to the return of work to students
- How details of feedback given to students establish an audit trail to standards or specifications
- Quality of formative feedback with specific alignment of the Awarding Organisation's boundaries and also leading to improvements in the quality of student work including spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Effectiveness of assessment planning
- Individual Assessor needs for support or training
- Good practice to share within the team or for wider benefit at standardisation meetings
- Standardisation documentation and audit trails

#### **Summative sampling to confirm:**

- The quality of the assessment decision
- How the Assessor has reached that decision
- The quality of feedback given to students
- An audit trail is in place which clearly demonstrates that the Assessor has checked the evidence presented, whatever its format, and related it to the qualification requirements

#### **Talking to students to ensure:**

- They understand how and when they will be assessed
- They are aware of the criteria they will be assessed against
- Account is taken of individual needs
- They are aware of appeals procedure
- They are satisfied with the assessment process

## **4. Standardising Internal Quality Assurance**

Internal Standardisation is a requirement of all Awarding Organisations and is critical to securing Certification for students. These guidelines must be used in conjunction with the programme's last Awarding Organisation report. Standardisation must address any actions or recommendations included in these reports. Standardisation meetings should be used as an opportunity to cascade and share good assessment practice.

Standardisation meetings must be recorded using IQA 05 and IQA06. Evidence of standardisation will be required by all EQAs.

The role of IQA is to take responsibility for promoting and maintaining the quality of assessment across programmes and in some cases, depending on the nature of the provision, this could be across college.

### The Purpose of Internal Standardisation

The purpose of internal standardisation is to develop a professional discussion to monitor standards and to ensure consistent and reliable assessment decisions across all staff. This includes ensuring that all assessment requirements of the qualification are met.

Internal standardisation provides a system for checking the quality of assessment to make sure that it is:

- **Valid** – relevant to the standards for which competence / attainment is claimed
- **Authentic** – produced by the students
- **Current** – sufficiently recent for Assessors to be confident that the student still has the same level of skills or knowledge
- **Reliable** - genuinely representative of the student's knowledge and skills
- **Sufficient** – meets all the requirements of the standards in full.

There are three stages of assessment where internal standardisation plays a vital role:

- The setting of assessments – including devising original assessment or modifying Awarding Organisation Assessments
- The production of evidence and expectations
- Standardising centre staff assessment decisions.

### Ensuring assessment resources

IQAs have first-hand knowledge of the training and assessment resources required for qualifications. It is important that these requirements - equipment, training facilities, students' support, learning materials and Assessors - are monitored and discussed on a regular basis.

To complete internal standardisation, a nominated member of the team will be identified to take responsibility for the IQA process for the course as the Lead IQA. This person will need to work closely with the Head of Curriculum.

The role of the IQA is to:

- Plan regular sampling activities, and sampling (throughout and before certification)
- Agree with the Head of Curriculum how the time available for the IQA process each term (See **Appendix 7**) will be used to support the programme team, what targets are to be achieved in each allocated slot and take responsibility for achievement of those targets
- Check the evidence of assessment decisions made by all Assessors across all assessment methods, including observation of practice against competence-based qualifications
- Advise on interpretation of the standards, including feedback from previous assessment series (where relevant)
- Check records of student registration and external assessment entries
- Co-ordinate assessment practice and ensure that all Assessors are using correct documentation
- Provide advice and support to Assessors who are assessing the qualification
- Monitor and observe (annually for each assessor) assessment practice to ensure that where needed all assessments are in line with the required standards
- Make sure all centre Assessors are assessing to the required standard
- Sample assessments to confirm Assessors' judgements
- Make sure that all assessment decisions are fair, valid and reliable
- Make sure feedback is given to all Centre Assessors and documented e.g. records of feedback

- Suggest ways in which assessment may be brought into line to meet the required standards
- Check that all units/modules have been included in internal standardisation
- Maintain assessment and standardisation documentation and records
- Liaise with the EQA in conjunction with the QoE team
- Organise and record regular standardisation meetings / activities / events for the Assessors
- Identify Assessor development needs including for vocational updating
- Act as arbitrator for any disagreements in outcomes of assessments, including appeals.
- Communicate to the team the Awarding Organisation's requirements for storage and archiving of assessed work and assessment records, and ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to meet those requirements.
- Work with the Head of Curriculum to ensure that Extenuating Circumstances, Appeals against assessment decision and Academic Misconduct issues within the course are monitored and the correct procedures are followed.

## 5. The Quality Calendar

The College Quality Calendar stipulates there will be two cross-college standardisation meetings per year, per AO used by more than 1 Curriculum Area to be scheduled by the SQCO. It is expected that teams will meet at least termly to standardise their course. An outline of the cross-college meetings is given in **Appendix 4**.

The Quality Calendar also gives details of the 3 Stages of the IQA Audit Process (See **Appendix 8**)

## 6. Remote Sampling

The IQA is responsible for ensuring that appropriate materials are dispatched according to Awarding Organisation/Partner requirements.

The IQA must know the sampling schedule;

- read all guidelines issued by the Awarding Organisation/Partner and the College
- raise any queries as soon as possible with the QI team
- where the Awarding Organisation/Partner does not stipulate original work, agree with Head of Curriculum Area whether to send copies or originals

All samples must be internally quality assured before dispatch to ensure that all appropriate materials are provided in the sample to enable the EQA to make a judgement without reference to the programme team;

- complete all accompanying documentation correctly
- all samples will be logged and dispatched with the knowledge of the QoE team
- make sure samples are taken to the appropriate office, e.g. Quality of Education office for BTEC or Access, Exams for A Levels or British Computer Society (BCS), in time to allow recording and dispatch to meet deadlines where relevant.

## 7. Monitoring External Quality Assurance Reports

All EQA reports are monitored by the SQCO and filed on a central database held by the QoE team or are stored on the Awarding Organisation/Partners' online database.

It is expected that actions indicated by an EQA will be managed within the Curriculum Area.

## Document and Record Retention Periods

All Awarding Organisations require that we retain accurate, up to date and auditable centre registration, achievement and certification records. This is usually for a 3-year period. It is important that the Awarding Organisations' guidelines are adhered to and therefore must be referenced for each qualification. If in doubt the Senior Quality and Compliance Officer will provide advice on required documentation and record retention periods.

### **Qualification Approval Risk Status**

As part of the post-approval external quality assurance activities, the College is monitored and awarded a Qualification Approval Risk Status for each qualification delivered. This is based upon the College's ability to meet the criteria outlined in this document. Each Qualification Approval Risk Status is based on a risk-based assessment strategy, and typically have the following outcomes:

### **Example Risk Approval Rating**

<b>Qualification Approval</b>	<b>Risk Status</b>	<b>Outcome Reasons</b>
<b>L – Low</b>	The centre has the ability to register students and claim for certificates at will. This is also known as Direct Claims Status. This is no longer available for some courses where CASS applies	Any issues identified could be easily corrected without further consequence and do not have an adverse effect on the student
<b>M – Medium</b>	The centre may register student at will, but any claims for certification must be agreed by an EQA. All CASS courses fall into this category .	Issues identified could potentially damage the integrity, credibility and validity of the qualification and/or be detrimental to the student
<b>H – High</b>	The centre is unable to register or certificate students.	Issues identified could have a significant impact on the integrity, credibility and validity of the qualification or the effective operation of a centre as a whole, if corrective action is not taken quickly.



## Appendix 1

### List of Internal Quality Assurance Documents and Forms –

Available electronically on [Sharepoint QI site](#)

IQA 100: Programme IQA Plan - course level

IQA 101: IQA Planning Schedule (Curriculum)

IQA 01: Quality Assurance of Unit/Module Specification

IQA 02: Quality Assurance of Assessment Briefs

IQA 03a: Confirmation of results by Lead IV (Vocational)

IQA 03a: Confirmation of results by Lead IV (A Level)

IQA 04a: IQA Sampling Report (Individual)

IQA 04b: IQA Sampling Report (Group)

IQA 05: Standardisation Meeting Agenda

IQA 06a: Standardisation feedback form *Cross College*

IQA 06b: Standardisation feedback form *Course level*

IQA 07: Observation of Assessor Checklist

IQA 08: Student Interview Record (Apprentices)

IQA 08b: Activity Record - Witness Statement (Apprentices)

IQA 09: Assessor Induction Record

IQA 10: IQA Induction Record

EC 01: Extenuating Circumstances Form

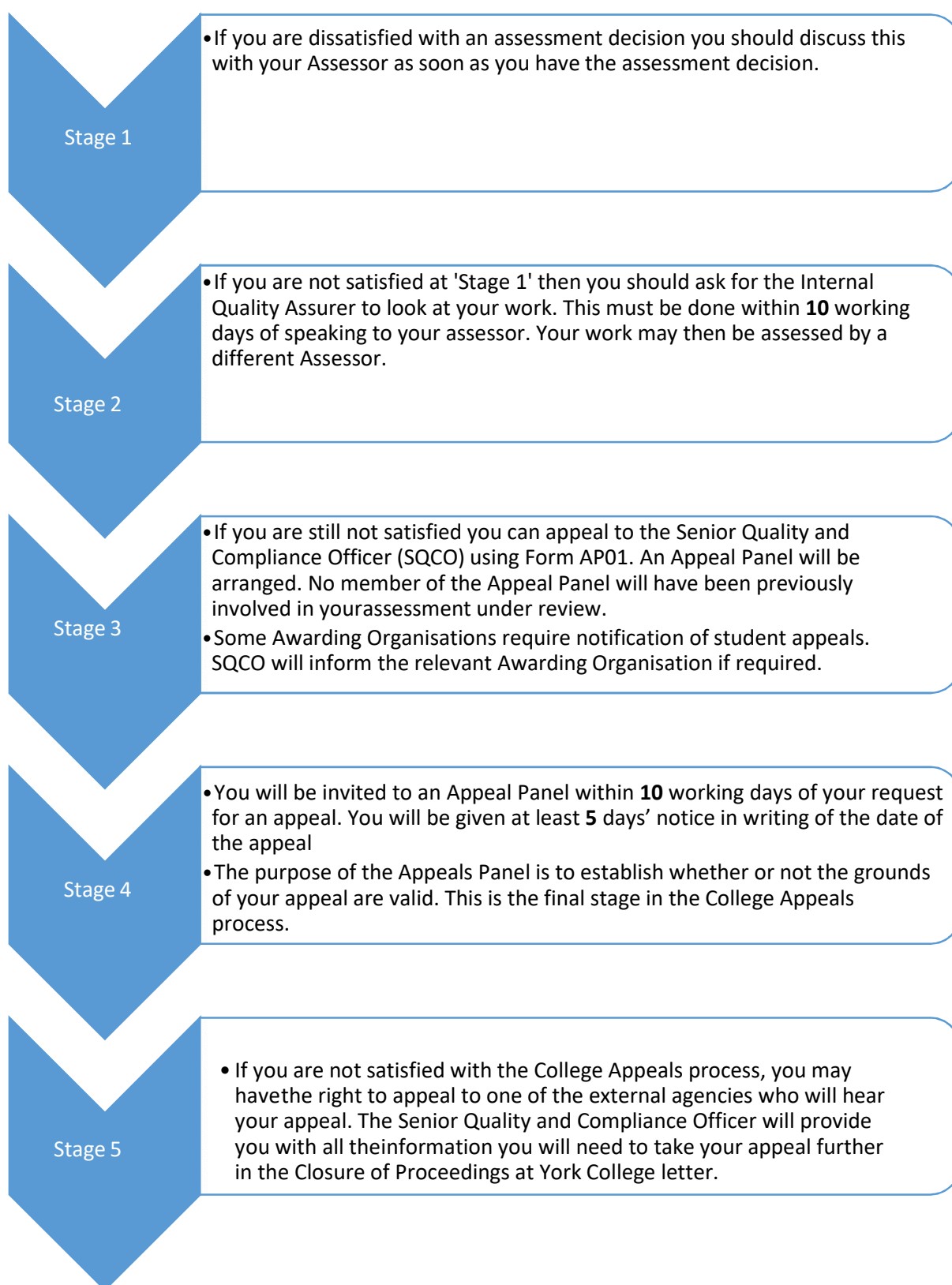
AP 01a: Application for Appeal against assessment decision

AP 01b: Application for Appeal against assessment decision GCE (EXAMS only)

## Appendix 2

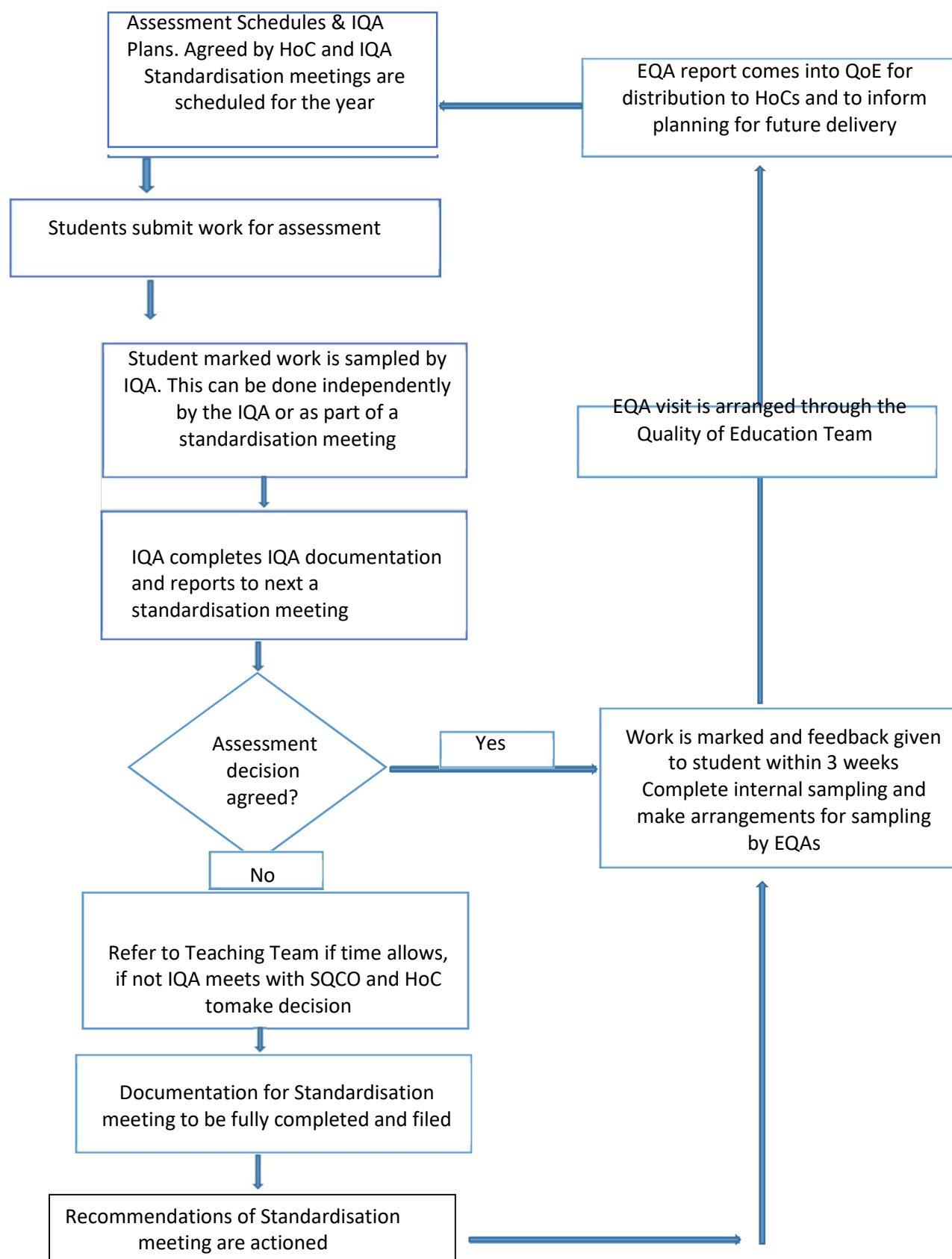
### Appeals Procedure

York College will provide Fair and Reliable Assessment



### Appendix 3

Sampling Model for all Qualifications – Process to be completed before marks/grades are returned to students and at summative assessment point



## Appendix 4

### The Quality Improvement Calendar

The College Quality Calendar stipulates there will be two cross college standardisation meetings per year, per AO used by more than 1 Curriculum Area to be scheduled by the SQCO. These meetings will in addition to team/CA standardisation meetings.

#### Cross College Standardisation Meeting A - Autumn Term

- Review of EQA reports, action plans
- New policies etc.
- Information from Awarding Organisations
- Mutual support through professional dialogue
- Assessor qualifications / CPD records / requirements / attended / booked
- Reviewing assessment and IQA plans

#### Cross College Standardisation Meeting B - Summer Term

- Information from regulatory bodies
- Review of external reports
- Course updates to Awarding Organisations
- Teaching & Development
- Mutual support
- Reviewing assessment and IQA of marked work

#### Team Standardisation meetings across the year (as above, plus.)

- Quality of delivery
- Analysis of achievement
- Accommodation of curriculum change
- New programme validations / validation reviews
- New Assessors (induction etc.)
- Reports from IQA
- Pre-issue assignments
- Registrations and entries
- Progress reports - candidates, towards deadlines, general
- Review of IQA activities
- Mutual support
- Progress against Assessment /IQA plans
- Sampling - audit trail, compliance, feedback, actions

## Appendix 5

### Developing and Supporting Assessors

IQAs have a responsibility to identify and support Assessor training and development needs.

#### 1. Induction

New Assessors should receive an appropriate level of planned induction. This may depend on the Assessor's previous assessment experience and familiarity with the qualification being assessed. As a minimum it should include:

- familiarisation with the college assessment policy
- issue relevant Assessor handbook which includes scheme specifications or standards, assessment and IQA paperwork specific to particular qualifications
- updating of CPD records through Human Resources (HR) to include personal profile or CV, demonstrating occupational competence and recent industrial experience
- planning for Assessor qualifications where required
- agree sampling schedule

#### 2. Providing information and feedback

IQAs have a responsibility to Assessors to:

- provide factual information
- help with interpretation of guidelines and policy
- answer specific questions about assessment
- be proactive in promoting and developing the quality of assessment
- hold Assessor meetings
- organise standardisation activities within the team
- give meaningful feedback from monitoring and sampling
- disseminate EQA feedback

#### 3. Informing and contributing to CPD

The IQA has a role in identifying and supporting the continual professional development of the Assessor team. This may include:

- occupational updating
- Awarding Organisation training events
- skills development
- standardisation activities.

#### 4. Maintaining own competence:

IQAs need to be aware of the importance of and take responsibility for maintaining their own knowledge and competence:

- participate regularly in college standardisation activities
- attend appropriate college and external training events in order to maintain professional and occupational competence
- keep an up to date understanding of the relevant qualification system e.g. A Level or BTEC
- develop a thorough understanding of the Awarding Organisation systems and documentation

## Appendix 6

### Managing External Quality Assurance Visits

Pre visit arrangements:	Examples:
Make sure all information related to students and programme approval held by Awarding Organisation / Partners is up to date and accessible	Programme file to include registrations, entries, programme specification and handbooks, assessment plans, IQA and standardisation records, staff CV or copies of qualifications
Any actions from previous reports have been addressed	team structure, qualifications and responsibilities
Evidence of good practice is collated	professional development undertaken by team members minutes of standardisation events
All assessment and verification records are up to date	clear audit trail through student, Assessor, verification documents, sample Assessor and IQA signatures minutes of standardisation events
You have received and agreed a visit plan and prepared a schedule accordingly	Visit planner managers and Assessors are included and have set interview times
Ensure Assessors are prepared	make sure they understand the purpose of the visit, and they know what the EQA has asked for
Ask QoE to book facilities	car park, base room, refreshments
During visit arrangements:	Examples:
All required information available	copy of last EQA report with details of actions completed, staffing structure, candidate registration dates, 'TAQA' 'CAVA' unit certificates for new / newly qualified Assessors
Plans for and records of IQA activities and visits	IQA plans, assessment plans, sampling strategy, feedback to Assessors, actions and completions, minutes of meetings
Make sure the EQA understands your paperwork and knows where to find information Explain page layouts	Where is essential information recorded? What is a particular document designed to record? How does it do that?
Required portfolios are available	those stipulated by EQA, those where there has been an appeal against an assessment/IQA decision
Have an auditable trail of achievement for all students on programme	Student tracking including Mark Book if used on programme records, requests for certification, withdrawals
Assessment records	Formative and summative, including feedback to students
Appropriate equipment to hand and working	Viewer for video evidence, cassette player
All interviewees know where to meet, presented promptly	HoCs, Programme Leaders, Assessors, IQAs, students, employers
Maintain health & safety	during EQA observation in workshops
Signing the report	only if you agree with it; don't sign a blank/draft report
Post visit activity	Examples
Obtain copy of the External Quality Assurer Report via the QoE office	discuss report with Head of Curriculum, prepare schedule for completion of any actions, communicate contents of report to team

## Appendix 7

### Internal Quality Assurance Framework

1. There will be time within TCT for local IQA activity and/or a cross college Lead IQA/standardisation meeting with SQCO
  - i. There will be regular update training for Assessors and IQAs to ensure that they are up to date with the latest standards.
  - ii. There will be regular updates on this procedure and the accompanying paperwork
  - iii. There will be a whole day in the July training week during which IQA activities can take place. This will be used to either complete IQA activity for this academic year and have a meeting to confirm the marks/grades achieved this academic year, or to plan assessment and IQA schedules for the next academic year
2. Every HoC can use up to 1 day\* per term for each programme team to complete IQA activities where they give their students 'directed study' and use the relevant register mark so attendance is not impacted. HoCs should choose days when the students are not taking English or Maths wherever possible. (\* The 1 day per term can be used flexibly such as breaking this down into the last lesson every 2 weeks but this MUST NOT affect the same lesson.)
  - i. A Level/GCSE standardisation/moderation (where applicable) is included but it is not expected that the equivalent of 1 day per term is needed.
  - ii. HE and Access standardisation/moderation is also included
3. In order to ensure that this activity is coordinated and monitored there needs to be an approvals and monitoring process which will have 5 parts:
  - i. All teams will complete the IQA100 IQA Plan for each programme. HoCs will ask relevant IQAs to complete the Plan so that the activity to be completed by the team can be approved, coordinated and quality checked by HoC/DHoC.
  - ii. If using any time other than TCT time, the HoC will sign the IQA101 proforma to show that the IQA100 has been approved and send a copy of both documents to their Director.
  - iii. The IQA101 schedule needs to be approved by the relevant Director, though activity should start as soon as possible.
  - iv. All approved activities within the Curriculum Area must be shared with the QoE team and EQAs/SVs. IQA101s must be completed by the IQA /HoC to record any activity that has taken and evidence of the activity has been collected.
  - v. SQCO will audit the process and the IQA will provide the evidence to SQCO when it is requested.

## Appendix 8

## **The Stages of IQA Audit.**

- 1.** There are three stages of the Audit process which are carried out at the points noted on the Quality Calendar.
- 2. Stage 1**  
SQCO will request the following documentation for five (5) vocational courses in each Curriculum Area (where a CA has less than 5 course all will be requested)
  - a. IQA100,
  - b. All IQA02 forms for Assessment Briefs for the course,
  - c. IQA05 for first Standardisation meeting of the year
  - d. IQA101 if it has been completed for the course.
- 3. Stage 2**  
SQCO will request the following documentation for five (5) vocational courses in each Curriculum Area (where a CA has less than 5 course all will be requested)
  - a. IQA05 for second Standardisation meeting of the year
  - b. All IQA04 forms for Assessments completed for the course to date,
  - c. Updated IQA100 showing the IQA which has taken place,
  - d. AP01 Appeals forms completed to date,
  - e. EC01 Extenuating Circumstances forms completed to date.
- 4. Stage 3**  
SQCO will request the following documentation for five (5) vocational courses in each Curriculum Area (where a CA has less than 5 course all will be requested)
  - a. IQA05 for third Standardisation meeting of the year
  - b. All IQA04 forms for Assessments completed since Stage 2,
  - c. Updated IQA100 showing the IQA which has taken place,
  - d. AP01 Appeals forms completed to date,
  - e. EC01 Extenuating Circumstances forms completed to date.