WEST THAMES COLLEGE

Assessment and Verification Policy and Procedures

Policy owner	Approved by:	Date approved:	Next review date:	Where published:
Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality	Executive Team	1st December 2025	1st December 2026	Connect

Section 1: Assessment

Assessment Policy

Context
Assessment may be formative or summative. Formative assessment is designed to support and guide students in their learning. Summative assessment is designed to enable students to demonstrate achievement to the required standard to achieve certification.

Aims of the Assessment Policy
- To ensure students are informed of their individual progress.
- To ensure appropriate feedback is provided to students in a way that promotes learning and facilitates improvement.
- To inform staff of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.
- To ensure that students achieve their learning goal.
- To meet national awarding/examining body requirements.
- To ensure consistency in the approach to assessment in course teams

Requirements of the Assessment Policy
This policy requires that:

- All courses operate within course regulations, which specify any assessment requirements. These requirements are determined and published by Awarding/Examining Organisations.

- The assessment requirements are made known to students through the Course Handbook. These should include the scheme of learning giving the calendar for assessments – the assessment plan, the assessment criteria, deadlines for assignments and for work (including portfolio) submission.

- All assignment briefs/tasks are internally quality assured/verified prior to being issued

- All students must be made aware of the expectations around the use of AI, what is permitted and what it not and the consequences of submitting work that has been generated with the use of AI. Students should be reminded of the importance of referencing any sources and reminders about the ethical use of AI at regular intervals across their programme of study (ideally when each assessment is set).

- For the majority of courses where the awarding organisation does not require a specific platform to be used, summative assessment must be submitted and returned to students via Teams. This allows submissions and returned work to be tracked and recorded easily.

- All assignments must have an appropriate front cover sheet, meeting requirements of the awarding organisation.

- All students are given appropriate feedback in a way that promotes learning and facilitates improvement. This could include written and verbal feedback.

- Support and special arrangements for assessment may be made in accordance with warding organisation procedures, where approved. These have been notified in advance to the Exams Manager.

- Assessment decisions are recorded and documented accurately and systematically, and internal quality assurance and verification procedures are followed.

- All assessment opportunities will be conducted with due regard to the Equality & Diversity Policy (available on the staff intranet).

At the start of their programme, all students must be given information how to appeal against an assessment decision they feel is unfair or inaccurate.

- All students must be made aware of the section in these guidelines related to Malpractice (Section 2).

- All students must be made aware of the internal and external moderation process and understand grades are subject to internal and external moderation.

Assessment Process

Entry to Course
Recruitment and selection criteria are explicit, transparent and reflect equality of opportunity and College initial assessment and guidance procedures are implemented as appropriate.

Advice is given as to whether previous achievement or experience could count towards th proposed qualification. For all courses, the College refers to the policies and procedures required by the awarding organisations.

Where a student does not meet the entry requirements of a particular programme, further guidance as to suitable alternatives will be available.

Maximising Student Success provides staff with the information and tools to successfully Support students.

Clear information must be given to students of the course assessment requirements, how and when assessment takes place, associated costs and special arrangements for assessed coursework, exams or tests.

The same procedures apply to all students for entry to courses regardless of start date.

On Course
All courses will have an assessment schedule. Formative assessment should take place in every session to ensure that students can demonstrate learning and progress and for teachers to identify where gaps in what learners know, understand and can do exist. Teachers will take appropriate steps to ensure these are addressed.

Students should receive feedback on assessment which will be provided inn a variety of formats including verbal and written feedback. This must be sufficiently detailed to ensure students know what they need to do to improve their work and secure high grades (where applicable).

Assessment schedules should be shared with students to ensure they are aware of upcoming assessments to be able to plan their workload accordingly. Assessments should be spread appropriately and deadlines for summative assessment should only be amended for exceptional reasons. Where changs are made students must be advised of these changes. Where assessment schedules are required to be submitted to awarding organisations any changes must be communicated to them.

Each assignment will include clear details pertaining to the unit and full details of the assessment criteria being assessed. The assignment brief should clearly outline what is being assessed and include assessment criteria as well as provide sufficient background and context and guidance on format. The brief should identify opportunities for students to develop wider skills for example research, communication, presentation skills, report writing etc. They should include dates the assessment was set and when it should be submitted and via what channel or medium e.g. Teams by 12 midday on 12/12/25. All briefs must be internally quality assured before they are issued to students and be supported by a record of the internal quality assurance activity. This must include details of when the assessment brief was internally verified, by who and include feedback and actions. Where adjustments are needed these should be checked and closed off before the assignment is set.

Feedback should be clear and coherent. Summative work should have an appropriate feedback sheet, providing feedback to the student's work (including strengths and areas for development, and feedforward to support the student to improve and develop their work in future. Where relevant to the qualification, feedback should refer to high grades and target grades, and how the students can work towards achieving these in future submissions. Feedback does not have to be written and can be recorded using facilities available in Teams.

Students should be made aware of the deadlines for submission of assessment; in exceptional cases extensions may be negotiated and awarded, based on awarding organisation guidelines. Failure to complete assignments and/or hand in coursework by agreed specified deadlines can be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

Progress of each student must be carefully tracked using ProMonitor and Markbook. This is used to inform individuals of their progress across their programme, complete effective Student Learning Reviews, and provide information for parents/guardians/carers

Blended and Online Learning

Context
Blended learning is a formal approach to education that creates an integrated learning environment where face-to-face and online teaching and learning become complementary, with the purpose of giving students a more diverse and engaging learning experience.

The College recognises the benefits of blended learning and, although most timetabled sessions take place within college, the approach is now established, and used where appropriate.

Remote Assessment
Remote assessment enables students to be assessed even if they are in situations/settings where traditional methods of assessment may be difficult or impossible to operate.

At the College, teachers use tools within Microsoft Teams (including TurnItIn) to assess, grade and provide feedback on students' work.

The College will always endeavour to ensure that the development and assessment of students' practical skills and/or interaction with individuals/equipment are

demonstrated and assessed in person. This applies to group and collaborative work and to assessments where there is a requirement for students to be overseen in person by centre staff at a specific physical location, under controlled conditions, including observations of performance in competency- based qualifications and externally set and marked examinations and controlled tasks.

It is the role of the CQTM to keep up to date with assessment requirements for the programmes within their areas, supported by the Director for Teaching, Learning Quality & Innovation, who will share timely and regular updates and up to date guidance available from awarding organizations.

When students submit work for assessment, they are required to submit a confirmation to confirm that the work they are submitting is their own and has not been produced in collusion with others or wholly using AI. Students must acknowledge any sources and reference appropriately using systems outlined by the awarding organisation. Paperwork provided by Awarding organisations will be used for this.

Late submission of work policy and procedures

Context
Students should be encouraged to complete assessments by the due date throughout their programme of study. This policy and its procedures are to support students who may need to hand in work at dates later than those specified.

Aims
- To ensure that all students are aware of the requirement to submit work to specified deadlines
- To ensure that no students should gain advantage by submitting work after agreed deadlines

Procedure
Teachers will ensure that this procedure is drawn to the attention of the students at induction and in the Course Handbook

All teaching staff have a responsibility to remind students of this procedure when setting assignments and deadlines.

If, for any reason prior to the deadline, the student knows they are unable to meet the specified deadline they should inform the teacher within a reasonable period that they will be unable to meet the deadline giving reasons (if possible, in writing). Any work completed at the time of the request might be made available to the teacher to assist in making a judgement about granting an extension. Requests for extension should be noted on the assessment/assignment front sheet.

Students should be informed of extensions within two working days of the request. Extensions to deadline dates may only be granted once in relation to a particular assessment/assignment. If the new deadline is not met the assessment/assignment will be graded as 'no grade' for the present time. The student will be required to undertake another

assessment/assignment, or complete the original, which covers the appropriate learning outcomes.

Where a unit/module is a pre-requisite for another unit/module it must normally have been satisfactorily completed before the subsequent unit/module begins.

Where assessments are handed in late without an agreed extension the assessor, as directed by awarding organisation requirements, may only mark only those components of the work related to pass criteria, or issue a new assignment that covers at least the pass criteria for the unit/module being assessed.

Failure to complete assignments/assessments and/or hand in coursework by agreed deadlines can be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

End of Course
The Course Team may award a pass, provided that satisfactory performance has been achieved, ensuring that students are graded accurately for the work they have completed. This may result in a smaller qualification award being claimed or unit certification. For students who have not completed all required work the following guidance is provided. This is however generic, and in such cases the requirements outlined by the awarding organisation will be followed.

- A student who fails to complete assessments to a satisfactorily standard in one or more unit/modules of study in any year may, at the discretion of the Course Team:
  a) Be permitted to resit/resubmit the failed work or alternative work by a date determined by the Course Team before the beginning of the next session. Normally no more than half of the unit/modules can be referred in this way nor can more than 50% of the assessment in a particular Unit/Module be resat/resubmitted.
  b) Be permitted to repeat the course in whole or in part.
  c) Be removed from the course or will not be permitted to progress to the next year of a 2 year programme

A student who fails a referred assessment for a complete unit/module may, at the discretion of the Course Team, be required:
- To repeat the unit/module.
- To repeat the course.
- To withdraw from the course.

A student may normally repeat the programme of study of a unit/module once only and will be eligible for the full range of grades.

A student can only be given the opportunity to redeem failed assessments so long as it continues to be possible for them to complete the requirements for an award within the maximum period of registration for the award and awarding organization regulations allow this.

If a student fails to sit or submit all or part of an assessment due to medically certified illness or other valid cause, they may be permitted to resit/resubmit the failed assessment(s) as if for the first time by a date to be determined by the Course Team. The Curriculum Director will be consulted if concerns arise in individual cases.

Where the Course Team is satisfied that it has sufficient evidence to arrive at a fair estimation of the student's performance, it may alternatively deem the student to

have passed the assessment.

West Thames College Higher Education Assessment Board (HNC/D) policy and procedures

Aim
To formally ensure the fairness and consistency of decisions relating to the achievement of Higher Education students

Purpose
- To make recommendations on the grades achieved by students on individual units/modules
- To make recommendations on the progression of students onto the next stage of the programme.
- To make recommendations on the certification of students.
- To consider and make recommendations on extenuating circumstances.
- To look at and make recommendations on cheating and plagiarism.
- To look at and make recommendations on referrals and deferrals.

Procedure
A pre Assessment Board meeting may be held but any discussion must be confidential.

The Assessment Board will meet appropriately during and at the end of each academic year with the following membership:
- Curriculum Director (Chair)
- External Examiner
- Curriculum & Quality Team Manager
- Staff teaching on the course
- Curriculum Administrator (Minute Secretary)

An agenda must be circulated at least two weeks prior to the meeting and must contain the items documented in Purpose above.

Minutes of the Assessment Board will be taken and kept by the course leader in the course file.

Decisions made by the assessment board must be kept confidential until the formal publication of the results.

Only course leaders will be responsible for conveying results to students.

The College Appeals Procedure must be used for any appeals.

Section 2: Candidate support and guidance

Recording Prior Learning
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment that considers whether students can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning.

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Partial unit completion is not acceptable.

The College may use RPL where it is of value to students in facilitating assessment.

In all circumstances, teachers should discuss any RPL with their CQTM and Curriculum Director. Reference must also be made to awarding organisation guidelines, policies and procedures.

A curriculum meeting involving the teacher, lead internal verifier/quality assurer, and CQTM is required. In the case of any queries, the SV or EQA allocated to the subject area should be contacted.

All evidence gathered or presented by a student must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL the College must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the student meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the teacher should use questions to check understanding, and ask for the demonstration of skills to check competence.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used to generate sufficient evidence to be able to award the learning outcome(s) for the whole unit. Where RPL evidence is being assessed against graded units only pass criteria can be awarded.

Curriculum areas which use RPL must follow these principles and keep appropriate records.

Candidate Support for Assessment and Examinations

The main reasons for additional support are:
- Medical/physical condition
- Language needs
- Specific Learning Difficulties

It is often possible to provide additional support during an examination or assessment. This can take the form, for example, of a reader, a scribe, extra time or oral questioning.

CQTMs should ensure that candidates requiring additional assessment support have been identified. Candidates should be referred to the Head of Inclusion in good time to allow for assessments to be made.

Deadlines for referral to the Head of Inclusion are as follows:

GCSE November – by mid-September
GCSE March – by early January
GCSE summer – by early March

The Examinations Team will send the assessment report to the awarding organisation for approval.

On receipt of approval the Examinations Team will inform the candidate and make appropriate provision.

The Internal Quality Assurer/Verifier should be informed, and they will give guidance to Assessors to ensure appropriate provision is given for candidate assessment.

The Internal Quality Assurer/Verifier should inform the External Quality Assurer/Verifier of any issues arising.

Procedures and activities safeguarding the authenticity of students' work

All evidence of submission, regardless of format, is retained by the College in line with the requirements of the awarding organisation. All authentication forms provided by awarding organisations are used at both individual and group level and are signed by the teacher and the student. These are reviewed through internal moderation/verification.

All course teams develop and integrate into their teaching, learning and assessment strategies to ensure that students understand plagiarism, the skills to avoid it and the consequences of it, and the positive and negative uses of AI in their work. For assignments based or written work, the College uses TurnItIn (for the majority of work for students on courses at level 2 or above) to uphold the academic integrity of students' work.

All internally assessed programmes or programmes including internal assessment are subject to our current Procedures and Policies for Assessment and Verification. Internal moderation/verification is adjusted routinely based on the mode of learning, assessment or submission process routinely. This is discussed at team level with reference to and support from, as required, the Director for Teaching, Learning, Quality and Innovation. Common adjustments include changes to the proportion of work sampled, variation of the assessment type and/or engagement of support from the awarding organisation.

Our current Procedures and Policies for Assessment and Verification sets out our duty to ensure the integrity of all qualifications and to act on breaches of security and malpractice. All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and will be processed in accordance with the student and/or staff disciplinary procedures.

Plagiarism
All course teams should develop and integrate into their teaching, learning and assessment strategies to ensure that students understand plagiarism, the skills to avoid it and the consequences of it, as well as the consequences of using AI inappropriately and unethically in their assessments.

A note on plagiarism in the Course Handbook pro forma can be used as a starting point to inform students, and as the basis for teaching the skills of how to reference and cite sources.

It is important to distinguish between minor plagiarism and those cases in which the plagiarism is major. Staff assessing students' work must use their professional judgement to decide when an instance of plagiarism is significant, that is when action needs to be taken, as per AWARDING ORGANISATION guidance.

Turnitin (plagiarism software) is used at the College – please contact the E-Learning Development Manager for further details and support.

Course teams are encouraged to devise assessments which prevent students from

submitting work wholly generate by AI. For example the use of presentations, professional discussions, group work etc.

Cheating

Cheating is an attempt to deceive assessors and/or examiners. It includes but is not restricted to examination situations. The following are examples of cheating:
- Impersonates another student, or allows themselves to be impersonated
- Copies, or attempts to copy from another candidate.
- Communicates, or attempts to communicate with another candidate, or individual, who is not the invigilator, or a member of staff.
- Consults, or attempts to consult any unauthorised material, whether written, printed, electronic or information storage devices including AI

The penalties for cheating may range from work being down grading, being dealt with under the academic disciplinary procedures and/or being reported to an awarding organisation.

Suspected Malpractice in exams and assessments policy and procedures

Context

The College has a duty to ensure the integrity of those qualifications and to take action on dealing with breaches of security and malpractice. All offences in connection with examinations and other forms of assessment e.g., plagiarism, collusion, cheating, will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter and will be processed in accordance with the student and/or staff disciplinary procedures.

Awarding organisations and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) have a statutory duty to publish a Code of Practice outlining procedures for dealing with suspected malpractice.

The College will adhere to the regulations specified in the relevant Code of Practice and awarding organisation Publications. Regulations of the awarding organisation may take precedence and the matter may be investigated and referred to the awarding organisation for a decision.

The policy should be considered in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- Exam Policy
- Student Disciplinary Procedures
- Staff Disciplinary Procedures

Definition

Malpractice means any act, default or practice which is a breach of the statutory regulations which:
- compromises, attempts to compromise or may compromise the process of assessment, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of an examination result or certificate; and/or
- damages the authority, reputation or credibility of the College, any awarding organisation or any officer, employee or agent of the College or awarding organisation

Aims

This procedure aims to:
- Identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners.
- Respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively.
- Standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness.
- Impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on students or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven.
- Protect the integrity of the College and the qualifications delivered.

To do this the College will:
- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student handbook to inform students of the College's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- Show students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials from informed sources.
- Inform students (and regularly remind them) of the ethical use of AI and give them guidance about how to use AI with intregity. They will be advised of the consequences of using AI to produce work.
- Ask students to declare that their work is their own.
- Ask students to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used.
- Investigate in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation.
- Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- Document all stages of any investigation.
- Ensure all staff undergo a course/team induction and updating on awarding organisation requirements.
- Use robust internal verification and audited record keeping.
- Audit learner records, assessment tracking records and certification claims.

Procedure

Allegation

Staff or students who suspect malpractice in an examination or assessment must report this to the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation, and the Examinations Manager who will inform the awarding organisation.

Investigation

The Principal delegates responsibility to the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation to conduct a full investigation to establish the facts and the circumstances of any alleged malpractice.

Staff accused of malpractice will be informed in writing of the allegation and the Staff disciplinary procedures will be used.

Students accused of malpractice will be informed in writing of the allegation and the Student Disciplinary Process will be used.

Following the investigation, the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation will submit a full report to the awarding organisation.

Decisions

The awarding organisation will consider the evidence to decide if the allegation is substantiated.

If the allegation is upheld, Awarding organisations may impose sanctions on the College and on individuals. This could include an improvement action plan to be implemented in order to continue to offer the qualification.

If the allegations are upheld, the College may initiate disciplinary procedures against the individual – staff and/or students.

Appeal

Appeals to the awarding organisation may be made by the College or a member of staff. All appeals should be made through the awarding organisation or the Examinations Manager.

Further information can be found in individual Awarding organisations publications and the Joint Council for Qualifications publication on Malpractice

Appeals Procedure

Introduction
This procedure is primarily concerned with the management of the assessment process for qualifications in which the College has a major responsibility for both assessment and verification.

This procedure refers only to courses within the responsibility of the College. The assessment and appeals procedures on other courses provided on behalf of higher education establishments are the responsibility of the parent organisation.

Definitions
An **appeal** is defined as a complaint by a student about a decision made by a course assessment board

A **course assessment board** is the body established within a department to determine assessment and make recommendation for the award of a qualification

A **student** is anyone enrolled to the course of study and the qualification aim

Mitigating circumstances are defined for the purpose of assessment as circumstances of a serious nature, usually sudden or unforeseen, that occurred during or immediately before a specific assessment

Grounds for an Appeal
Examples of grounds for appeal include the following circumstances:
- The Course assessment team was presented with incorrect or inaccurate assessment information.
- The scheme of assessment has been inappropriately applied.
- There has been a significant irregularity in the assessment process.
- Other mitigating circumstances exist of which the board was unaware when making its decision.

If in doubt, contact the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation

Initial Stage
Many student queries relating to assessment can, and should, be resolved informally, so that the formal appeals process is used only in cases where the student's concerns are not resolved.

Students who believe that a mistake has been made in the marks or grades of an individual assessment, or overall result, should raise the matter with the member of staff responsible for their programme as soon as possible after the result is published. This would normally be investigated by the Internal Verifier who would ensure that the assessment procedure had been followed. The IQA/V should formally note the outcome of their investigation and inform the student in writing of the result.

Second Stage
If a student is not satisfied that the matter has been resolved through the initial stage

they may submit a written request stating the grounds for the appeal and the appropriate evidence

The appeal will be considered by the relevant Director who will decide to:
- Reject the appeal on the grounds of lack of evidence
- Refer back to the student for clarification
- Hear the appeal

The Appeal Hearing
The appeal hearing will be chaired by the relevant Director, plus another Director from a different area, who is unconnected with the programme, teaching and assessment of the student.

The appeal should be conducted as soon as possible after receiving the written request, and within two working weeks.

Members of the panel, the student and their advisor should all receive the same documentation.

The panel should interview the student (who may be accompanied by a friend or advisor; e.g., a member of Student Services), the course board chair, and any other appropriate members of the course board.

The appeals panel will consider the evidence and agree that the assessment board should re consider the original decision, or that the assessment decision will stand

If the assessment board is required to re consider their decision, this should be done at the earliest opportunity and normally within two working weeks

Appeal to the Vice Principal - Curriculum & Quality

If the student has a further concern about the process of assessment, and/or the review process, a further appeal may be heard by the Vice Principal - Curriculum & Quality.

Appeal to Awarding organisation

If a student feels the outcomes of the College's Appeal Procedure is unsatisfactory, they may contact the relevant awarding organisation and lodge an appeal directly with them.

Section 3: Internal quality assurance/verification (IQA/IVV) policy Context
IQA/IVV is the process of monitoring assessment practice in order to ensure that assessment decisions meet national standards. It provides a continuous check on the consistent, quality and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of students' work.

IQA/V covers all forms of activity that check and validate assessment. It may be implemented through the systems of verification as required, or laid down, by awarding organisations, or

it may occur through shared observation of student activities, second marking of students' work, or team grading/assessment of students' work.

Any task, activity, essay or project that contributes to the students' final achievement in a vocational area, academic subject, or a key/functional skill will fall within the scope of this policy.

IQA/IV requires active commitment from all staff, operating and monitoring it through programme teams, and auditing through College quality audit processes and procedures.

Regular time is ringfenced for and IQA/IV meetings to take place, for example during the Monday afternoon CILT sessions. In addition to this, CQTMs may allocate some team meeting for this purpose.

Aims
- To ensure that all students are fairly, accurately and regularly assessed in a consistent manner.
- To meet and exceed the requirements placed upon us by Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.
- To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all students and that external requirements are fully met.
- To support teaching staff in their assessment activities by affording them the opportunity to receive critical supportive feedback on their assessment decisions

Requirements
This policy requires that:
- Every programme with work that is internally assessed and which contributes to the final assessment outcome of a student must carry out internal verification.
- An IQA/IV plan will be produced at the start of the year outlining planned IQA/IV. Staff will follow this through the year however changes may be made depending changes to assessment deadlines and availability of student work at allocated times. Records of planned and actual IV/IQA activities will be maintained by curriculum teams.
- All internal verification must be carried out by appropriately qualified staff.
- CQTM's are responsible for ensuring IQA.IV is carried out and is robust, including any loops folliwng actions are closed.
- Each programme must have identified members of staff carrying out IQA/IV by the end of the first six weeks of the academic year and IQA/IV palns in place.
- The evidence must be recorded on the appropriate documentation, which considers the requirements of Awarding organisations and the College quality systems.
- Assignments must be verified before they are issued, as well as when they have been marked, using the appropriate documentation.
- IQA/V must be carried out continuously throughout the year. Each programme will identify, in addition, dedicated periods when internal verification will take place.
- IQA/V must take place before assessment decisions are finalised and notified to students. Students should receive assessment decisions no later than two weeks after submission, and internal verification must take place within that time. In some cases the volume of assignments may mean that IV activity cannot take place in order for students to be given the outcome in a timely fashion. In these cases, and in agreement with the CQTM, the grade/outcome **must** be noted as *provisional* on the

assignment feedback sheet. Please note that some Awarding organisations prohibit the return of work to students prior to IV – if you are unsure, please check with your awarding organisation.
- Progress with IQA/IV will be reviewed as part of deep dives.
- Records of IQA/IV must be kept in a secure, accessible location, which is notified to the Curriculum Quality Team Manager. The Appeals Procedure and Malpractice Policies must be in place and followed.

Internal Quality Assurance/Verification Process Within the first 6

weeks of the programme commencing
- Draw up an IQA/IV plan, which includes all the units and all the assessors
- Ensure that you are appropriately qualified to IQA/IV.
- Check that assignment briefs meet the performance criteria or outcomes as required in the course unit specifications.

Assessment of Completed Work
Ensure that you have the following relevant documentation
- Unit/module specifications
- Assignments briefs for every unit
- Assessment criteria
- Completed assessed work
- Assessment from work placements
- Witness/observation statements

IQA/V documentation to demonstrate that:
- Assessment is fair and consistent;
- the correct assessment procedures have been followed;
- there has been adequate feedback to ensure that the students understand the assessment decision;
- problems or areas are identified where assessors require advice/development;
- feedback is to assessors, both verbally and written

Internal Quality Assurance/Verification

Key Roles Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation
The Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation acts as the co-ordinator of IQA/IV practices within the College and as the quality link for all awarding organisations. All external quality assurance feedback and issues relating to course and centre approval must be seen and agreed by the Vice Principal for Curriculum and Quality.

Curriculum Director
- Ensures the IQA/IV procedures are in place for each course.
- Ensures the Lead Internal Quality Assurer/Verifiers are identified for each course and that they are appropriately trained
- Oversees the appeals procedure.

- Ensures that actions arising from external verification, standards moderation, and standards verification are addressed.
- Shares feedback from external verification including actions with the team and develops a plan to address any areas for improvement/development. This may incorporated into the QIP

Curriculum and Quality Team Manager
- Ensures approval for any new qualifications through the Director of Teaching, Learning, Quality & Innovation
- Communicates change to units with the dellivery team
- Liaises with Director to ensure Lead Internal Verifiers are identified by the end of the 6 weeks of the new academic year
- Liaises with team to map evidence opportunities via assessment timetable.
- Provides information for Internal Quality Assurers/Verifiers on course - assessors, assessment timetable and assessment opportunities.
- Draws up and circulates the Internal Verification and Standardisation Schedule and sends a copy to the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation.
- Monitors IQA/IV which should take place throughout the year. Monitors staff development requirements for internal verification through the appraisal process.
- Generates and implements action plans following external verification and standards moderation sampling reports.
- Management of the appeals procedure.
- Management of the Malpractice Policy.
- Feedback significant IQA/IV issues to the Curriculum Director
- Maintains appropriate liaison with the External/Standards Quality Assurer/Verifier in relation to the following:
    a) Arranging the programme of visits
    b) Ensuring that College policies and procedures are made available
    c) Ensuring that programme management documentation is available
    d) Indicating the roles and responsibilities for programme teams
    e) Outlines the action plan of the individual programme
    f) Agreement of external verification plan
    g) Receiving written and verbal reports

*Note that in some cases depending on volume, some of the activities above may be delegated to the Lead IQA/V, in agreement with the Director.

Lead/Internal Quality Assurer/Verifier
- Needs to have a clear understanding of the standards to which the candidate is being assessed and ensure that any queries relating to the interpretation of the standards are brought to the immediate attention of the External/Standards Quality Assurer/Verifier.
- Responsible for checking to ensure that the assignment briefs cover the elements/performance criteria they are intended to cover, as indicated on the assignment front cover, i.e., verifying assignments/assessments.
- Liaises with the CQTM and assessors to organise a sampling programme.
- Submits new or significantly revised assignments to the Awarding organisations assignment checking service or EQA.
- Samples agreed student portfolio work.
- Feeds back outcomes of samples to assessor promptly.
- Feeds back sampling and assessor comments to Curriculum & Quality Team Manager.
- Develops and supports assessors and team in identification of assessment opportunities and assessment process.

- Deals with the Appeals Procedure when appropriate.

*Note that in some cases, where provision does not have a Lead IQA/V, the CQTM will take on these activities.

Assessor and/or Teacher

- Has knowledge and understanding of the assessment criteria.
- Identified assessment opportunities for each unit.
- Ensures the assignment brief has been IV'd.
- Checks evidence against standards.
- Gives constructive feedback and provides guidance to students who have not achieved specific criteria.
- Tracks student progress for each unit.
- Responds to Lead Internal Quality Assurer/Verifier's comments from sampling with intended action. Liaises with Lead Internal Quality Assurer/Verifier for clarification and support as necessary.
- Records student achievement and tracks progress for whole unit. Extracts student portfolio work according to agreed sampling programme.
- Provides student with portfolio note to explain whereabouts of sampling work.
- Reports on unavailability of requested sample portfolio work (where student has left course or not completed assignment) and provides agreed alternatives as necessary

Conflict of Interest

PolicyPolicy Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to protect our integrity as a business and the integrity of the qualifications delivered by, and on behalf of, West Thames College ('*the College'*). The policy is also designed to provide guidance on handling possible conflicts of interest that may arise.

This policy:
- Defines what is meant by conflict of interest
- Sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at different levels in the College.

Scope
This policy applies to all staff that deliver qualifications accredited by awarding organisations working with West Thames College.

The individuals falling within the scope of this policy include directors, managers, lecturers, agency staff and any associate staff, including managers, assessors, and lecturers employed on a consultancy basis.

Definition
A conflict of interest is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of circumstances in relation to training and assessment activity, for example:
- When an individual has a position of authority in one organisation which conflicts with his or her interests in another organisation
- When an individual has personal interests that conflict with his/her professional position
- Where someone works for or carries out work on West Thames College behalf, but who may have personal interests – paid or unpaid – in another business working with West Thames College

- Where someone works for or carries out work on behalf of West Thames College, who has friends or relatives involved in the teaching, learning and assessment carried out by West Thames College
- When one part of West Thames College creates and follows a procedure that conflicts with its responsibilities as an awarding organization

Responsibilities

College Management Team (CMT)
Managers in all Curriculum Directorates are responsible for communicating the Conflict of Interest Policy to all relevant individuals within their areas of responsibility annually. All Directors are required to review their procedures annually to ensure that they anticipate and manage potential or actual conflicts of interest. Line managers (most likely to be CQTMs) are responsible for ensuring that all new staff receive the most current Standards & Assessment Guidelines, including the Conflict of Interest policy.

Any potential or actual conflict of interest must be documented on the conflict of interest form which is shared with the examinations manager. The line manager must either resolve the issue or, for issues that cannot be resolved at this level, report the issue to their Director and/or the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation.

Individual responsibility
All staff involved in the delivery and assessment of qualifications at West Thames College have responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with the assessment and verification guidelines, including the Conflict of Interest Policy. All staff are required annually to read the most up to date assessment and verification guidelines and take any queries up with their line manager, in the first instance.

The most important feature of the Conflict of Interest Policy is the requirement that an individual disclose any activity that might give rise to a potential conflict of interest. If there is any doubt whether or not it represents a conflict of interest - report it! The individual and line manager are equally responsible for ensuring that the issue is documented carefully.

An individual may wish to raise concerns relating to conflict of interest directly with the Director of Teaching, Learning Quality and Innovation. This may be done in confidence. It should be noted that staff are protected under the College's Whistle Blowing Policy.

Any staff member considering paid or unpaid work outside West Thames College should refer to the Employees Undertaking Occasional External Work document found on the staff intranet, and, for managers, the Exclusivity of Service section included in the statement of terms and conditions of employment.

External Assessment, Quality Assurance and Verification

External Assessments
West Thames College is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

We have a standalone Exams Policy. This exam policy ensures that:

- all aspects of the exam process are documented, supporting the exams contingency plan, and other relevant exams-related policies, procedures and plans.
- all staff involved in the exams process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- all exams and assessments are conducted according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions, thus always maintaining the integrity and security of the exam/assessment system.
- exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them

The Exams Policy is reviewed annually to ensure ways of working are accurately reflected and that exams and assessments are conducted to current JCQ (and awarding body) regulations, instructions and guidance. The Exams Policy is be communicated to all relevant staff and is saved on Connect (Staff Intranet) as well as being issued to Exam Invigilators.

The appendices to the Exams Policy cover:
- Access Arrangements
- Contingency
- Declaration of Interest
- Emergency Evacuation
- Escalation
- Invigilation
- Non-examination & Controlled Assessments.

External Quality Assurance
The role of the External Verifier varies between Awarding organisations. Given below are the general requirements for most Awarding organisations.

General requirements
The External Quality Assurer/Verifier will focus on the following key areas:
- resources
- assessment
- quality assurance and quality control

Before the first visit the External Verifier will require the following details about your programmes:
- details of approved assessors and Internal Verifiers
- lists of assessors against units/modules
- lists of students (in groups) against units/modules
- an indication of new assessors
- details of the assessment programme
- a planned sample of assignments/assessments and student work

Resources
It will be necessary to provide your External Quality Assurer/Verifier with evidence that there are sufficient appropriately qualified staff competent to assess your programmes and that their training and development needs are met.

Evidence will also be required to show that there are sufficient physical resources to support the qualification and students have access to them.

The External Assurer/Verifier will seek views from students about access to resources and the assessment process during their visit to the centre.

Assessment

The External Quality Assurer/Verifier will need to sample assessments not only during visits but may also carry out this role at a distance.

Any samples that are sent to the External Quality Assurer/Verifier should be photocopied and the originals retained in the student's portfolio.

In common with the internal verification practice, an External Quality Assurer/Verifier will structure a sample to cover all assessors, each unit/module, all assessment methods and students from each group.