

College Policy

Pearson Higher National Assessment, verification & moderation policy 2025-26



25th July 2025

Senior Leadership Responsibility	Adam Fahey
Policy Author	Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning) – Matthew Twitchett
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Executive Director Quality, Teaching and Learning
Issue date of current version	25-26 – V1
Date to be reviewed	August 26
Type of Policy	Public

Significant changes following review of policy - 25th July 2025

Page Number or Heading Name	Details of significant change	Changes made by
Section 2 – Page 6	2.5 – This point has been added to ensure tutors refer to the College Groups Plagiarism Policy and Procedure which incorporates Artificial Intelligence.	Matthew Twitchett
Section 8 – page 12	This is a new section which relates to distance learning	Sharon Dunphy
Section 14 – page 9	Record retention periods updated to meet revised OfS requirements	Matthew Twitchett

POLICY AVAILABILITY NOTICE

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Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	25-7-25
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Matthew Twitchett
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	Students and Staff employed
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	This is a yearly review and update required by awarding organisations

You will need to consider whether it's possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy / procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy)
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with one being lowest impact and 5 being the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	None identified		
Disability	1	Some students may need support in understanding the policy. This will be provided by the student support teams in the College.	Students with an identified disability can seek support from a Carer/Parent or Guardian and the College in requesting an extension. College staff will also support in this request where awarding organisations allow.	As and when required
Gender (Sex)	1	None identified		
Gender Reassignment	1	None identified		
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	None identified		
Pregnancy / Maternity	2	A student may require additional time to submit an assessment. This will be supported by the College as long as it is within the awarding organisation rules and regulations.	A request will be accepted for additional time if allowed by the awarding organisation.	As and when required
Race	1	None identified		
Religion or Religious Belief	1	Staff when setting assessment deadlines must consider whether a religious holiday may impact the student submitting on time and avoid if possible.	Staff will ensure that all students have the same amount of time to complete their assessments. Students to complete extenuating circumstances if impacted by a religious event/holiday. This will be applied within rules of awarding organisations.	As and when required
Sexual Orientation	1	None identified		
Any other element that needs to be considered.	1	None identified		

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

Executive summary

Assessment, verification & moderation policy

Appropriate and accessible assessment supports students' learning and encourages their ambition and achievement. The integrity and consistency of assessment processes and practices are essential in order that learners' qualifications are valued by the learners themselves, employers, other educational institutions, the public and other interested parties.

Awarding organisations require centres to ensure standardisation in assessment, verification and moderation procedures and practice. This policy statement lays down the practice at South Essex College in order to establish best practice in assessment and verification. It also lays down the standards of service required to meet the expectations of learners.

Assessment at South Essex College should at all times be informed by the fundamental principle that students should be assessed only when they have acquired the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding and are ready to achieve. All verification and moderation activity should be informed by this principle.

Adherence by staff to this procedure will ensure that we word towards the College Groups strategic aim 1 (Provide teaching and learning that expands learners' horizons and enables them to achieve the qualifications they need to give them life-time choices). This will ensure that stringent standards are set and maintained for the submission and marking of assessed work.

Policy Statement

Assessment, verification and moderation

1. Assessment will meet the needs of the individual learner in line with the Teaching and Learning Strategy.

1.1 Initial assessment will form an accurate basis for identifying the appropriate study programme which will meet the ambition and aspirations of each individual learner.

2. Assessment and internal standards verification/moderation will exemplify best practice and will meet the requirements of awarding organisations and National Occupational Standards where relevant.

2.1 Assessors and Internal Verifiers/moderators must be aware of the requirements of awarding organisations and National Occupational Standards where relevant.

2.2 Staff development will be provided to ensure staff are trained and updated on awarding organisation requirements and procedures.

2.3 Awarding organisations will be made aware of any changes to Lead Verifiers/Quality Co- Ordinators by the Quality team in line with the specific awarding organisations own rules and regulations.

2.4 Curriculum Leaders to ensure the Quality team are made aware of any centre updates including staff details and will inform awarding organisations.

2.5 Course tutors must ensure that students are informed of the College Plagiarism Policy and procedure which includes the use of Artificial Intelligence in the preparation of assessments.

3. Staff who carry out assessment and internal verification of qualifications must

meet or be working towards the requirements set by the awarding organisations.

- 3.1 Staff will be provided with the necessary development for them to achieve assessor and verifier awards where appropriate and subject to Staff Development approval.
- 3.2 Staff will be assisted by the College Group to gain the awards and to be kept updated with any changes or amendments from the Awarding organisations. This will include any Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which may be an awarding organisation requirement.
- 3.3 Staff will be required to provide evidence of any qualifications obtained appropriate to the role. Awarding organisations may request to see copies of a staff members qualification certificates, CV and staff development/training log.
- 3.4 Staff teaching on NVQs/Apprenticeships must be occupationally competent and hold the relevant assessor and verifier awards stipulated by the awarding organisation.
- 3.5 All staff who are occupationally competent to assess are equally competent to Internally Verify unless stipulated by the awarding organisation.
- 3.6 The Head of School will ensure that any new assessor has the occupational experience and qualifications to complete assessment as per the awarding organisation. The Head of School will need to review and monitor all assessors expertise on an annual basis to ensure compliance with awarding organisation requirements.
- 3.7 The Internal Verifier must ensure that when planning the internal verification for the programme that they complete coverage of the full range of assessment activities. This may include written work, practical assessment in the workshop and observations of performance as example.

4. Each College and School will implement an assessment and verification process

compliant with College policies and the requirements of awarding organisations, awarding organisations' guidance and National Occupational Standards.

- 4.1 Each course or programme of study will have an assessment plan, which is made known to learners and other relevant stakeholders at the start of the programme of study and which is logged on ProMonitor, Smart Assessor or equivalent tracking system.
- 4.2 Each assessment plan must follow the South Essex College Group assessment deadlines. An exemption form must be completed by the College Principal for any programmes which will sit outside these deadlines.
- 4.3 The Curriculum Leader will be responsible for the implementation of the plan and ensuring assessments take place.
- 4.4 Each course or group of courses will have a named lead internal verifier/moderator and an appropriate number of internal verifiers/moderators.
- 4.5 Individual assessment briefs will be internally checked before being distributed to learners, where assessment is not prescribed by the awarding body. If any issues are identified by the Internal Verifier, they should be addressed by the Assessor prior to issue.
- 4.6 The Curriculum Leader will ensure that sampling plan is in place and that a representative sample (a minimum of 4 students unless stipulated by Awarding Organisation) of assessment decisions from all assessors is verified or moderated.
- 4.7 Where Internal Verification (IV) takes place in the workplace, any health and safety issues which are noted during the IV visit must be reported to the College health and safety representative to action as appropriate.
- 4.8 Assessments will be carried out to meet the requirements of awarding organisations and the National Occupational Standards and will follow the fundamental principle that learners will be assessed only when they are ready to achieve.

- 4.9 Assessment decisions will be made promptly, and written feedback given to students/candidates with 10 working days of assessment including internal verification unless stipulated differently by the awarding organisation.
- 4.10 The outcome of students' assessment decisions must be tracked on completion of grading. Tutors must ensure that assessment submissions have been uploaded onto ProMonitor (S has been placed onto ProMonitor), Smart Assessor or equivalent on the day of submission and the assessment grade is uploaded onto Pro Monitor, Smart Assessor or equivalent within 10 working days of assessment date.
- 4.11 Feedback should (within awarding organisation requirements) comment on what has been done well and provide guidance on how work can be improved.
- 4.12 Feedback should include the correction of errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 4.13 The Curriculum Leader is responsible for ensuring that they are aware of where assessed student work (electronic and paper-based) will be stored. Electronic work must be stored in either the department's quality folder and clearly labelled by course, year and unit or in an approved portfolio system such as SMART assessor.
- 4.14 The Curriculum Leader must ensure there is a secure place to store paper-based student assessments within the department. Assessed work must be clearly marked by academic year, course and unit.
- 4.14.1 The Curriculum Leader must ensure a sign in/out process is in place for student paper-based portfolios which must be adhered to.
- 4.14.2 Tracking , Assessment feedback sheets and internal verification records must be stored securely and safely for five years after completion and be made available for audit.
- 4.14.3 Student work is to be retained and made available to awarding organisations as per their stated requirements and for a minimum of 12 weeks after the completion of their programme.

- 4.15 The outcomes and any actions resulting from internal verification/moderation are to be followed up, acted upon, reported and signed off by Head of Schools and reported to the Quality Executive Board.
- 4.16 Appeals are to be documented and where appropriate, forwarded on to the external verifier/standards moderator, in line with the awarding body's requirements.
- 4.17 Standardisation/moderation should take place when a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation must be carried out before any formal assessment and internal verification have taken place. Standardisation is the process to discuss and mutually assess a sample of learner work to reach a consensus. This will be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided in the qualification specification.
- 4.18 An audit of the internal verification and standardisation/moderation processes in each School will take place at least once each year with formal reports presented to the Quality Executive Board.
- 4.19 Students should not be provided with grades until internal verification of assessment decisions have been made. Students should be made aware that grades are subject to moderation from awarding organisations and can be altered as a result of this process.

5. The College Group appeals procedure will apply to assessment and internal moderation decisions

- 5.1 Students will be made aware of the College Academic appeals process (stage 1-3).
- 5.2 A student has the right to appeal to the awarding organisation once they have been through the College internal appeals process.
- 5.3 Students will be made aware of the potential consequences of appealing to an awarding organisation.

6. The Assessment, verification and moderation policy will promote equality and diversity and be consistent with and complementary to all other College policies

6.1 Equality of access to fair and reliable assessment is guaranteed to all students and candidates.

6.2 Students who wish to have prior experience and /or learning accredited will be covered by the procedure for recognition of prior learning (RPL) exemptions/equivalency.

7 The operation of the assessment and internal verification/moderation procedures will be monitored through the Quality Calendar and by the Quality Executive Board.

7.1 Compliance with assessment and internal verification/moderation procedures will be monitored through the quality calendar, team meetings, annual course reviews and the School reviews and will be reported to the Quality Executive Board by the Deputy College Principals.

7.2 Feedback from students on the assessment process will be gathered through such mechanisms as student surveys, forums and meetings with course representatives and student focus groups.

7.3 External verification/moderation reports will be sent to Heads of Schools and Curriculum Leaders for action. Head of Schools will provide updates on progress towards these actions to the Deputy College Principals.

7.4 Reports will be produced to summarise the performance of each curriculum area and scrutinised by Quality Executive Board.

7.5 Any programme or course must ensure that they meet the awarding organisation

minimum requirements to be able to use distance learning or distance assessment.

- 7.6 Online learning where a blended approach is used including a mix of face to face on campus assessment and via online platforms will adhere to the requirements set by the relevant awarding organisations which is separate from distance learning.
- 7.7 Tutors, assessors must understand, and follow, any qualification and unit-specific requirements for delivery or assessment that are set out in the qualification specification by the awarding organisation.
- 7.8 Distance learning and assessment may not be the right approach for some learners so it is important that Schools recruit with integrity. Distance learners will need to have the technical and communication skills to enable them to work independently and communicate effectively
- 7.9 No distance learning should be delivered without permission from the Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning to ensure all awarding organisation requirements are met. Distance learning programmes will be approved by the Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality). See section 8.

8. Distance Learning

- 8.1 Any programme or course must ensure that they meet the awarding organisation minimum requirements to be able to use distance learning or distance assessment.
- 8.2 Online learning where a blended approach is used, including a mix of face-to-face on-campus assessment and online delivery, will adhere to the requirements set by the relevant awarding organisations, which are separate from those for distance learning.
- 8.3 Tutors and assessors must understand, and follow, any qualification and unit specific requirements for delivery or assessment that are set out in the awarding organisation's qualification specification.

8.4 Distance learning and assessment may not be appropriate for all learners. Schools must recruit with integrity, ensuring that distance learners have the technical and communication skills to study independently and communicate effectively.

8.5 No distance learning should be delivered without prior approval from the Executive Director of Quality, Teaching and Learning to ensure all awarding organisation requirements are met. Distance learning programmes must also be approved by the Deputy Principal (Curriculum & Quality).

8.6 Communication and Response Times

- Distance learners must be informed at induction of expected timeframes for staff response to queries, marking and feedback.
- Tutors and assessors must acknowledge student queries (via email, VLE, or agreed platforms) within 2 working days, even if a full response cannot be provided immediately.
- Feedback on assessment must be provided within 10 working days of submission, in line with College policy (or sooner where specified by the awarding organisation).
- Internal verification and moderation timelines for distance learning must mirror on campus provision to ensure parity.
- Where exceptional circumstances mean these timescales cannot be met, students must be notified promptly with a revised timescale.
- Heads of School or designated person are responsible for monitoring staff adherence to distance learning response times and ensuring consistency across programmes.

8.7 Assessment Security and Authenticity

- Distance learning assessments must include measures to confirm the authenticity of learner work in line with awarding organisation requirements.
- This may include plagiarism detection software, oral questioning/viva voce, online invigilation, or learner authenticity declarations.
- Assessors must be satisfied that submitted work is the learner's own before confirming an assessment decision.

8.8 Accessibility, Inclusion and Digital Equity

- Learners must be informed prior to enrolment of the minimum digital and connectivity requirements for participation in distance learning.
- Reasonable adjustments must be provided for learners with disabilities or additional learning needs to ensure accessibility of online platforms.
- Alternative submission or assessment arrangements must be available where technical issues would otherwise disadvantage a learner, ensuring parity of opportunity.

8.9 Record-Keeping and Monitoring

- All communications, feedback and assessment records for distance learners must be logged on approved College systems such as ProMonitor, Smart Assessor or equivalent.
- Heads of School or designated person must monitor engagement, assessment outcomes and feedback for distance learners to identify any learners at risk of disengagement.
- Distance learning provision must be reviewed annually as part of the course monitoring process to ensure that standards are equivalent to on-campus provision and continue to meet awarding organisation requirements.

End of Policy

