

TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT HANDBOOK

Policy Group: Quality and Curriculum Group 4

Effective: June 2020

Approved: Gail Crossman Director of
Performance and Development

Responsible officer: Head of Quality and
Director of Quality

Next renew due: June 2021

Ref no.: 4.3

GUIDANCE

Values | Vision | Tone of Voice



Vision

Transforming lives through learning

Tone of voice

Our tone of voice takes its direct influence from our core values.

We are passionate about people and learners and are driven to get the best out of everyone by getting to understand them. We are caring and supportive, as well as being determined and strive for growth. We talk with purpose and enthusiasm in a way that connects and empowers people.

Innovation is at the heart of Learning Curve Group and we're always thinking about what's next!

SUMMARY CHANGES

Date	Page	Details of amendments
March 19	All	Full document review to combine a variety of Policies and Procedures into a handbook.
February 20	16,17	Inclusion of countersigning procedure
April 20	All	Review to reflect Covid19 changes to process
June 20	All	Reflect LHAA and Learning Support

I. INTRODUCTION

We ensure that our core values take priority when conducting quality assurance activities. This policy aims to develop, support and achieve high quality teaching and learning form part of the overall self-assessment and quality improvement processes. The data and information extracted from the observation of teaching, learning and assessment, feedback from learners and reviews of documentation will be used to inform the annual self-assessment report and to shape development priorities

Learning Curve Group is one of the largest training providers in the UK, providing education and training nationally. In October 2018 Profound Services Ltd and Northern Care Training Ltd joined Learning Curve Group and later in 2020 the London Hairdressing Apprenticeship Academy and the London Beauty Training Academy and Acorn Training Consultants Ltd joined the family.

Glossary:

Learning Curve Group (LCG)

Profound Services (PS)

Northern Care Training Ltd (NCT)

London Hairdressing Apprenticeship Academy (LHAA)

London Beauty Training Academy (LBTA)

Acorn Training Consultants Ltd (ATC)

Applies to:

This handbook has been adapted by the Group and is to be adhered to by delivery staff .

Reason for handbook:

To ensure that:

- Colleagues have clear information, advice and guidance given about us, the expected standards of teaching, learning and assessment and the strategies that will be implemented to achieve these across all our contracts.
- Colleagues understand that exceeding or meeting expectations for teaching, learning and assessment is the standard for all staff facilitating learning activities.
- Colleagues follow the Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers in the Education and Training Sector.
- Each learner is supported to achieve their full potential whilst studying with us, through this and our robust information, advice and guidance mantra.
- Each learner's experience of learning is wholly positive.
- Foster an inclusive approach to teaching delivery through the provision of tailored learning support, in order to maximise successful learning outcomes.

II. HANDBOOK AND POLICY STATEMENT

Learning Ethos and Expectations

Our commitment is that we will:

- be an inclusive institution, whilst having a clear intent to meet the needs of learners , employers and regional requirements
aim to establish an ethos based on an excellence within a safe and supportive learning environment.
- place learners at the centre of everything we do and ensure our expectations of them are high.
Provide robust and informative advice and guidance at the beginning and throughout the programme.
- match individual learners' needs with suitable courses and, where we cannot meet their needs, signpost them to a provider who can.
- consider previous learning experiences and ensure all delivery colleagues provide a differentiated approach to the setting of curriculum goals and the sequence of delivery.
- Provide a range of learning environments aimed at encouraging independent and flexible learning.
- Provide learning resources appropriate to learning styles and maximise the use of technology.
- Provide learners with a breadth of learning experience incorporating the development of functionality and a focus on personal development, behavior and welfare.
- Ensure learners receive sound next steps and career advice and guidance through their learning programmes.

Teaching and Tutoring

Our commitment is that we will:

- provide high quality teaching and learning and commit to the continuous improvement of the learner experience.
- ensure the learners' starting point is established through the use of robust initial assessment (IA), including identified recognised prior learning (RPL)
- ensure teaching and learning focuses on the appropriate sequencing of components and allow learners to demonstrate their skills in terms of recall and building expertise.
- provide learners with challenging targets in order to raise aspirations and ensure their potential to achieve curriculum goals is evident.
- ensure all staff reflect on their current practice, develop strategies to enhance teaching, tutoring, learning and achieve a result which is beyond expectations.
- ensure continuous professional development (CPD) events are held both internally and externally in order to support our staff in the development of their own expertise and pedagogy.

- ensure the quality and operational management team provide our staff with ongoing coaching and support. This includes supporting them in the use of technology and remote teaching and learning techniques, including during periods of disruption.
- ensure the coaching and development cycle is companywide and used as a tool to develop and measure impact.
- ensure the provision of continued teaching, learning and assessment through the use of technology, when this is the chosen method of delivery.
- Provide online resources and a range of technology solutions to support learner progress.

Assessment

Assessment will take place regularly through any programme on a formative and summative basis and serve the following purposes:

- Assessing an individual's progress in order to deliver constructive and developmental feedback to support future success and provide every opportunity to stretch beyond the Standards.
- Assessing an individual's performance to allow for formal grading and certification.
- Establishing the effectiveness of memory recall and impact of sustained learning.
- Checking on the development of learners' progress and to inform them of distance travelled in relation to progress towards achievement of curriculum goals and aspirations.

The approach to assessment follows the following principles:

- Working within Awarding Organisation guidelines, the assessment process should always be appropriate for each individual learner and adopt the flexibility allowed to us by Ofqual during any periods of disruption
- Learners will be made aware of the procedures for appeal against assessment decisions both internally and externally.
- Formal assessment will always comply with Awarding Organisation regulations and adequate preparations for such assessment should be scheduled into every programme.
- Special assessment adjustments need to be applied for, when appropriate, through the Awarding Organisation.
- Initial assessment, completed predominantly online, will be carried out and assessed against screening indicators, where available, to determine any additional learning support needs and advice given accordingly
- When receiving the portfolio from a learner the centre should record who received the portfolio, candidate name, when the portfolio was received, assessor name and where it has been stored. When the portfolio is returned to the learner it should be signed for. The centre must store all retained portfolios in a secure store.

In situations where a portfolio cannot be found then a full investigation will be triggered by the Internal Quality Assurance Team (IQA).

The External Quality Assurance (EQA) will be contacted for guidance and at this time the Internal Quality Assurance will discuss the photocopied assessment evidence for the candidate which is held by the centre. It may be a requirement that assessment and or evidence collection will need to be repeated. All Awarding Organisations require centres to retain records for a minimum of 3 years to make them available for certification queries. These records should be scanned and contain details of Learner, Assessor, IQA, enrolment and registration. These records should be supported by the assessment records and verification documentation. Portfolios should be returned to the learner following the EQA's and Examiners' visit. Copied assessment records will be retained by the Centre.

III. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

Awarding Organisation Guidance

Delivery Staff Handbook

1.5 Whistleblowing Procedure

4.7 External and Internal Assessment Policy and Procedure

4.8 Conflict of Interest Policy

4.20 Complaints Procedure

Appendix

Learner Appeals Procedure

(To be issued to all learners at Induction and reinforced at each assessment)

If you are dissatisfied with an assessment outcome you have the right to appeal. There are 3 formal stages in the Appeals Procedure and each stage must be exhausted before proceeding to the next one.

Reasons for appeal are likely to be:

- You do not feel that you were given adequate access to assessment.
- You were not satisfied with the methods used by your Trainer/Tutor to assess your work.
- You feel that there is an element of bias in your assessment.

You are advised to keep your own copies of all documents used in the Appeals procedure. For candidates who are unable to place their appeal in writing, access to an alternative method will be provided.

Stage 1

Having received a decision and feedback as to your claim to competence achievement with which you are not satisfied, you have the right to appeal directly to your delivery colleague member, who has carried out the assessment, within 10 working days. This appeal must be in writing and clearly indicate:

- The points of your disagreement and your reasons.
- The evidence within your portfolio/e-portfolio which you believe meets the requirements of the learning outcomes.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Stage 1 Appeal, you can then appeal to the Internal Quality Assurer within 10 working days.

Your Appeal must be in writing, but you do not need to repeat the detail provided at Stage 1, as all of the documentation used at Stage 1 will have been passed to the Lead Quality Assurer from your delivery staff member.

Stage 3

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the State 2 Appeal, you can then appeal directly to the Quality Assurance Manager, who will review all documentation presented and provide an outcome.

Stage

Before proceeding to Stage 4, you must have exhausted (all) the Internal Appeals Procedure of Learning Curve Group. Your appeal must be presented to the appropriate Awarding Organisation via the Director of Performance and Development.

Stage 1 You wish to appeal against an assessment procedure/decision. You will appeal to your Tutor/Trainer.

Tutor/Trainer Name: _____

Contact Number: _____

Date Appeal lodged: _____

If the issue is not resolved within 10 days to your satisfaction, go to Stage 2

Stage 2 Your issue and related documentation is passed on to the Internal Quality Assurer by your Tutor/Trainer who will discuss this with the Quality Assurance Manager.

Your Internal Quality Assurer is: _____

Date notified of Appeal and in receipt of related of documentation:

If the issue is not resolved within 10 days to your satisfaction, go to Stage 3

Stage 3 Your issue and related documentation is passed on to the Quality Assurance Manager by your IQA.

Your Internal Quality Assurer is _____

Date notified of Appeal and in receipt of related of documentation:

If the issue is not resolved within 10 days to your satisfaction, go to Stage 4

Stage 4 Your issue and related documentation is referred to the Awarding Organisation with which you are registered, via the Director of Performance and Development.

Director of Performance and Development

Name: Gail Crossman

Contact Number: 01388 777129

The Awarding Organisation you are registered with is: _____

The contact number is: _____

Date referred: _____

Copies of all Appeals and actions taken must be retained for the Awarding Organisation

Assessor Appeals Procedure

If you are dissatisfied with a verification outcome you have the right to appeal. There are 3 formal stages in the appeals procedure and each stage must be exhausted before proceeding to the next one.

Reasons for appeal are likely to be:

- You do not feel that you were given adequate access to verification.
- You were not satisfied with the methods used by your Internal Quality Assurer to verify your work.
- You feel that there is an element of bias in your verification.

You are advised to keep your own copies of all documents used in the Appeals Procedure

Stage 1

Having received a decision and feedback as to your assessment competence, with which you are not satisfied, you have the right to appeal directly to your Internal Quality Assurer, who carried out the verification, within 10 working days. This appeal must be in writing and clearly indicate:

- The point of your disagreement and your reasons.
- The evidence within your portfolio which you believe meets the requirements of the performance criteria for claiming evidence.

Stage 2

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your stage 1 appeal, you can then appeal to the Quality Assurance Manager within 10 working days. Your appeal must be in writing, but you do not need to repeat the detail provided at stage 1, as all of the documentation used at stage 1 will have been passed to the Quality Assurance Manager by your Line Manager. The Quality Assurance Manager will bring this to the attention of the Head of Quality, who will consult the Awarding Organisation where appropriate.

Stage 3

IF you are not satisfied your appeal will be passed on to the Director of Performance and Development to review your appeal.

Stage 4

Before proceeding to stage 4, you must have exhausted (all) the internal Appeals Procedure stages of Learning Curve Group. Your appeal will then be referred to the Awarding Organisation that you are registered with.

Centre Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Procedure

Any Awarding Organisation reserves the right, in suspected cases of Malpractice and Maladministration, to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress.

The following are some examples of malpractice by centre colleagues: -

- Failing to keep marking schemes and examination papers safe.
- Alteration of marking schemes or assignment criteria.
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment.
- Producing falsified witness statements.
- Allowing evidence that is known not to be the learner's work.
- Falsifying records and certificates.
- Obtaining unauthorised access to assessment materials.
- Misusing special learner assessment requirements.

The following are some examples of maladministration by centre colleagues: -

- Late registration of learners with the Awarding Organisation.
- Claiming certification for incorrect units.
- Not retaining appropriate learner records.

Learning Curve Group take all reasonable steps to prevent malpractice and/or maladministration from occurring throughout the development, delivery and assessment of all qualifications and programmes.

The exams officer will register all learners within Awarding Organisation guidelines within one week of starting a short Award or within one month of starting a Certificate or Diploma.

Learning Curve Group will maintain all learner records that are required and will do so under the requirements of the GDPR.

When investigating alleged malpractice and maladministration, Awarding Organisations will primarily deal with the Director of Performance and Development or his/her nominated representative and retain the right to involve the learner in the process. A learner has the right to report all allegations of malpractice and maladministration directly to the Awarding Organisation.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Performance and Development or their nominees to carry out investigations into allegations of malpractice and maladministration. It is vitally important that any alleged malpractice is reported to the Awarding Organisation within 48 hours. The centre must make the accused fully aware in writing at the earliest convenience and inform him/her /them that the matter will be dealt with through the Company disciplinary procedure.

Whistleblowing

Our Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure sets out the way in which concerns about malpractice may be properly raised within and, if necessary, outside of the company.

Lost Portfolio Procedure

We will take every precaution to avoid the loss or theft of portfolios through the process of recording the receipt of portfolios and storing them in secure locations; it is recognised that Delivery Staff or Moderators/Internal Quality Assurers may need to transport portfolios i.e. from centres to Head office, which could result in loss or theft.

If a portfolio goes missing it should be reported to the Quality Support Team as soon as possible, detailing the name of the learner, the qualification aim and the units/elements that were in the portfolio. The Quality Support Team will then inform the Quality Assurance Manager, who will advise of the process to follow.

The Delivery Staff member and Moderator/Internal Quality Assurers, along with the support of the Quality Assurance Manager, will review all assessment, Internal Quality Assurance records and action plans to identify units completed and evidence that has already been gathered. The Quality Assurance Manager will inform the Head of Quality of the issue and a decision will be made regarding further action.

The decision will be discussed with the learner and arrangements will be made for any outstanding evidence to be gathered with the least possible inconvenience to the learner. In such a situation the External Quality Assurer will be informed at the earliest opportunity by the Quality Assurance Manager and advised of the action being taken.

Loss of Digital Recordings

Copies of digital recordings must be stored on the shared area/e-portfolio; information needs to be annotated on a multi assessment record or e-portfolio to ensure access to all DVR information.

Where the loss of a digital recording occurs the Delivery Staff member must report the loss to the Internal Quality Assurer. Copies of multi assessment records, visit reports and matrix sheets must be supplied to demonstrate competence. In the event that records do not fully demonstrate the competence of the learner, the details of the recording must be confirmed through a summary of assessment - this must be confirmed by the learner as a true recording of the assessment activity.

Where relevant - inform the EQA before a sample is sought/next visit is scheduled.

Conflict of interest

Learners will not be able to call upon a family member or a person with whom they have a close working relationship (or with people who work for us) to provide witness statements or undertake any form of assessment or examination invigilation, In line with our conflict of Interest policy

Professional Standards 2014

[https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ETF Professional Standards Framework Spreads Web.pdf](https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/ETF_Professional_Standards_Framework_Spreads_Web.pdf)

Values and attributes

Teachers and trainers are reflective and enquiring practitioners who think critically about their own educational assumptions, values and practice in the context of a changing contemporary and educational world, drawing on relevant research as part of evidence-based practice.

Professional behavior

They act with honesty and integrity to maintain high standards of ethics and professional behavior in support of learners and their expectations.

Dual professionalism

Teachers and trainers are 'dual professionals'; they are both vocational/subject specialists and teaching experts, committed to maintaining and developing their expertise in both aspects of their role to ensure the best outcomes for their learners.

Professional values and attributes

Develop your own judgement of what works and does not work in your teaching and training.

1. Reflect on what works best in your teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of the learners.
2. Evaluate and challenge your practice, values and beliefs.
3. Inspire, motivate and raise aspirations of learners through your enthusiasm and knowledge.
4. Be creative and innovative in selecting and adapting strategies to help and guide learners to learn.
5. Value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunities and inclusivity.
6. Build positive and collaborative relationships with colleagues and learners, maintaining professional knowledge and understanding
7. Maintain and update knowledge of your subject and/or vocational area.
8. Maintain and update your knowledge of educational research to develop evidence-based practice.
9. Apply theoretical understanding of effective practice in teaching, learning and assessment, drawing on research and other evidence.
10. Evaluate your practice with others and other evidence.
11. Manage and promote positive learner behaviour.
12. Understand your role in terms of teaching and professionalism, as well as considering your associated responsibilities and professional skills.

Develop your expertise and skills to ensure the best outcomes for learners.

13. Motivate and inspire learners to promote achievement and develop their skills to enable progression.
14. Plan and deliver effective learning programmes for diverse groups or individuals in a safe and inclusive environment.
15. Promote the benefits of technology and support learners in its use.
16. Address the Mathematics and English needs of learners and work creatively to overcome individual barriers to learning.
17. Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning and assessment, setting goals that stretch and challenge.
18. Apply appropriate and fair methods of assessment and provide constructive and timely feedback to support progression and achievement.
19. Maintain and update your teaching and training expertise and vocational skills through collaboration with employers.
20. Contribute to organizational development and quality improvement through collaboration with others.
21. Consider the options for Reasonable Adjustments, where required, in order to adopt an inclusive approach to teaching and assessment, considering the needs of learners requiring Additional Learning Support.

Staff have appropriate skills and expertise to provide good-quality teaching, learning assessment and information and support services for each learner.

- Learners understand how well they are progressing towards their learning goals and what they need to do to improve.
- Those with a legitimate interest, such as employers of parents, are clearly and regularly informed about student progress.
- Feedback on marked work should be given within appropriate time limits and in accordance with the assessment schedule, where applicable.
- Give choices about the next stage of their education, employment and offer impartial career advice and guidance.
- Instill employability skills, along with personal development, so that learners are prepared to respect others and contribute to the wider society and life in Britain.
- Understanding how to keep themselves safe, spot potential risks and keep healthy, both emotionally and physically.
- Understand risks: sexual exploitation and extremism, including when using the internet and social media.
- To inspire self-confidence, self-awareness and understand how to be a successful learner.
- Through following guidelines for behavior and conduct, how to manage their own feelings, behavior and ability to relate to others.

- Learners receive help to develop English and Mathematics skills to support the attainment of their main learning goals.

- Learners' progress in English and Mathematics is monitored and reviewed with them.
- Learners' work is mark carefully with correction of spelling, grammatical errors and

Inaccuracies.

- Learning Curve Group have specialized tutors/ staff to work with and keep those who need additional support engaged and motivated.
- Learning, teaching, training and assessment promote equality and support diversity.
- Staff use materials and teaching methods that are sensitive to, and promote equality of opportunity.
- Staff maximise the opportunities in sessions and within all learning contexts to promote equality of opportunity and diversity.
- Lesson plans and schemes of work demonstrate how staff will promote equality and support diversity.
- Staff attend scheduled events to maintain knowledge levels, share ideas and continuously improve embedding skills.

Countersigning Procedure

Unqualified Assessors

The length of time that unqualified assessors take to achieve an assessor qualification will vary dependent on the amount of assessing that they are undertaking and their previous experience. It is expected that learners should take at least 10 weeks to achieve the award-sized qualifications, ie the 2-unit knowledge and competency- based awards. Occupational competence Assessors are making a judgement about whether the learner is competent in the role that they are undertaking. Assessment of occupational competence in a work environment requires assessors to provide assessments, formative and/or summative, of learner performance against relevant standards: national, apprenticeship or employer specified.

Where this relates to a qualification, this should be a competence-based qualification assessed in a work environment, but it does not have to be a regulated qualification. It could also potentially include assessment of National Occupational Standards, employer standards or a new Apprenticeship Standard.

The following requirements are to be considered:

Countersigning

- Each assessment decision will need to be countersigned. i.e Any judgements made by an unqualified assessor as part of their training must be countersigned by a qualified and competent assessor before being accepted as valid.
- Countersigning must take place prior to verification.
- Any countersigning action points issued are to be checked by the IQA as part of their verification. They are not to be re-submitted to the countersigner for re-checking.
- Countersigning can cease from the date the certificate has been claimed by the relevant CAVA IQA.
- If the Assessor subsequently makes a summative assessment decision on a unit as a qualified Assessor, any missed countersigning does not need to be retrospectively completed for that unit.

Vocational IQA responsibilities

- Verification of Functional Skills can be conducted without countersigning.
- It is the IQA's responsibility to check that countersigning has taken place before commencing any verification and then they must check any countersigning actions have been completed.

Countersigning procedure

- The relevant delivery Manager & Vocational IQA will agree the countersigner for the unqualified Assessor. The relevant delivery Manager will notify the CAVA Assessor. The Countersigners details will need to be added to Smart Assessor as the 'Lead Assessor'.

- Vocational IQA to confirm this countersigning procedure to the unqualified Assessor & their countersigner including the Countersigning Report Form and a Countersigning Tracker relevant to the qualification.
- Unqualified Assessor is to update the countersigning tracker weekly by recording the learner's details, and entering a 'Y' into the units where a first assessment decision has been made (this could be either a formative or summative assessment decision), and confirm that the assessments have been uploaded to Smart Assessor.
- The Countersigner is to sample each assessment decision made by a trainee assessor to ensure it is valid, reliable, authentic
- The countersigner is to complete the Countersigning Report Form and attach it to an email to send to the unqualified Assessor (CC the Vocational IQA) and ticking the unit as 'Lead Assessor' on Smart Assessor.
- The Countersigner is to provide verbal feedback to the unqualified assessor - via Teams if possible so that screens can be shared and viewed.
- The Countersigner is to update the countersigning trackers by colouring the units green to identify that countersigning of those units has taken place
- The updated countersigning trackers are to be emailed to the unqualified Assessor (CC the Vocational IQA).
- The unqualified Assessor is to view the comments on the Countersigning Report Form. Any countersigning actions are to be completed as soon as possible and by the dates specified.
- The Vocational IQA can now verify those units countersigned, checking any countersigning action points issued have been closed as they do so.
- The Vocational IQA may need to provide feedback to the Countersigner if they disagree with the decision and/or feedback provided to the unqualified Assessor.
- This should be recorded via email (CC the relevant delivery Manager) and followed up with verbal feedback - via Teams if possible so that screens can be shared and viewed.