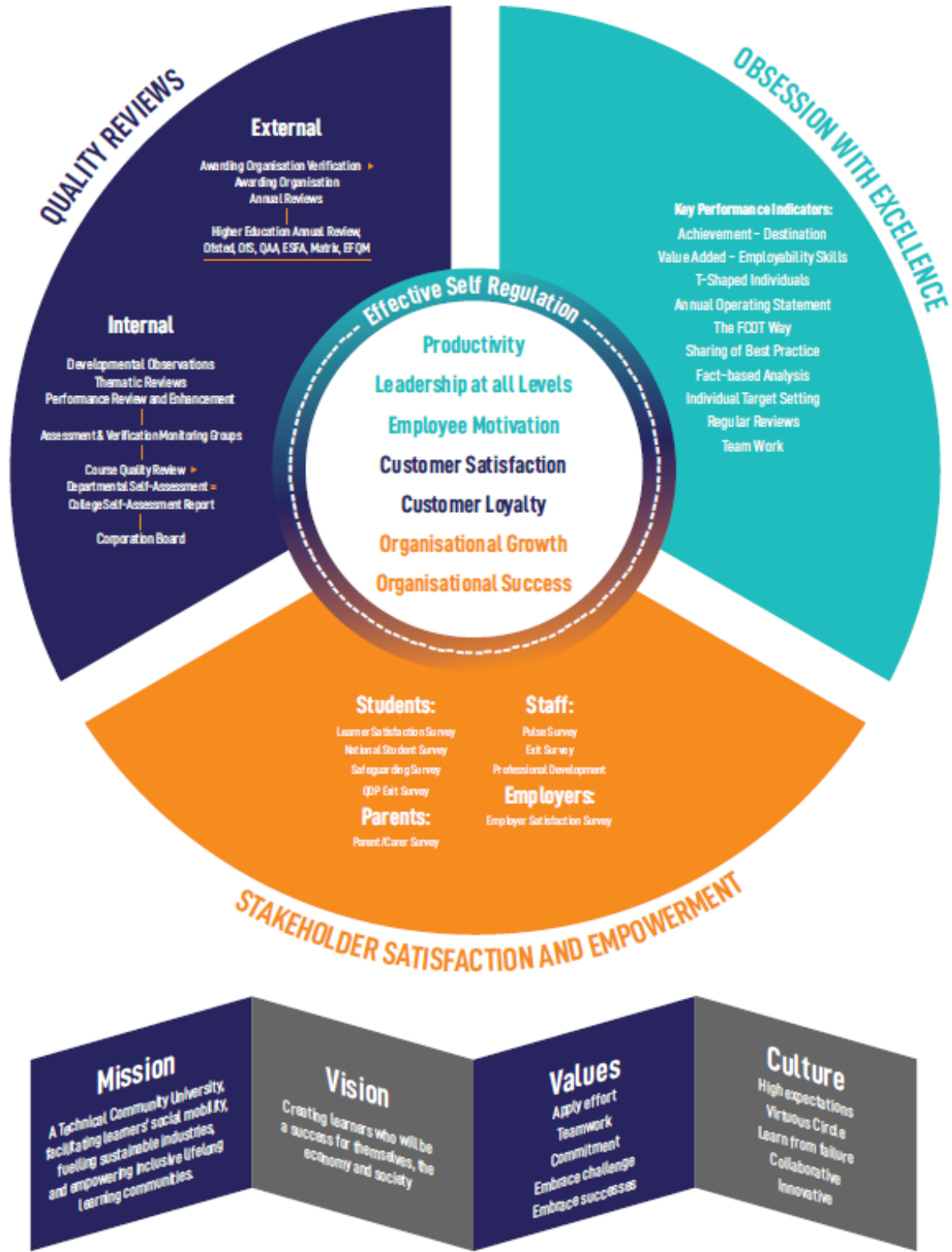




TOTAL QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK



1.0 CONTEXT

Farnborough College of Technology (FCOT)'s long-term goal is to be a beyond outstanding provider with growing and empowering participation from learners, employers, communities and civic stakeholders. One of our key enabling goals is to deliver 'beyond outstanding' quality of education, trusted by all. Consequently, in order to build on our accomplishments to date, the College's Total Quality Assurance Framework (TQAF) is focused on ensuring:

- We live our values, foster and nurture the culture needed for sustained excellence and continuous success, thereby realising our vision for stakeholders.
- We effectively self-regulate to annually maintain achievement rates at least 10% above national averages, along with high levels of stakeholder satisfaction and sustainable destinations for learners.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING HIGH STANDARDS & BEST PRACTICE

Leadership at all levels is the primary agent of high standards. Consequently, every member of staff (support and academic) is responsible for the quality of the courses and services offered by the College.

3.0 SCOPE

FCOT's TQAF and associated Policies will involve all staff and collaborative partners:

- 3.1 The management of the process will be through the existing organisational structure.
- 3.2 Line managers will initiate procedures with their teams, collate, and monitor self-assessment reports and action plans.
- 3.3 Quality improvement will be founded on a process of regular self-evaluation by teams and individual staff who are responsible for delivering courses and other services.
- 3.4 It will seek the views and perceptions of learners, employers and other stakeholders for whom the services of the College exist.
- 3.5 Wherever appropriate, this Policy will promote the identification of quality standards and performance indicators that are consistent with external body requirements such as those expected to be measured by Ofsted or other external review organisations and against which performance can be measured, evaluated and so improved. We will ensure that all processes model and implement the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF).
- 3.6 This Policy will support the processes of peer review both internally and with external partners in the sector including training and private providers.
- 3.7 Wherever appropriate, for Higher Nationals and University accredited programmes, this Policy will promote the identification of quality standards and performance indicators that are consistent with the UK Quality Code for HE and against which performance can be measured, evaluated and so improved.
- 3.8 In the case of University accredited programmes, these are monitored through the University of Surrey via their HE Annual Review processes. Academic Annual Returns are generated by course leaders from course boards, learner feedback and module reports. These are distributed to both the university and to line managers. A Higher Education (HE) Self Evaluation

Document (SED) and Action Plan is written annually reviewing the whole of the HE provision. This is monitored and reviewed by SMT and signed off at Board Level as required for the Office for Learners (OfS). Awarding Organisation Reviews for HNC/Ds are also produced on an annual basis for Awarding Bodies such as Pearson to ensure we meet their quality assurance processes.

4.0 STRATEGIC GOAL

One of the College's Enabling Goals is to deliver 'beyond outstanding' quality of education, trusted by all. To this end, the aim is to ensure that through robust self-regulation, curriculum and services produce outstanding customer satisfaction and loyalty, staff are productive and motivated, and the College achieves its growth and success ambitions. Consequently, the purpose of our Total Quality Assurance Framework is to ensure these are achieved through three key approaches.

5.0 TOTAL QUALITY APPROACHES

- 5.1 Obsession with **excellence**: Through pragmatic approaches such as annual KPIs and innovations such as the FCOT Way, that bring transparency to best practice and high expectations. Ensuring excellent outcomes for learners through careful **monitoring of learners' progress which** ensures good skills development, leading to positive destinations.
- 5.2 Exceed **stakeholders' expectations** every time: Through long term commitment to stakeholder voice, understanding stakeholder needs and never knowingly fail to provide the education, training and services needed to progress stakeholders. Empowering **staff who are our greatest asset**: Through meaningful and timely staff development and appraisal as well as open communication and a culture of team working.
- 5.3 Embedded **reviews for continuous growth and improvements**: Through effective and timely use and responsiveness to **internal and external quality review** processes. Fostering a systematic, people-centric, **high performing culture** supported by values including collegiate working, transparency and inclusiveness.

6.0 Procedures to drive high standards with continuous improvement

A number of established processes and procedures, some of which are detailed in the appendices, support the aims of this TQAF:

- Course Results Review Meetings
- Monitoring of Key Performance Indicators
- PRAE (Performance Review and Enhancement)
- Stakeholder satisfaction processes
- Staff development days
- Curriculum and learner experience committee
- The Complaints Policy and Processes

- Assessment Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG)
- Quality Audit Day
- Annual Self-Assessment Review (SAR)
- Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)
- Course Approval
- Quality Assurance of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Quality and standards committee

APPENDICES: PROCESSES & PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 1: Quality Processes

PRAE (Performance Review and Enhancement)

The PRAE process has evolved incorporating a range of best practice quality review processes outlined below. This includes our self-assessment peer checking process, which supports each Programme Manager to sharpen their reviews and equally important learn from examples of good practice that emerge from these meetings.

Self-Assessment Reporting (SAR) and Quality Improvement Planning (QIP)

The SAR provides a tool for evaluating the quality of courses and services and for recording the evidence used to support judgements about quality. The SAR and QIP process is fully outlined in Appendix 5. The Director of Quality chairs a review panel that considers draft SARs presented by each Programme Manager for their provision. All subsequent actions are sent to respective Assistant Principals and their Programme Managers. At the end of this process, the Quality team checks refined versions (ultimate drafts) of all SARs.

Course Results Review Meetings

Data generated by MIS, presented by each Programme Area and then checked by Quality with notes made of follow-up actions. In the autumn term, achievement data from the previous year is checked and in the spring term retention and predicted achievement rates are considered. ProTarget is used to assist the process of analysing FE and HE data in scope during this process. This enables SMT to gain an understanding of Outcomes for Learners by Programme Area. All actions are sent to respective Assistant Principals and their Programme Managers.

Quality Audit Day

A day given over for all staff, led by their managers, to self-assess the quality of the previous year. Managers reflect on the strengths and areas to develop in their area. Prior to this day Programme and Operational Managers are provided with the self-assessment calendar for the year. They also receive refresher training on the self-assessment process to support effective self-review with their teams.

Learner Quality Meetings

In line with our strong partnership with learners, PRAE also includes learner quality meetings. Learners from each Programme Area / Faculty are asked a range of questions along Ofsted guidelines. This includes checking understanding of the dangers of radicalisation, the effectiveness of initial information and advice and progress in maths and English. This enables managers to understand learners' experiences, gauge their views of each programme area and make improvements as required.

Assessment Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG)

AVMG meetings take place approximately every six weeks and aims to sample at least one course from each programme area. Priority is given to areas perceived as either high risk or those courses with large numbers. Tutors are notified that their unit/module has been selected for review shortly before the AVMG meeting and are required to submit course folder and a selection of learner work. The assessment sample and internal verification process is subsequently reviewed in order to produce a list of commendations and action points. Feedback is given verbally and recorded on to a sample sheet which highlights areas of good practice or identifies those that require improvement. If necessary, action plans are written and sent to Programme Managers and these are monitored locally by the Assistant Principals and centrally at subsequent AVMG.

Quality of Assessment

The College Internal Verification Policy and Procedures outline the College's commitment to the rigour of all assessment practices through identifying the requirements, roles and processes to be followed, and the cross-college monitoring of this. These are reviewed and updated in line with Awarding Organisation expectations on a regular basis.

External Quality Review

In addition to the internal SAR, the College is required to produce a Higher Education Annual Review for the Universities of Surrey and Greenwich. In the case of University accredited programmes, these are monitored through the University of Surrey's (and Greenwich for Teacher Training) annual Academic Review processes. Academic Annual Reviews are generated by course leaders from course boards, learner feedback and module reports. These are distributed to both the university and to line managers. A Higher Education (HE) Self Evaluation Document (SED) and Action Plan is written annually reviewing the whole of the HE provision. Governors review oversight of quality assurance and sign off for submission to the OfS. Awarding Organisation Reviews (for example, Pearson and City and Guilds) are produced on an annual basis for quality assurance purposes.

The College also subscribes to various external quality marks to ensure it is meeting national standards in the delivery of its services (e.g. Matrix).

APPENDIX 2: Quality Assurance of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment

High quality teaching, learning and assessment (TLA) are central to securing the best outcomes for our learners. The College is committed to the delivery and facilitation of a consistently excellent learning experience that meets the needs of a diverse community of learners across a wide variety of programmes and pathways.

These high standards of expectation have been developed by teachers over the years and have evolved into the 'TLA the FCoT Way' guide.

As a part of our self-regulation, we are committed to ensuring the standard of TLA is in line with College expectations. The College adopts a standardised yet flexible approach to continuously improving TLA. This involves a range of TLA observation strategies, which support the development of 'Leadership at all Levels':

- Quality team involvement in teacher recruitment microteaches
- Observation of new teachers by the Quality Team
- Peer observations / Teaching Squares
- Programme Manager / Line Manager lesson visits
- Termly SMT Learning Walks
- Themed observation weeks/Deep Dives
- Departmental observation weeks

Lesson visits to new teachers are conducted by the Quality team and normally take place within four to six working weeks of the individual's start date. The teacher will be notified by email of the lesson to be visited at least one week prior to the visit taking place.

The annual lesson observation cycle is planned and reviewed by the Director of Quality in consultation with the Senior Management Team. The Quality Team provides an expert and independent view of the quality of teaching and learning across the College. From time to time, the Quality team will engage the support of external consultants who are experts in their field to ensure that all Internal Quality Assurance of TLA is robust.

The Director of Quality will organise all Deep Dive / Thematic Review activity. Programme Managers will be notified on the Thursday of the week prior to the activity taking place. Deep Dives and Thematic Reviews will usually start on a Monday (unless the focus TLA does not usually take place on a Monday, for example Study Programme Tutorials).

All teachers take part in self-/peer-assessment through peer observations or teaching squares and are observed by their line managers each academic year.

The Principal and a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) visit faculties occasionally to observe the quality of teaching and learning. They are accompanied by the Head of Department and/or an Assistant Principal and observe a series of teaching sessions. These visits provide direct engagement in the quality of TLA across the College with the purpose of celebrating high standards of delivery and monitoring improvements.

The purpose of this multi-faceted strategy is to:

- Maintain a culture of excellence through fostering self-reflection and leadership at all levels
- Provide rigorous checks on quality



- Identify areas of excellence and areas for improvement / ensure TLA is at least sound
- Trigger support through training and coaching
- Facilitate better intra-/inter-departmental sharing.

The quality of lesson visits and lesson visit feedback is standardised through lesson observation training, Joint Lesson Visits and the moderation of lesson observation reports.

The documentation used to record observations is generated by the Quality Team and informed by the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework. Lesson observation reports are moderated before being sent to individual teachers and their managers. These reports inform the focus of TLA development for the individual teacher and the departmental SAR and QIP.

Threshold Observation

The College expects all teachers to provide a sound learning experience for their learners. Consequently, any session observed to fall below the standards or threshold expected at the College would trigger a further lesson observation following a period of support and guidance. The teacher's line manager will be responsible for arranging the necessary support and sharing of best practice. A re-observation by the Quality team would normally be held within four to six working weeks of the initial observation.

A session deemed considerably below threshold will trigger another observation, usually within two weeks, following a swift intervention by the Programme Manager to improve the learners' experience.

Failure to improve practice and meet the threshold required will start an informal capability process. If this process does not then lead to improvement, it will trigger the formal process, and subsequently, without required improvements, contract termination. This process will ensure the College is providing the best possible experience for all learners.

APPENDIX 3: Course Approval Process

This guidance outlines the process of programme approval and subsequent validation by appropriate awarding bodies.

Course Approval	is the internal college process for obtaining approval for a new course of study, subject to approval by awarding organisation.
Replacement/Modification	is the internal college process for obtaining approval for a revised course of study.
Approval	is the process required by awarding organisation to enable the College to offer a course.

The primary aim of this process is to ensure that a complete, coherent and high-quality course is developed and documented before it is delivered to learners.

It is important that any new course proposal is seen in the context of, and consistent with, the College Strategic Plan and Faculty Development Plans.

The Approval Process

The Curriculum Management Committee (CMC) considers course proposals/modifications. The Committee meets on a weekly basis and considers course proposals for both college awards and for courses approved by awarding organisations /professional bodies. This includes allowing planning permission to go ahead with the validation process for proposed university-accredited degree programmes. In exceptional circumstances (where Awarding Organisation approval already exists) the internal approval process may be shortened to accommodate the urgency of the course going live and being available to learners. However, all necessary fields must still be populated in full by the next CMC meeting to ensure the completeness of the approval process.

For prescribed HE Validation:

The validation process for university-accredited degree programme follows the University of Surrey regulations. This is a very lengthy process and therefore should be started in the September of the academic year prior to the planned start date. To validate for a September start, the process must be completed by the end of April. Stages 1 and 2 of the process below should be completed by the end of October.

The draft validation document (following CMC approval) must then be received by the Academic Registrar by the end of January. The paperwork is quality sense-checked and sent to an external expert reader prior to the Internal Validation meeting (usually in March). The documents are then sent to the external panel for final approval. Further details of the process can be provided by the Academic Registrar.

For all other courses:

When planning new developments Business Services/ Programme Managers are asked to consider and take the following steps to assist in the Academic Standards process:

Stage 1: Planning & Development

The manager responsible:

- Discusses course/programme proposals with members of the course/programme team and Assistant Principal.
- Clarifies aims and objectives of course/programme. These need to be derived from:
 - evidence of market research
 - evidence of employers/professional body support
 - career and progression opportunities, as well as characteristics of potential learners and their needs.
- Seeks approval to progress with new course proposal from Assistant Principal who will consult the Vice Principal for FE courses and/or Head of HE as representatives of the Senior Management Team.
- Considers critical deadlines, especially in respect of gaining internal approval and validation by awarding bodies and allows generous time limits in order to meet deadlines.
- Identifies the teaching team and discusses the resource implications and staff development requirements of the course (and associated costs) with appropriate managers.

Stage 2: Internal Approval

The Quality Administrative Officer will manage the Course Approval Request Team (on Microsoft Teams) where all Course Approval Request Forms will be stored during the process. The Quality Administrative Officer will also monitor the process using the Course Approval tracking document located in Teams. Final documentation will be saved to the Quality area of the shared drive.

Step 1: Programme Manager/Assistant Principal complete [Course Approval Initial Details Form](#) (located in MIS on Staff Intranet) and AP sends approved form to MISSupport@farn-ct.ac.uk with supporting details.

Step 2: MIS inputs the data from the [Course Approval Initial Details Form](#) to generate the Course Proposal form through 4Cast. The Course Proposal Form is then posted onto the Course Approval Panel MSteam.

Step 3: Course Approval Panel considers application and approves/recommends actions/rejects application. Course Approval Panel may require relevant Assistant Principal/Director to present curriculum context information to the panel. Once recommendation have been addressed, the Course Approval Panel will reconsider.

Step 4: Following Approval, ADPFISE clarifies actions for different departments i.e. MIS set up, marketing, Quality approval, curriculum actions.

Stage 3 – External Validation

- The Assistant Principal instructs the Programme Manager (PM) to complete and submit the course application to the Awarding Organisation.
- The Programme Manager compiles and completes appropriate paperwork for validation purposes which should be approved by Assistant Principal before submission to external validator.
- Awarding Organisation / Professional Body approval: the requirements of each Awarding Organisation / Professional Body differ slightly. However, the following is an example list of the information that may be required:
 - Course title & qualification number
 - Number of expected learners on year 1 and year 2
 - Staff involved in the assessing/teaching/IV of the course
 - Staff CVs
 - Staff CPD information
 - Relevant experience/qualifications staff have for delivery of the course
 - Is the qualification already approved by another awarding body?
 - Delivery and resources; i.e. do we have the right physical resources to teach the course
 - Schemes of work/lesson plans – do we have them?
 - Quality assurance information
 - Will employers be involved in the delivery of the course? If so how?

Additional evidence that may possible be required include:

- College H&S policy
- College Public Liability certificate
- Equipment checklists
- Real Working Environment
- Organisational charts
- Role profiles
- Records of team meetings
- CPD records
- Staff induction packs
- Staff Development plans
- Staff handbook
- E-learning policy
- The Programme Manager tracks the progress of the application and alerts MIS and Quality once course approval is confirmed by the Awarding Organisation.

Stage 4 – Post approval

The manager responsible:

- Ensures all necessary curriculum planning and delivery tools are devised (e.g. iSOW, set up Moodle, finalise Learner Handbook, teaching resources including request of library resources)
- Ensures associated staff development and quality assurance plans are followed.

APPENDIX 4: Stakeholder Satisfaction Processes

The views of all stakeholders are essential to the assessment of quality and to the instigation of improvements. The College actively engages stakeholder feedback through multiple channels on an annual basis. Stakeholders and members of the public are also able to communicate *Compliments, Comments or Complaints* in line with the Complaints Policy published on the College website. The College is committed to acting on feedback in a timely manner in order to improve quality for existing and future learners.

Learners and Apprentices:

- **Surveys** – Induction, Safeguarding, National Learner Surveys (FE & HE), FE & Apprentices Learner Satisfaction Survey, HE Destination Survey, Learner Services Surveys
- **Formal Evaluation** - individual module (HE); end of course.
- **Informal Evaluation** – Learners provide informal feedback to teaching and tutorial staff throughout their studies. Such comments provide an immediate form of feedback upon learner satisfaction with the course and it is important that teachers and course managers act upon this feedback and provide clear responses to issues raised.
- **Representation** - Course representation at Faculty/College Forum/Learner Conference, Two Learner Governors are elected annually to sit on the College Corporation Board.

Parents/Carers:

- **Parent/Carer consultations** – Parents/Carers of learners up to the age of 18 (up to the age of 25 in the cases of some vulnerable adults) meet with teachers/tutors on at least two occasions during the academic year. The first event is held early in the academic year to inform parents/carers of the services and expectations of the College and to include them in the process of ensuring the best outcomes for their child. Feedback from parents/carers is an important part of the consultation process and should be recorded and acted upon as appropriate.
- **Annual Parent/Carer survey**

Employers:

- **National Employer Satisfaction Survey**
- **Career and Industry Advisory Board and Committees**
- **Learning reviews** Apprenticeship reviews
- **Informal Evaluation** - Business services engagement and contract meetings

Local Community:

- Feedback on College services (e.g. the training restaurant, the hairdressing, beauty salons and floristry)
- Feedback on community engagement events (open events, award ceremonies, Family Fun Day, taster sessions, schools interactive fair)
- College staff engagement in local community bodies/committees
- Quality of response to website enquiries

Staff:

- **Surveys, Meetings, Staff Development Evaluation**

APPENDIX 5: Self-Assessment Reporting (SAR) and Quality Improvement Planning (QIP)

The **SAR** provides a tool for evaluating the quality of courses and services and for recording the evidence used to support judgements about quality. The SAR structured in line with the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF):

- Quality of education
- Behaviour and attitudes
- Personal development
- Leadership and management

The **SAR informs the QIP structure**. Areas of weaknesses identified in the SAR are transferred into the QIP. Key actions and KPIs are then identified and reviewed throughout the academic year to improve the quality of a course or service.

The diagram at figure 2 (below) indicates the processes for producing SAR & QIPs, from course level to the production of a summary SAR & QIP for the College as a whole. A course SAR is produced for all courses (or related groups of courses) and addresses the key strengths and areas for improvement of each course.

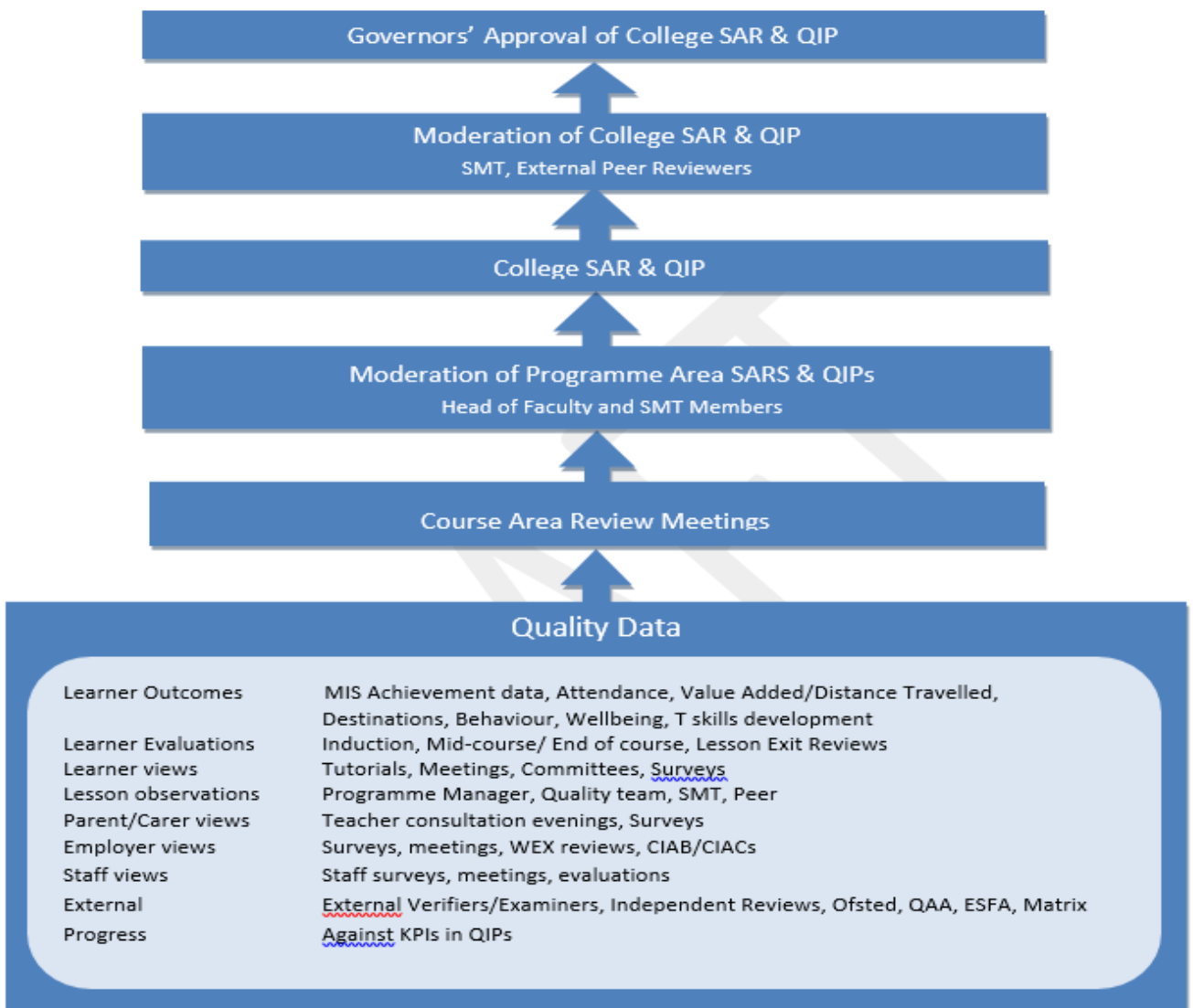


Figure 2: College Self-Assessment Process

Programme Areas

It is the responsibility of Programme Managers to prepare a summary SAR & QIP for their programme area in the standard format, using key quality data. Data will be gathered throughout the academic year to ensure that the College recognises its strengths and weaknesses and implements actions to secure improvement.

The SAR & QIP for the programme area will be completed by an agreed date early in the new academic year and will be uploaded onto O:\\Projects & Shared Documents\\SAR-Self Assessment Reporting.

The relevant Assistant Principal, Quality team and members of the SMT will initially moderate the quality of the SAR & QIP and will note required improvements to these documents if they do not meet the requirements.

The Programme Area SARs draw upon all available evidence in order to arrive at judgements about quality. Figure 2 outlines the evidence or 'quality data', which should be used.

Course teams will draw on evidence from a range of sources to inform their judgements about quality. These will include:

- Observations of TLA
- Learner outcomes (knowledge and skills development, qualifications, progression and destinations)
- Stakeholder feedback
- Internal & External quality review
- Performance management review

The Course Team will analyse the available quality data to make judgements about the quality of the course in line with the Ofsted Inspection Framework.

A QIP is then completed which identifies actions to be taken to develop identified areas for quality improvement. Actions identified in the QIP should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-limited (SMART) and be allocated to individuals within the course team.

Progress against the QIP is regularly reviewed and updated by Programme Managers throughout the academic year and overseen by Assistant Principals.

Cross-College Support Teams

Each cross-college support team will undertake a process of evaluating the quality of the services provided and for planning improvements to the quality of those services. Teams will utilise all available evidence about the quality of the service they provide, which may include:

Learner views & evaluations	<i>via surveys, meetings, committees, etc.</i>
Service user views	<i>e.g. internal staff users of the service</i>
External customer views	<i>e.g. external bodies, employers, etc.</i>
Staff team views	<i>Based on experience in delivering the service</i>



Based on the available evidence the team will produce a SAR, which identifies key strengths, areas for improvement and improvements since the last SAR. A QIP will then be completed which identifies actions to be taken to develop identified areas for quality improvement. Actions identified in the QIP should be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-limited (SMART). Further, the plan should relate to actions that are to be taken by identified members of the course team, rather than allocating actions to individuals outside of the team.

Whole College SAR & QIP

The Academic and Support SARs using cross-college data will inform the whole College SAR & QIP. The draft report will be moderated by external peer reviewers and by SMT members, before being submitted to the Corporation Curriculum & Standards Committee for consideration. When the College SAR & QIP is deemed to be of sufficient quality it will be submitted to the College Corporation for final approval.

APPENDIX 6: Quality & Standards Committee - Terms of Reference

Date reviewed: November 2023

Date for next Review: November 2025

1. Membership

1.1 The Quality & Standards Committee (QSC) shall comprise:

Director of Quality (Chair)	1
Vice Principal (VPHECD Co-Chair)	2
Assistant Principals	2
Director of Planning, Funding & Information Systems and Exams	1
Quality Manager	1
Business Services Executive Director	1
Academic Registrar	1
Safeguarding and Quality Administrator	1
Academic Staff	4
HE Student Governor	1
FE Student Governor	1
University of Surrey Representative	1

1.2 Members who are nominated will serve for a period of two years

1.3 Other members of staff or students may be invited to attend meetings to provide information to the Committee

1.4 The quorum for meetings of the Committee will be six members

1.5 The Safeguarding and Quality Administrator will act as clerk to the Committee

1.6 The Committee will meet at least once each term

1.7 Where the Chair is unable to attend a meeting of the Committee, the Vice Principal, Higher Education and Curriculum Development will act as chair

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1. To implement, maintain and review the College's **policies for quality improvement and the maintenance of academic standards**
- 2.2. To devise and monitor **plans of action** in relation to the agreed priorities for quality improvement and the maintenance of academic standards
- 2.3. To advise on the development of appropriate **systems and processes** to support the implementation of the policy
- 2.4. To review and provide **evidence to satisfy the quality and improvement requirements** of:
 - Students
 - Employers
 - The Corporation Board
 - SMT
 - External validating and awarding bodies
 - Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB)
 - Government agencies
 - Funding bodies
- 2.5. To monitor the **self-assessment and quality improvement planning** work of all areas of College delivery
- 2.6. To receive regular reports on the quality of **assessment and verification** practice, through the work of the Assessment and Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG), and direct any required improvement actions
- 2.7. To ensure that the College's work to enhance quality and maintain academic standards benefits groups of learners with **differing protected characteristics** (as defined by The Equality Act 2010)
- 2.8. To receive regular reports on the **validation and review of HE** programmes and direct any required improvement actions
- 2.9. To **establish groups** to undertake work on behalf of the Committee, in order to support the functions of the Committee, and to receive reports from those groups as appropriate
- 2.10. To **report on the work** of the Committee to the Senior Management Team

APPENDIX 7: Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Policy

Introduction

The College aims to ensure that all assessment is of the highest standard, ensuring reliability, validity and objectivity.

The Quality Manager oversees the internal quality assurance of all assessment and verification across the organisation in line with all AO expectations. Programme Managers must ensure that standardisation meetings take place and Assessment Plans are of good quality and adhered to. Programme Managers will also ensure that new staff are appropriately trained, and IQA of their work is adjusted appropriately.

Standardisation meetings must take place at the beginning of each academic year as a minimum for each qualification to ensure all staff are fully appraised of the assessment specifications and awarding organisation standards and updated as appropriate.

All lecturers and assessors are required to follow the specific assessment methodology and guidance provided by the relevant Awarding Organisation/HEI/Professional Body for the qualification they are delivering. This includes completing and keeping up to date with relevant training and assessor qualifications as required.

On courses where the College is the awarding institution, a system of RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) will be applied through assessing achievement against individual and/or group learning goals.

Internal Verification provides a continuous check on the consistency, quality and fairness of marking, grading and the overall assessment of learners' work to ensure that assessment decisions meet the standards required by the College and by awarding bodies, to include the internal verification of assignment briefs. It is a continuous process that starts with the verification of the assessment task, continues to the final judgment about the grading and encompasses all forms of activity that check and validate assessment, including those set down by awarding and examining bodies.

Any assessment that contributes to the achievement of a qualification will fall within the scope of this policy and associated procedures.

Aims

- To ensure that all learners are fairly, accurately and regularly assessed in a consistent manner, in accordance with relevant awarding body requirements.
- To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all learners and that external requirements are fully met.
- To establish quality assurance mechanisms through a system of internal verification, which co-ordinates and monitors the assessment process.
- To meet the requirements of awarding bodies, ensuring consistent interpretation and application of national and awarding bodies' standards.
- To provide support and advice to assessors.
- To provide evidence and feedback to Vice/Assistant Principals and External verifiers on the internal verification process.

- To ensure that candidates are satisfied with the assessment process.

Requirements of internal verification

- Every programme with work that is internally assessed and contributes to the final assessment outcome of a learner must carry out internal verification in accordance with College and awarding body regulations.
- All internal verification must be carried out by appropriately qualified staff.
- Internal Verification must be carried out continuously throughout the year.
- Any evidence that is produced must meet the requirements of the awarding bodies and the College quality system and be recorded on appropriate documentation, which considers the requirements of awarding bodies and the College quality system.
- Assignment briefs, examinations and lists of knowledge questions must be verified before they are issued.
- Internal Verification must take place before assessment decisions are finalised and learners notified.
- Evidence that internal verification has taken place must be available for monitoring by the Assessment and Verification Monitoring Group.

Operational guidelines for internal verification These guidelines cover all forms of assessment – including the knowledge and competency elements of apprenticeships

Internal Verifiers

There will be at least two Internal Verifiers per programme (where possible), with one being the Course Co-ordinator. For BTECs this will include one Lead Internal Verifier (BTECs) per Principal Subject Area. The Vice/Assistant Principal/ Associate Director of Apprenticeships and Business Development will co-ordinate this work for the Faculty / Business Services.

Internal verifiers must be appropriately qualified (within 18 months for new internal verifiers) and possess any requirements for occupational expertise as specified by relevant standards-setting bodies.

Decisions made by unqualified or inexperienced assessor / internal verifiers (i.e. staff with less than 1 year's teaching experience) will be countersigned by a qualified internal verifier.

The role of the Internal Verifier

- Internally verify assignment briefs, examinations, lists of knowledge questions and assessments to ensure consistency in the coverage of the syllabus and interpretation of standards.
- Sample evidence of assessment decisions made by assessors on an ongoing basis throughout the year, ensuring consistent and reliable assessment of internal verification decisions. Evidence should be confirmed as valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient in quantity.
- Establish recording systems/documentation for assessment and internal verification.
- Establish an inventory of current documentation and examples of completed documentation for the guidance of new assessors.

- Support assessors by giving feedback and advice on a regular basis, identifying problems and areas requiring advice/development.
- Report all findings to Lead IV/Programme Managers to ensure that standardisation meetings address issues raised through IQA, AVMG or EQA with actions to resolve.
- Undertake appropriate in-house internal verification training.
- Have their work internally verified by a different member of staff, if they are an assessor as well as an Internal Verifier.

Sampling plan

An internal verification sampling plan will be drawn up in conjunction with the programme assessment calendar. Standard College and Faculty internal verification documents will be used.

The plan will ensure that Internal verification of assignments / assessed work is carried out on an on-going basis throughout the year; that all assignment briefs (or equivalent) are internally verified before being issued and that a minimum of 10% from each assessor, of completed assignments / assessed work per unit are internally verified (It may be necessary for the sample to be larger to ensure that all units, all assessors and all units are sampled at least once during the course of the year)

Feedback

Internal verifiers will feed back their decisions promptly to assessors on the appropriate forms. Revisions/recommendations will normally be implemented within 10 working days.

The role of Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) for BTECs

The LIV oversees assessment outcomes and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area. Their role is to ensure consistency by sampling verification and assessment across the qualifications for which they have responsibility and ensuring that a suitable plan for verification is in place.

Lead Internal Verifiers for BTECs are required to:

- Gain and maintain accreditation as LIV with Pearson by
 - Registering with Pearson as the LIV for a Principal Subject Area
 - Reconfirming registration as LIV each year with Pearson
 - Successfully completing the online standardisation process
- Support the assessment and internal verification of BTEC programmes at the College by
 - Supporting the development of Assessors and Internal Verifiers.
 - Ensuring that there is an agreed assessment and verification strategy for the PSA, which is fit for purpose, meets regulatory requirements and is carried out effectively
 - Ensuring that records of assessment and verification and current learner work are available for scrutiny by Pearson

- Liaising with the Pearson Standards Verifier, if allocated, to ensure that appropriate samples of assessed and verified learner work are available for sampling
- Sharing information about standards with colleagues to ensure that assessment across the College meets national standards

The Quality Administrative Officer will act as the main external contact and internal co-ordinator to assure quality is maintained by:

- Liaising with validating bodies and their representatives
- Co-ordinating the College's quality assurance system, disseminating information and reports.
- Informing AVMG of reports received and visits made by validating bodies.
- Liaising with Vice/Assistant Principals.

External verification

External Verifier visits to the college are an integral part of an awarding body's quality assurance strategy. The normal frequency of external verification visits to the college is two per year (a total of 2 days per year).

The External Verifier will inform the College in advance of a visit, in order to agree the scope of the visit and the verification and sampling activities that will take place. The College is obliged to comply with requests made in respect of access to premises, records, information, candidates and staff. Programme Managers must also ensure that the Quality department is informed of any EV activity so enable the appropriate support.

External verification reports

Feedback on visits will be made via a written report, which will highlight areas of good practice, as well as any action required where performance does not meet the requirements.

Programme Managers are responsible for devising timely action plans to address any areas for improvement.

All External Verification reports must be sent to the Quality Administrative Officer who will note areas of good practice and update the College Quality action plan which will be monitored and updated through the AVMG process.

Programme Managers must ensure an analysis of the external verification reports and resulting action plans is included in the Programme Area SAR.

Recording

Copies of records will be stored safely and accessibly with the Course Manager and assessors for a minimum of three years.

The Course Co-ordinator will draw all IV results together, as a source of evidence in the Self-Assessment Report.

Candidate Registration

All candidates will be registered via the College Examination Team.

Additional guidelines for internal verification of HE programmes

Internal verification of examination papers - It is essential that someone other than the compiler of the examination should verify that the rubric is correct and that questions are unambiguous and written in clear English. A mark scheme of the key points and their mark allocation must accompany the question paper. The Vice/Assistant Principal will act as arbiter. Papers for degree, post-graduate and professional courses (where relevant) should be sent to the Examination Team, by published submission dates, to allow time for External Examiners to comment.

Verification of assessed work. See HE Assessment and Feedback Policy and HE Assessment and Feedback Procedures

Assessment & Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG)

The AVMG will monitor and enhance standards of assessment and verification across all College programmes.

Attendees

Quality Manager (Chair)

Internal Verifiers (IVs)

Quality Administrative Officer

Director of Quality

Programme Managers

The AVMG will also have a flexible attendance from this list below

Vice Principals

Assistant Principals

The functions of the AVMG will be to:

- Ensure that assessment and verification is monitored in every programme area by:
Scrutinising a randomly selected sample of assessed and verified learner work.
(Programme areas will not substitute alternatives for the work required in the sample and will provide 100% of marked work to the AVMG where the work has been marked by staff with less than 12 months experience of teaching – to facilitate further investigation if required)
 - Providing a list of required actions to the relevant Vice/Assistant Principals and Programme Manager

- Requiring a further randomly selected sample of work to be provided within one month, where required actions are significant
- Reporting on outcomes of the AVMG to the Quality and Standards Committee
- Review all reports from awarding bodies, external verifiers, standards monitors, etc. and monitor the implementation of action plans arising from the reports.
- Establish policies and procedures for monitoring and enhancing standards of assessment and verification throughout College.

APPENDIX 8: Assessment Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG) - Terms of Reference

1. Attendees

- 1.1 Quality Manager(Chair)
Internal Verifiers (IVs)
Quality Administrative Officer
Director of Quality
Programme Managers

The AVMG will also have a flexible attendance from this list below

Vice Principals
Assistant Principals

- 1.2 From time to time learners may be invited to attend meetings to provide information to the Group.
- 1.3 The Quality Administrative Officer will act as clerk to the Group.
- 1.4 The Group will meet twice each term, that is six times in a given year.
- 1.5 Where the Chair is unable to attend a meeting the Director of Quality will Chair. If neither can attend it will be rearranged.
- 1.6 IVs across the College are expected to produce samples as requested.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1. This quality lead process will report on the work of the Group to the Senior Management Team.
- 2.2. Ensure that assessment and verification is monitored in every Programme Area through the work of the AVMG by:
 - Requiring IV schedules from each Programme Area to be produced for Quality at the start of the year. This schedule will be used to request IV'd work.
 - Requiring a randomly selected sample of assessed and verified learner work to be provided to the AVMG. Programme areas will not be permitted to substitute alternatives for the work in the sample.
 - Scrutinising the sample of work.
 - Providing a list of required actions to the relevant Vice Principal/Assistant Principal and Programme Manager.
 - Requiring a further randomly selected sample of work to be provided to the AVMG within one month, where the AVMG decide that any required actions are significant.
 - Ensuring assessment and verification is of highest standard and meets awarding body requirements.
- 2.3. Reporting on the outcomes of the work of the AVMG to SMT.

- 2.4. Review all reports from awarding bodies, external verifiers, standards monitors, etc. at the AVMG and monitor the implementation of any required actions.
- 2.5. Best practice and areas for improvement in a termly and annual single page report/communication.