Internal Verification and Assessment Policy

1.0 Internal Verification

Internal Verification (IV) is the process of monitoring assessment practice in order to ensure that assessment decisions meet national standards. It provides a continuous check on the consistency, quality and fairness of marking, grading and overall assessment of student's work.

- To ensure that all students are fairly, accurately and regularly assessed in a consistent manner.

- To meet and exceed the requirements placed upon the College by external awarding bodies.

- To ensure that valid assessment decisions are reached for all our students and that external requirements are fully met.

- To support academic staff in their assessment activities by affording them the opportunity to receive critically supportive comment on the assessment decisions reached.

1.1 Scope

This policy relates to both FE and HE classroom based and Apprenticeship Provision.
- For the purpose of this policy, the term IV encompasses all forms of activity that check and validate assessment. It may be implemented through the systems of verification as required or laid down by examining or awarding bodies; or it may occur through shared observation of student activities, second marking of students' work, or team grading/assessment of students' work.

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

1.2 Responsibilities

- All staff have a responsibility to give full and active support for the policy by ensuring:
- The policy is known, understood, and implemented.

1.3 Actions to Implement and Develop Policy

- Every programme with work that is internally assessed and which contributes to the final assessment outcome of a student must carry out internal verification.

- Appropriately qualified staff must carry out all internal verification. Where trainee internal verifier undertakes IV, this must be verified by a qualified IV and countersigned

- Each programme must have identified members of staff who will verify or standardise the assessments for that particular programme.

- IV must be carried out continuously throughout the year. In addition to this, each programme will identify appropriate periods of time when IV takes place. These times will be included in a course calendar, which each course must have in place in either the IV file or course file.

- Any evidence that is produced must meet the requirements of the awarding bodies and the College's related quality assurance policies and procedures.

- The evidence must be recorded on appropriate documentation, which takes into account the requirements of awarding bodies and the College's quality assurance policies and procedures.

- Assignments must be verified before they are issued to students

- Assessment decisions need to be verified in line with awarding body requirements before assessment decisions are finalised and notified to students and certification is requested.

- Evidence that IV practice has taken place must be available by the end of the first term for monitoring by the Quality team / Lead Verifier.

- Internal monitoring of IV activity will be carried out via Quality team/ Lead Verifier.

- Records of IV must be kept in a secure location and accessed by staff authorised to do so.

- IV documentation must be retained for the duration set by the awarding body

- All IV or moderation must be in line with current awarding body and Joint Awarding Body recommendations.

- Sampling must be across all assessors, sites, all types of evidence, and all learners including plans, reviews, and records in addition to candidate evidence.

- IV must attend standardisation meetings and maintain a current continuous professional development file. Records of standardisation meetings and activities must be maintained and made available to the awarding body upon request.

- With Direct Claim Status, and Centre Assessment Standards Scrutiny (CASS), the specific awarding body guidelines must be followed.

1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

- This policy will be monitored by the Quality Unit/Lead Verifier and through established quality audit procedure.

2.0 Assessment

The College recognises that assessment is a key part of the teaching and learning process that outcomes of assessment not only determine student achievement but provide information that guides both students and staff in the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning. The college aims to ensure that students experience high quality assessment practices

2.1 Statement of Principles

The College will provide an environment where:

- Assessment is **fair** in that students are entitled to parity of treatment and comparative assessment demands across courses of the same level relevant to the awarding body. All Off-site learners will have the same amount of opportunities as class room based learners and to ensure the equal access to assessment for all.

- Assessment is **reliable**. This requires clear and consistent processes for the setting, marking, grading and internal verification of assignments.

- Assessment is **valid**. Validity ensures that assessment tasks and associated criteria will effectively measure student attainment of the intended learning outcomes

- Information about assessment will be **explicit and accessible**. Clear, accurate, consistent and timely information on assessment tasks, assignments and procedures will be made available to students, assessors, placement providers, employers, and external verifiers/examiners.

- Assessment recognises and respects **equality and diversity**. Inclusive and equitable assessment will ensure that tasks and procedures do not disadvantage any group of individual.

- Assessment is **relevan**t to the programme aims and outcomes

- The amount of assessed work is **manageable**. The scheduling of assignments and the amount of assessed work required provides a reliable and valid profile of achievements without overloading students

- **Formative and summative** assessment is included in all programmes to ensure that the purposes of assessment are adequately addressed. Main programmes will also wish to include diagnostic assessment.

- **Feedback** is an integral part of the assessment process. Students are entitled to feedback on all submitted assessment tasks. The nature, extent and timing of feedback should be clear in advance, and in line with awarding body guidelines.

- Each programme includes a **variety of assessment** types to allow a range of learning outcomes to be appropriately assessed. In addition, varied assessment tasks support a range of learning styles and ensure that accessibility is planned for and address.

3.0 Responsibilities and Duties

- All assessors have a responsibility to ensure the successful implementation of the Assessment Policy and associated Procedures and Guidelines.

- Assessors have the primary responsibility for implementation of assessment, reflecting the nature of the subject. Assessors have the responsibility to design and implement assessment in ways that encourage and promote effective learning, and that measure student achievement effectively with reference to state intended learning outcomes. To make reasonable adjustments to the design and conduct of assessment to meet the needs of learners with special educational needs and disabilities and to provide constructive and developmental feedback on assessed work. Assessors have a responsibility to update their knowledge and skill and attend training and development.

- Assessors have a responsibility to ensure assessment as part of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgements about learners' prior learning and experience in relation to unit standards. Assessment must be valid and reliable as the learners' own unaided work. (see guidelines set out in RPL policy)

- Internal verifiers, moderated by external verifiers/examiners have the primary responsibility for assuring the effectiveness of assessment.

- The FE Examinations Boards Process consisting of a Pre-Exam Board (the responsibility of the course manager) and an FE Examination Board meeting (the responsibility of the Head of Department) will be held with all Level 2&3 provision across all awarding bodies.

- Assessment/Examination Boards, under the guidance of the Chair, have a primary responsibility for assuring the academic standards of HE provision. Each Divisional Manager has a particular responsibility for ensuring the implementation of any actions agreed.

- The Quality Group has responsibility for monitoring assessment procedures and standards across the College.

- The Vice Principal Curriculum has responsibility, for setting and agreeing actions to ensure the Policy is implemented.

- The Principal has overall responsibility for creating an ethos and environment that reflects the Policy.

- The Governing Board through the Curriculum and Student Matters Committee will approve and review the Assessment Policy.

Explanation of Key Terms	
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding, or skills they already possess and so not need to develop through a course of learning.
Reasonable adjustments	Reasonable adjustments provide, learners with special educational needs or disabilities with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes
Formative assessment	Formative assessment is designed to provide learners with feedback on progress and inform development, but not contribute to overall assessment
Summative assessment	Summative assessment provides a measure of achievement or failure of a student's performance in relation to the intended learning outcomes
Diagnostic assessment	Diagnostic assessment provides an indicator of a learner's readiness for a programme and identifies possible learning difficulties