

<u>Policy Title</u>	NCG Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy	
<u>Policy Category</u>	Compliant	
<u>Owner</u>	Adrian Pegg – Assistant Director Quality (TLA)	
<u>Group Executive Lead</u>	Steve Wallis – Executive Director, Quality	
<u>Date Written</u>	August 2020	
<u>Considered By</u>	NCG QA/TLA Forum	
<u>Approved By</u>	Executive Board	
<u>Date Approved</u>	Sep 2020	
<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics	
<u>Freedom of Information</u>	This document will be publicly available through the Group's Publication Scheme.	
<u>Review Date</u>	September 2022	
<u>Policy Summary</u>	This policy identifies the required characteristics of all teaching, learning and assessment at NCG. The policy sets out the framework for the evaluation of teaching and learning and aligns the NCG strategic aim to pursue exceptional teaching, learner experienced and outcomes with national standards for teaching and education.	
<u>Applicability of Policy</u>	<u>Consultation Undertaken</u>	<u>Applicable To</u>
Carlisle College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Kidderminster College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Lewisham College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Newcastle College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Professional Services	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
Southwark College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
West Lancashire College	<u>Yes</u>	Yes
<u>Changes to Earlier Versions</u>		
<u>Previous Approval Date</u>	<u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u>	
Sep 2020	Makes clear the minimum expectations for ETLA and arrangements for remote and online ETLA	
Sep 2019	Minor changes made to reflect detail with Ofsted education inspection framework	
20th September 2018	Update to new policy format. The 12 TLA Keys changed and/or included the word indicators. Separation of Lewisham and Southwark College in the implementation of the policy to individual colleges.	
<u>Linked Documents</u>		
<u>Document Title</u>	<u>Relevance</u>	
EDI Strategy	To ensure our classroom, workshops and learning communities are inclusive environments, conducive to ensuring that NCG learners can secure their potential, by understanding and responding to their individual starting points	
NCG Attendance Management Policy	Sets out the expectations for recording and managing learner attendance	
NCG Malpractice Policy	Applies to all staff that have a teaching, learning or assessment role or are involved in the associated supporting services.	
NCG Unified Tutorial, Progress and Attainment Policy	It is the responsibility of college leaders to ensure that a designated course lead/tutor is appointed to manage the learner journey for a defined course(s) or programme.	
Safeguarding Policy	To highlight the key responsibilities and processes should a teacher or educator identify a safeguarding concern during their routine delivery and tutorial work	
Apprenticeship Policy	Sets out the expectations for delivering and reviewing apprenticeship	

1.0 Scope, purpose and intent of this Policy

This policy identifies the arrangements for implementing the common annual development cycle for teaching, learning and assessment across NCG, in which we set-out what is required to assure a suitably engaging and challenging teaching and learner experience. The policy sets out the framework for the evaluation of teaching and learning and aligns the NCG strategic theme of *exceptional teaching, learner experiences and outcomes* into a pragmatic framework by considering national standards for teaching and education.

Through this policy, NCG will ensure that: a) the learner experiences meet expectations; and b) teachers receive regular feedback on how to further develop their practice for their ongoing professional development. The premise underlying this strand is that all teachers can develop and improve their practice, given considered and well-intended feedback.

In practice, this means that learners are: suitably assessed for their starting points; that delivery is purposeful, engaging and challenging; and thereby ensures that learners develop new technical, academic or applied skills, knowledge and inclusive and respectful behaviours. In doing so we will aim to secure exceptional outcomes for our learners, that facilitates their successful progression in further education (at a higher level), higher education and employment (including apprenticeships).

The policy is checked against sector norms to ensure that it is fair, representative of current practice and aligns closely with the practice of leading colleges, as identified through exchange visits and integrates learning from formal activity such as the strategic college improvement fund (SCIF)

We hope that the Group's teachers and educators will welcome the evaluation of teaching, learning and assessment in the spirit in which it is intended, which is to receive feedback on their contribution to the learner journey with considered guidance on how to improve the session/practice further.

1.1 Definitions

The term **learner** is used in its widest sense and includes all learners, whether young people aged 14-18, learners with specific high needs, apprentices, adult learners or higher education students.

The term **teacher** is used to describe all teaching and training staff, including teachers, lecturers, instructors, skills trainers, learning support practitioners, coaches/mentors, work experience coaches and teachers in managing positions.

SLT relates to the senior leadership team in the College – comprised of a principal and their senior deputies.

Great Place to Teach is an NCG brand, used occasionally for communications associated with TLA, to represent Group-wide events, conferences, good practice and highlight the annual cycle of continuous improvement.

2.0 Implementation and Compliance

This policy is reviewed and agreed (at least) biennially and must be implemented in full through college TLA/ETLA procedures, alongside guidance for teachers (for example a handbook or similar).

The policy will be reviewed by QA/TLA Forum and is consulted upon with relevant trade unions at a national level on behalf of all colleges. The policy is approved by the Executive Board.

The policy applies to all teachers and educators in NCG – without such policy, college leaders can not carry out their duty to evaluate the quality of education in their college and ensure that the learners receive the required standard of education.

3.0 NCG and Teacher Commitment

NCG is committed to the professional status of the profession and as such will ensure that all teachers on permanent contracts work toward the following:

- all (unqualified) teachers at NCG will work toward, and typically complete, a recognised teaching qualification, at an appropriate level within 2 years
- all teachers of academic (A level) courses will arrive with teaching training/qualifications at an appropriate level

- all teachers at NCG will be functionally competent at level 2 or higher (equivalent to a good GCSE pass or L2 functional skill) in both English and maths on joining NCG. This can be evidenced through a qualification or equivalent diagnostic test (such as BKSB or similar).
- all teachers at NCG will have access to continuous professional development and professional feedback
- all teachers at NCG will have access to basic digital training via Microsoft Learn, local college provision or from NCG Professional Services
- all teachers at NCG will undertake a basic course in careers education within 3 years of starting (dated from this revision, Sep 2020)
- all teachers at NCG will have access to online masterclass sessions at least once per term, organised by NCG Professional Services
- all teachers at NCG will be supported with their applied literacy and numeracy subject knowledge and pedagogy where required, or requested
- all teachers who have been away from industry for 5 years or more will be encouraged to undertake at least 5 days immersive project work/industry secondment with an industrially relevant employer of their choosing every five years – the timing in the academic year and nature of this leave must be agreed with the college principal and will be paid absence.
- all teachers in NCG must record their professional development in iTrent - this should be at least 28 hours in an academic year (pro rata for part time staff) - all relevant internal and external CPD will count, including online mandatory training

4.0 The Evaluation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment [ETLA]

NCG recognises the uniqueness of our college communities and the importance for leaders of teaching and learning to enact this policy by taking ownership and accommodating local differences and starting points in the college teaching and learning communities. There are also a number of different and equally successful approaches to improving teaching and learning in education and we understand that 'a one size fits all' approach, may not always be appropriate to facilitate improvement. Colleges are therefore required to implement and maintain an ETLA procedure that meets their needs, but is consistent with the criteria below:

- 4.1 The ETLA procedure must consider both the inputs into a successful session (i.e. subject knowledge, pedagogy and subject pedagogy)

and the common indicators of high quality TLA (of which we have identified 12 indicators) in the feedback to teachers.

- 4.2 The ETLA procedure should not be limited to a single observation of teaching exposition or demonstration, instead the process must include wider evaluation over time, including the extent to which planning and delivery is typical, an evaluation of learner work focusing on the acquisition of skills and knowledge; and in speaking to learners about the experiences (learner voice).
- 4.3 Learning Walks: The annual process of ETLA will make use of at least two developmental learning walks; the second of which should determine to what extent the teacher has acted on previous developmental feedback. The procedure should make clear where LWS are unannounced/scheduled/agreed and all college SLTs should work toward an open door culture of trusted development and support. This will inevitably require an ongoing dialogue with staff to review the efficacy of the procedure.
- 4.4 Formal evaluation: In addition to the learning walks, there should be at least one formal evaluation that will be selected due to the college quality cycle and any risk assessment arising from self-assessment. This may be thematic, for example, as part of curriculum 'deep dive', or it may be scheduled individually. The teacher should be given at least 2 working days' notice and the window for evaluation should not typically be longer than 5 working days. This is to ensure that the teacher has time to collate evidence of planning for effective learning, examples of learner work and any examples of good practice, but does not promote excessive lesson preparation, that exceeds requirements and is not typical of usual practice. The principal may agree an extension to the evaluation if part of a wider college or department technical review, which may make the timeframe inappropriate, however the intent of this clause (to reduce staff workload) must be considered and applied. The evaluation will typically last longer than 30 minutes and not more than 60 minutes. ETLA used for new teachers, as part of teacher training courses, can be used to satisfy this element of the policy as long as SLT are satisfied in the rigour and quality of feedback is aligned to that described in 4.1
- 4.5 Teachers delivering via blended routes should expect a proportional balance between evaluation of face to face and online delivery; virtual walkthroughs may need to be agreed and scheduled in advance as part of the learning walk process to overcome access issues to streaming/conferencing apps such as Microsoft Teams (see 3.3).

- 4.6 Staff evaluating ETLA must be suitably qualified and experienced teachers, who are appointed by the leadership team. Experienced college leaders are expected to show academic leadership and support the investment in teaching staff by participating in the evaluation process. College leaders who teach will also receive feedback using the college procedure. Group Quality, and/or external consultants, will occasionally support the process to undertake ETLA on behalf of the college. Again only suitably qualified and experienced teachers will participate. Group Quality may also support local procedures by evaluating college leaders with a teaching caseload. Where possible and practical evaluators will have relevant subject expertise.
- 4.7 The procedure must allow for 'higher risk' provision to be evaluated early in annual cycle – high risk areas may include new teaching staff, or historically weak provision (identified in self-assessment), courses that have received complaints, or have ongoing sanctions from awarding organisations.
- 4.8 As it is a personalised, developmental process, it must be inclusive so that every teacher participates and benefits from evaluation every year (regardless of length or service); teachers working as advanced practitioner or learning coaches can be evaluated in their delivery of CPD or mentorship of colleagues as it naturally occurs.
- 4.9 Procedures must follow the annual improvement cycle identified within this policy.
- 4.10 Procedures must make reference to how on-line, distant or remote learning will be evaluated – additional guidance, based on sector best practice, will be provide to evaluators via the GPTT microsite. Evaluators must show understanding if the technology fails, or if the teacher experiences issues out of their control. The teacher should not be penalised if trying out new technology or methods if the intended purpose is clear.
- 4.11 Procedures will make clear the grounds to appeal the summary evaluation. This appeal must be focused on naturally occurring, demonstrable evidence/examples of teaching, learning, assessment that do not appear (to the teacher) to have been taken into consideration in the summary evaluation and feedback, yet it could make a material difference in the feedback summary. Teachers who believe that the process is unfair/biased/discriminatory should follow the NCG complaints policy.
- 4.12 Procedures must recognise excellence when we see it – this may be in the form of sharing best practice through CPD or showcase

events, whether at college or Group-level (through communities of practice, Great Place to Teach events).

- 4.13 Procedures must integrate with arrangements for annual appraisal and performance review. Pay progression arrangements are part of an agreement made separately through a joint working group with trade union colleagues and HR at NCG nationally, and are covered in the performance management policy. This is intended to ensure that successful teachers are able to progress and thrive, whilst ensuring that any weak provision improves quickly for the benefit of the learners. The CPD should be reviewed and also planned for the year ahead.
- 4.14 The scale of NCG does mean that the Group is able to run pilots, or experiment with new research-based ETLA practice. Should this be the case, then the college principal must request flexibility via the Curriculum Strategy Group in the preceding term. The rationale for doing this should be formally recorded.
- 4.15 Procedures will adhere to the mission, strategic themes and values of NCG.

5.0 Acceptable forms of ETLA

- Visits to the place of learning via short learner walks, or extended observations of teaching and learning
- Deep dives into subject, sector, course themes
- Focused curriculum reviews through evaluation of learner work (book scrutiny), or evaluation of teacher preparation (i.e. curriculum scrutiny by looking at schemes, intent statements, records of work, teaching resources). This will extend to a review of exercise books, learner files, use of information learning technology (ILT) and virtual learning environments (VLE), product of work and portfolio work (as required)
- Evaluation of feedback from learners and apprentices through discussion, forums, or survey
- Evaluation of feedback from parents or employers, through discussion or survey
- Evaluation of learning progress records (ILP) and eILP (eTrackr)
- Evaluation of online delivery material and VLE resources
- Virtual learning walks (for online live-streamed delivery)

6.0 Process

- 6.1 All teachers will engage in professional dialogue to determine their relative strengths and areas for further improvement. Whilst the nature of this discussion will vary, it will be uniformly recorded on an agreed format within the college.
- 6.2 Feedback to the teacher, based on the items above, must reference the key inputs (subject knowledge, pedagogy) and 12 TLA indicators and will be recorded formally; in the majority of cases most of the indicators will be naturally occurring in any session and the longitudinal nature of the ETLA (involving learning walks and observations) will ensure that staff receive composite feedback over the academic year.
- 6.3 Staff making the evaluation must be suitably qualified and experienced, and ensure that an adequate provision of time is made to engage in professional dialogue with the teacher and with the learner group during the evaluation.
- 6.4 The views of the teachers should also be considered and recorded as reflections on the feedback. This should focus on the development aspects, but it the evaluator can use it to record the teacher perspective.
- 6.5 Processes must be established for annual training to ensure that the evaluating members of staff work toward a consistent standard, with training and calibration of evaluating staff being supported by Group QA. As a result of both the ETLA, and the resultant professional development plan¹, teachers can expect to receive personalised training and/or and/or support. This may be delivered in a variety of ways included bespoke sessions, college or Group CPD, online resources or mentorship. The professional dialogue will also seek to establish best practice from across the Group.
- 6.6 The process is summarised below. The process is best described as one of development-support, not of punitive-compliance. Very few teachers will ever leave NCG due to ETLA, however most, if not all, will benefit from honest, well intended feedback.

¹ Please note the development plan is termed a 'teacher action plan' at Lewisham College and Southwark College.



7.0 The NCG 12 TLA Indicators

– a set of consistent indicators used to evaluate TLA across NCG

1. **Purpose** - all sessions will have a clear purpose to develop relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours, which are articulated to learners. This will include the success criteria in the context of the session and the steps required to exceed the basic expectation (challenge).
2. **Assessment for Learning** - all sessions will begin with an evaluation of existing skills and/or knowledge – this may be a skillscan, exercise or activity, it may be questioning – but it must connect new ideas to what has previously been learned (and re-activating/checking that prior knowledge), the assessment process will then be continued throughout the session to appropriately gauge learner progress, identify misconceptions, sticking points and respond through additional teaching, training and assessment as required. Online sessions are encouraged to use integrated tools such as posting, hands up and surveys to help with assessments as appropriate.
3. **Readiness** – all sessions must ensure that teachers and their learners are appropriately prepared for, and are ready to participate; high risk practical sessions should always start with a check of PPE, risks and hazards; teachers will set a positive example through their own readiness and standards. Online sessions should include a reminder of basic etiquette and e-safety.
4. **Individualisation** - all teachers must understand the learners' relative starting points which will be dependent on their entry skills and knowledge and how far they have progressed through the planned learning – this will underpin the entire process of lesson planning, whilst concurrently ensuring an equitable and diverse approach to practice.

5. **Planning** - *planning must be sufficient to give students an appropriate sequence of learning tasks that embed and reinforce learning, with the opportunity to gain new knowledge and skills, whilst allowing time to review previous material for the purposes of successful revision and recall. Planning should draw on the subject knowledge and subject pedagogy of the teacher and take into account opportunities to integrate wider themes where naturally occurring and/or relevant (this may include equalities and respect, English and maths, British values and learner personal growth by promoting independence and curiosity). Planning for online sessions should incorporate appropriate adjustments— what works in a face to face classroom session, may not always be suitable for online delivery.*
6. **Managing Learning** – *NCG teachers must be able to manage the delivery and learning process through skilful classroom management, modelling and technology where appropriate in creating a climate of high expectations, with high challenge and trust; they should be mindful in their planning of the common stimuli that influence learner engagement (i.e. emotional, behavioural, cognitive factors) and make suitable adjustments where necessary. Adjustments must be made when delivering online or blended delivery and teachers should not simply assume that methods in the classroom are instantly transferrable.*
7. **English and maths** - *all NCG teachers are also teachers of English/communication and mathematics/numeracy, and should therefore plan to actively develop and consolidate English and maths knowledge or skills and seek opportunities to develop learner understanding wherever relevant and reasonable. Basic numeracy, reading skills and oracy can be developed in the majority of sessions.*
8. **Questioning** – *verbal and written questioning must take into account the learners’ starting points and will be used effectively to elicit student thinking, check learning and develop deeper understanding; questioning must be both frequent and reaching to determine how successfully core knowledge is retained and understood by the learner.*
9. **Pace** - *NCG teachers will maintain a suitable pace (to maximise productivity and minimise wasted time e.g. starts and transitions) by providing clear, explicit instruction and by moving briskly through planned theory and practical activity and exercise work (where applicable); if the guided content is covered, learner centred activity must have a clear purpose, timescale for completion and success criteria; online delivery must be adjusted accordingly to ensure engagement remains high*
10. **Adding Value**- *the course must add demonstrable value – this will generally include a balance of consolidation/recall, of which the proportion will increase as the course session moves through the year, however it should always contain the delivery of new skills and knowledge, or new examples, case studies to help consolidate understanding; learners should be encouraged to be both curious and independent. HE students should be encouraged to engage in meaningful collaboration between staff and students in programme design, content and delivery, adopting the concept ‘Student as Producer’, which seeks to recognise*

outputs of student research as a valued activity within an inclusive academic community.

11. Feedback - *all learners should expect and receive prompt and useful feedback, so that they understand how they can improve, if they have met or exceeded the success criteria and/or what they need to do to improve further – learners should be able to confirm that they understand what this means to them, and what they will do as a result; teachers will monitor the impact of their feedback and correct learner misunderstandings immediately*

12. Progress – *linked closely to **adding value**, learners should be able to 'showcase' or 'demonstrate' new skills or knowledge throughout their planned learning – if not, then the teacher should reflect and improve the planning and delivery accordingly. This may involve covering similar ground as recap and reskilling.*

8.0 Accountability and Compliance

College accountability for ensuring all teachers, managers and local procedures are aligned to this policy rests with the principal; College Board members will seek assurance that this policy is adequately embedded and is impactful.

Collective responsibility rests with staff at all levels – specifically the senior leadership team, operational management team and all staff with a teaching or training role within the organisation.

Additional assurance will be undertaken by Group Quality on behalf of Executive and Corporation Board and will usually take the form of thematic deep dives, or by supporting college reviews.

This activity will be consistent with the approach outlines in this policy.

9.0 Alignment with Professional Standards for Teachers and the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting HE

The policy framework seeks to simplify and combine existing and complementary standards currently used by many teaching professionals across the sector, whilst setting a consistent framework for teacher feedback across NCG.

NCG Teachers are encouraged to attain Qualified Teaching and Learning Status (QTLS) and Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) with the Education and Training Foundation, or equivalent professional body.

Department for Education (DFE) Teachers' Standards can be viewed in full [here](#):

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

Education and Training Foundation (ETF) professional teaching standards can be viewed in full [here](#):

<http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-practitioners/professional-standards/>

[UK Professional Standards Framework \(UKPSF\) for teaching and supporting learning in HE can be viewed here:](#)

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf>