Quality Assurance of Teaching & Enhanced Learning Policy

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable groups and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

New College Durham

Quality Assurance of Teaching & Enhanced Learning Policy

We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format.

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments. Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the Policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or human rights.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments, and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of the procedure.

To make suggestions or to seek further information please contact:

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If any employee has difficulty understanding this procedure or needs assistance completing any documentation associated with the procedure, please contact either your trade union representative or the College's Human Resource Department.

Equality Impact Assessed: July 2022

Policy Title	**Quality Assurance of Teaching & Enhanced Learning Policy**
Document Owner	Vice Principal
Owning Directorate	Curriculum and Quality
Owning Department	Quality & Enhanced Learning
Directorates and Departments affected by this Procedure	All staff
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New College Durham

Teaching & Enhanced Learning

1. Introduction

New College Durham is committed to providing high quality, teaching, learning and assessment to enable all students to achieve their full potential. This will be achieved through ensuring all staff in teaching and support roles are empowered to deliver high quality teaching and learning opportunities that are supported by robust assessment, feedback and sharing of good practice.

New College Durham delivers a wide range of qualifications across the areas of Further Education, Higher Education, Apprenticeships and Skills including students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Quality Assurance of Teaching and Enhanced Learning Policy aims to provide a holistic overview of the processes to quality assure and support the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning across all these specific remits.

This document outlines the College's processes for learning visits/drop-ins, and clarifies the relationship between learning visits, quality assurance and staff development. The output of these processes will feed into Risk and Action Intelligence for School Excellence (RAISE) Meetings, Curriculum Quality Reviews and the Curriculum Performance Monitoring processes.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all curriculum departments within New College Durham and external subcontractors and partners.
The term curriculum staff is used throughout this policy as a generic term to cover all staff involved in the delivery of teaching and/or learning. This includes, for example, Curriculum Managers, programme/course leaders, lecturers, teachers, tutors, apprenticeship skills coordinators, trainers, assessors, personal development coaches and instructor/demonstrators.

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Embed a supportive system of peer and developmental learning visits and drop-ins to quality assure standards of teaching and enhanced learning, and to inform self-assessment and improvement planning processes.
2. Provide opportunities for curriculum staff to self-reflect on their practice and encourage, challenge and support them to develop to support the College's aim of delivering an outstanding student experience.

3. Identify staff development needs and address these through a range of methods including individual action plans, coaching support where appropriate, and cross-college development days.
4. Identify and disseminate good practice.
5. Put in place immediate intervention, if required.

3. Location and Access

This policy is located on the Quality intranet site within Section 1 of the Quality & Enhanced Learning Manual.

4. Teaching and Learning activities

The College has identified various methods that will be used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across all provision types delivered at New College Durham and their partners. The range of approaches will allow a holistic viewpoint, drawing on evidence, data and feedback to ensure the expected standards of teaching, learning and assessment are met.

The types of methods used may vary per individual and curriculum area and will be dependent upon the performance and the quality risk associated with that area of the business.

5. *Recruitment of those staff with teaching responsibilities*

All staff that will be involved in the delivery of lessons/ learning activities to students, will undertake a (suitable to the role) micro teach activity as part of the selection process. This is to be planned by the recruiting manager.

Quality and Enhanced Learning can provide a member of the team for this element of the selection process. The QEL staff member will provide feedback to the recruiting manager on the individual's
suitability for the role in terms of the effectiveness of their teaching and learning practice

The Enhanced Learning Team will be involved in providing feedback to the recruiting team on the **microteach element only** and will not be part of the employment selection process.

The process should not just review the standard of teaching, learning and assessment skills, but also aim to assess the values of the candidate and their openness to coaching development and support for continual development.

All new staff will participate in the new staff Lecturer Development Programme, which will provide tailored and bespoke support to integrate new staff into the New College Durham approach to teaching, learning and assessment and set out expected standards. The programme provides extensive support to enable new staff to be able to carry out their new role effectively.

6. *Developmental Learning Visits*

All new members of curriculum staff will have a developmental learning visit within their probationary period (this is consistent with the College's Performance Monitoring for Probationary Employees policy). These will be organised by the Head of School in conjunction with the Enhanced Learning Manager.

Where members of staff are delivering their entire teaching hours off-site, or where circumstances prevent drop-in activity, for example health and safety requirements, they will receive a developmental learning visit. This includes both new and existing staff.

Any member of staff who believes they would benefit from further development as a result of self-reflection may request a developmental learning visit via the Enhanced Learning Manager.

A developmental learning visit, is a pre-arranged, announced visit to the teaching space of between 45- and 60-minutes duration that results in individual feedback to the staff member. This will result in a bespoke plan with action steps that celebrates areas of strength and supports the individual to develop any areas of enhancement to meet New College Durham standards.

- Developmental learning visits will be undertaken either:

    - Jointly by a member of the College's Management Team or an external consultant and supported by the Enhanced Learning Team. For staff delivering externally this may also include a member of the partner organisation.
    - Solely by two members of the Enhanced Learning Team where required.

- The Enhanced Learning Team are all qualified (to at least PGCE/Cert Ed or equivalent standard) and will attend training updates and standardisation sessions to ensure a consistent team approach.
- All members of the College management team undertaking Learning visits will need to have undertaken appropriate standardisation training with the Enhanced Learning Team.
- All external consultants will be appropriately qualified and experienced (Ofsted, OfS etc). Developmental learning visits may be conducted jointly with Head of School, Enhanced Learning Team or external consultants for standardisation purposes.
- Curriculum staff will be informed three working days before the week that the developmental learning visit will take place. Part time staff and staff delivering externally will be notified on an individual basis reflecting their working arrangements. The teaching staff member is responsible for providing a suitable session for the visit. This will be agreed with the member of staff carrying out the visit.
- Where the teaching member of staff does not provide a session, the visitor will select from the individual's timetable.
- The member of staff being visited will ensure group profiles, Scheme of Learning (SoL) and session resources are available prior to the visit. Marked work/additional evidence should be available as part of the learning visit if required to support holistic development.
- The members of staff or individual(s)undertaking the learning visit may attend at any point within the session. They may also leave and return to the lesson. The approach will be dependent upon the activities that are taking place and use the judgement of the staff member or individual(s) visiting. The total time they spend in the session will not exceed 60 minutes.
- The staff member delivering the session should expect the visitors to undertake a range of activities including, but not limited to:
    - Observation of practice
    - Interacting/ speaking to students
    - Reviewing student work and feedback
    - Reviewing resources
    - Monitoring attendance and punctuality
    - Monitoring the appropriateness of the learning environment (any concerns identified which are out of the staff members control would be highlighted to the curriculum manager and not be reflected upon the staff member delivering).
- Following the visit, a meeting will be arranged to give feedback and identify strengths and areas for enhancement. The feedback meeting should take place as soon as possible, and normally within three working days of the visit taking place. This will include the opportunity for self-reflection and professional discussion.
- The developmental learning visit will result in a judgement of the individual's progress towards achieving the teaching standards expected at New College Durham. This will be one of following four outcomes:
    - Strong
    - Secure
    - Developing

    - Support Required

- The individual carrying out the learning visit will complete the initial part of the development plan identifying agreed areas for enhancement and areas of strength, following the verbal feedback meeting.
- The member of staff visited must then complete their part of the development plan to identify the actions they will take to address areas for enhancement. Support to help develop actions may be requested by Heads of School/Curriculum managers or the Enhanced Learning Team; however, it is important to note that the member of staff visited has accountability for ensuring actions are relevant and appropriate to the feedback.
- If the outcome of the learning visit is judged as developing or support required, the member of staff will be referred for individual mentoring support. This process will involve support from the Enhanced Learning Team or an appropriate external consultant. This will support the member of staff to rapidly enhance their performance. This support will typically be in place for up to four weeks during this time, a further developmental learning visit will be completed, and the progress reviewed.
- If the re-visit demonstrates sufficient progress (secure or strong) then the member of staff will continue to work on the areas for enhancement through individual progression of the agreed development plan/ individual coaching plan. A further re-visit will not be required. Coaching support will still be available at the request of the member of staff.
- If there is limited progress and significant areas for enhancement are still identified (developing or support required) following the re-visit, further mentoring support will be put in place and a further re-visit will be completed to review progress.
- If concerns are still identified following the second re-visit, a focused learning visit will be initiated.
- The outcome of the developmental learning visit will be used to inform the line manager's decision on the outcome of the probationary period (where applicable)

7. Focused Learning Visit

The College uses a range of quality measures to monitor the quality of education. These include performance metrics, stakeholder voice and the other methods outlined within this policy. Where this intelligence identifies a requirement to investigate the quality of teaching and learning, focused learning visit(s) will be undertaken.

- Focused learning visits may be undertaken to include any member of staff where significant concerns have been identified that pose a potential risk to students' learning or the quality of education. This includes ongoing concerns which exist for those staff members who are yet to meet the colleges teaching and learning expectations during previous monitoring processes. This will allow a holistic picture of teaching and learning practices to be explored through focused feedback and triangulation of key performance metrics.
- Where it has been identified that a focused learning visit is needed, a meeting between the staff member, line manager and/or Head of School will take place to outline the reason for the visit.

- Notification will be given three- working days prior to the week in which the session has been selected. This will inform the individual of the week the visit will be carried out, but not the specific session that will be visited.
- Focused learning visits will be carried out jointly by the Head of School and either Assistant Principal Quality & Enhanced Learning or Enhanced Learning Manager.
- The members of staff undertaking the learning visit may attend at any point within the session. The staff members undertaking the visit may also leave and return to the lesson. The approach will be dependent upon the activities that are taking place. The total time they spend in the session will not exceed 60 minutes.

- The staff member delivering the session should expect the visitor(s) to undertake a range of activities including, but not limited to:
    - Observation of practice
    - Interacting/ speaking to students
    - Reviewing student work and feedback
    - Reviewing resources
    - Monitoring attendance and punctuality
    - Monitoring the appropriateness of the learning environment (any concerns identified which are out of the staff members control would be highlighted to the curriculum manager and not be reflected upon the staff member delivering).

- The learning visit will result in judgement of the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment observed in line with the teaching standards expected at New College Durham. This will be one of two outcomes:

    - Meets expectations
    - Does not meet expectations

- Where the outcome is judged as teaching and learning meets expectations, personalised actions and standard monitoring processes will continue in line with the enhanced learning policy for all staff.
- If the outcome does not meet expectations, then the Head of School / Line Manager (through discussion with HR) should consider the appropriateness of action being taken in line with the College's Competence Procedure – this could include either informal or formal monitoring of performance dependent upon the nature/extent and impact of the concerns.
- Further triangulation of evidence may be incorporated to provide a holistic view of overall teaching and learning performance.

8. Learning Drop-ins

- All members of staff with teaching responsibility (excluding those in their probationary period) will be in scope for teaching, learning and assessment drop-ins. This will allow regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning to provide a consistent picture of strengths and areas for enhancement through personalised action steps.
- Learning Drop-ins will typically be 20-30 mins in duration. The focus of these will be based on the overall learning experience for students and the effectiveness of teaching,

learning and assessment practice. These will take place regularly throughout the year to ensure consistency in practice. Where staff members teach across a range of provisions, drop-ins will be carried out across all provision types.

- Learning drop-ins are unannounced visits to the teaching space of between 20-30 mins duration that results in individual feedback to highlight key themes identified.
- Learning Drop-ins are undertaken jointly between either a member of the College's Management Team or an external consultant accompanied by a member of the College's Enhanced Learning Team. For staff delivering externally this may also include a member of the partner organisation.
- The members of staff undertaking the drop-in may attend at any point within the session. The staff members may also leave and return to the lesson. The approach will be dependent upon the activities that are taking place. The total time they spend in the session will not exceed 30 minutes.
- The staff member delivering the session should expect the visitor to undertake a range of activities including, but not limited to:
    - Observation of practice
    - Interacting/ speaking to students
    - Reviewing student work and feedback
    - Reviewing resources
    - Monitoring attendance and punctuality
    - Monitoring the appropriateness of the learning environment (any concerns identified which are out of the staff members control would be highlighted to the curriculum manager and not be reflected upon the staff member delivering)

- Following the drop-in, a meeting will be arranged to give feedback, identify strengths and areas for enhancement and include action steps for continued development of practice. The feedback meeting should take place as soon as possible and normally within three working days of the visit taking place, this will include the opportunity for self-reflection and professional discussion.

- Learning drop-ins will result in a judgement of the quality of teaching and learning observed and the progress towards achieving the teaching standards expected at New College Durham. This will be one of four outcomes:
    - Strong
    - Secure
    - Developing
    - Cause for concern

- Where the outcome is judged as teaching and learning is strong or secure, standard monitoring through developmental action steps and responsive coaching processes will continue in line will the enhanced learning policy for all staff.
- Where the outcome of the teaching and learning is judged as developing the member of staff will be referred for individual coaching support to include specific action steps. This process will involve support from the Enhanced Learning Team or an appropriate external consultant. This will support the member of staff to rapidly enhance their performance. This support will typically be in place for up to four weeks after this time, a further learning drop-in will be completed, and the progress reviewed. This process may include a total of up to two revisits.

- Where the outcome of the learning drop-in is recorded as cause for concern, this would instigate a focused learning visit. (see focused learning visit process)
- As part of the learning drop-in process evidence such as planning documentation, session resources or marked work should be available.
- Outcomes of all learning drop-ins will be recorded and data from these analysed to provided thematic support. The Curriculum Management teams will ensure outcomes feed into performance monitoring, self-assessment and improvement plans.
- Where repeated concerns exist, this will be escalated to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure consistency in teaching and learning standards. This may include initiation of a focused learning visit or appropriate performance monitoring processes.
- Concerns relating to safeguarding or health & safety will be referred immediately to the appropriate manager and progressed through relevant College procedures.

9. *Teaching and Learning Tours*

- Teaching and learning tours may be carried out across all areas of the college. These are focused on relevant and emerging themes to allow a holistic picture of cross college teaching, learning and assessment practices. These will follow a series of drop-ins across focused, emerging themes. (following the same format as learning drop-ins)
- Teaching and learning tours are managed and carried out by the Assistant Principal Quality & Enhanced Learning & Enhanced Learning Manager in response to emerging college themes and Teaching and learning priorities. They may be accompanied by members of the TLI team or Curriculum leaders as deemed appropriate
- They may be carried out as joint visits for standardisation (no more than two people)
- School/College level focused feedback will be given to HoS and CM to inform CPD, focus support, highlight areas of outstanding practice and feed into priorities and TLI development targets.
- Individual feedback will not be provided – unless concerns/support needs are identified. These will be escalated to the relevant Head of School.

10. Quality & Enhanced Learning Review

As part of the journey to outstanding, Quality & Enhanced Learning Reviews will be carried out to provide a holistic approach to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across an individual curriculum area. This process will cover all funding types and provision within a curriculum area (FE, HE, Apps, Bootcamps, etc).

The Quality & Enhanced learning team methodology is focused on the links between the curriculum, teaching, learning, assessment, and standards. It has three elements:

Top-level view: The Quality and Enhanced Learning Team and leaders start with a top-level view of the school's/area's curriculum, exploring leaders' understanding of curriculum intent and sequencing, and why these choices were made.

Quality and Enhanced Learning Review: The Review team will undertake quality activities to gather evidence on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the curriculum. This is done in collaboration with leaders, teachers, employers, and students. The intent of the Enhanced Quality and Enhanced Learning Review is to seek to explore and establish a coherent evidence base on the quality of education each curriculum area provide to their students.

Bringing it together: The Quality and Enhanced Learning Team will bring the evidence together to widen coverage and to test whether any issues identified during the process are systemic.

This will usually lead to leaders and mangers bringing forward further evidence and Quality and Enhanced Learning team and leaders gathering additional evidence.

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the teaching and learning practices within a subject or area, the following elements will be incorporated into a Quality and Enhanced Learning Review.

- **Evaluation of Curriculum Intent:** Managers responsible for the curriculum in a specific subject or area will be evaluated to determine their understanding of its intent and intended impact. This evaluation will assess their vision and goals for the curriculum, ensuring alignment with the broader educational objectives and policies. It will also assess their knowledge and comprehension of the subject-specific content and its relevance to the overall curriculum.
- **Evaluation of Curriculum Managers' Thinking and Planning:** The long and medium-term thinking and planning of curriculum managers will be evaluated, with specific attention to the rationale behind content choices and curriculum sequencing. This evaluation aims to examine the coherence and progression of the curriculum, as well as the strategic decisions made to ensure effective teaching and learning outcomes. It will also assess the responsiveness of the curriculum to the needs and aspirations of the students.
- **Learning drop-ins:** The process will involve visits to lessons within the subject or area under review. These visits will provide first-hand insights into the implementation of the curriculum, instructional strategies employed by teachers, and the engagement and progress of the students. The purpose is to assess the alignment between the intended curriculum and its actual delivery, identify areas of strength, and uncover potential areas for improvement.
- **Work Scrutiny:** In addition to learning drop-ins, work scrutiny will be conducted to assess the quality of work produced by students who are part of the visited classes. This scrutiny aims to provide evidence of the impact of teaching and learning on student outcomes. It will evaluate the extent to which the curriculum is effectively communicated, the depth of student understanding, and the progress made over time. By analysing students' work, the team can gain insights into the effectiveness of the curriculum in facilitating learning and skill development.
- **Discussions with Teachers/relevant staff members:** Engaging in discussions with teaching staff is crucial for understanding how the curriculum informs their choices regarding

content and sequencing to support effective learning. These discussions will explore teachers' pedagogical approaches, the rationale behind instructional decisions, and their reflections on the effectiveness of the curriculum in meeting the diverse needs of students. The feedback from teachers will help inform future curriculum development and professional development initiatives.

- **Discussions with Students/Employers:** To gain a comprehensive perspective on the impact of the curriculum, the team will engage in discussions with a group of students who have participated in the visited lessons. These conversations aim to capture students' perspectives on the curriculum, their engagement, and their understanding of the subject or area. Students' feedback will provide valuable insights into the relevance, clarity, and effectiveness of the curriculum in promoting meaningful learning experiences. Where relevant employers may also be contacted to share their views and experiences.
- **Next Steps:** To ensure that a full programme of support and consistency of practice is considered, where any concerns are raised as part of the Quality Enhanced Learning Review, a follow up programme of support/intervention may be put in place to ensure continual response to ongoing development of practice.

By incorporating these elements, the evaluation process will be comprehensive, ensuring a thorough assessment of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across an area. The information gathered through these reviews will inform future improvements to the curriculum, teaching practices, and professional development opportunities for educators. Please see the Quality & Enhanced Learning Review – Curriculum Deep Dive handbook for further detail.

11. Peer Learning Visits

- Peer learning visits represent a peer-driven supportive teaching and learning enhancement model, providing staff with a framework to, not only develop their own practice, but also contribute to college-wide improvements through formalised opportunities to visit the practice of colleagues, share best practice, share reflections, and give support to colleagues.
- All curriculum staff are required to participate in the peer visits process which will be co-ordinated by the Assistant Principal of Quality & Enhanced Learning, Enhanced Learning Manager, Head of School or Curriculum Manager who may use one or more themes from the College's key areas for improvement as the focus for the visits.
- Each member of curriculum staff will be expected to participate in visiting at least one peer visit per year. Staff should maintain a record of their visit and reflections and follow up with relevant action steps to promote development of practice. Records of completed peer learning visits should be submitted to Heads of School & Enhanced Learning Manager within ten working days and a copy stored on the Quality Intranet.
- The Enhanced Learning Manager & Assistant Principal Quality & Enhanced Learning will co-ordinate the sharing of best practice from peer learning visits through the 'Teach, Learn, Innovate' newsletter, staff development sessions and the annual teaching and learning fair. Best practice at departmental level should be shared through team meetings. This can be supported by the school's allocated Teaching and Learning Lead.

12. Communities of practice

- To further promote excellence in teaching, learning and assessment. Communities of Practice will be implemented to promote continual growth and development.
- To explore everyday problems, emerging trends, new practices, and complex challenges with a focus on improving teaching practices, learning experiences and outcomes for students.
- Selected members of staff will have the opportunity to be part of a community of practice, engagement in the process will be voluntary.
- The Community of Practice groups will provide teachers with an opportunity to identify solutions to shared problems that promotes self-reflection and offers a process to evaluate best practices.
- The major topic areas for community content and exploration will be set out in response to school key themes. Intentional design and shared goals to facilitate enhanced communication, inclusion of diverse perspectives, and more effective evaluation of progress. However, it's important to acknowledge topics may shift, change, and emerge over time, which requires participants to be adaptive, and responsive.

13. Coaching and mentoring

As part of the Quality & Enhanced Learning developmental support, an extensive coaching and mentoring offer is promoted. All staff are part of personalised development through a responsive coaching model and provided with development targets and evidence-informed action steps. In addition, all staff have access to a school allocated teaching and learning lead and quality contact who will provide coaching and mentoring in response to a range of support needs. There are numerous ways specific coaching support can be initiated. This can be self-referred by the member of staff, agreed as part of a developmental plan following learning visits or drop-ins or a condition of a PIP/formal competence process or a referral from Head of School/Curriculum Manager/ TLA team.

- Personalised coaching and mentoring
- Coaching visits/drop-ins
- Peer classroom visits
- Modelling of good practice
- Strategy showcase

Where a member of teaching staff has exhausted the opportunities for coaching and mentoring, the Assistant Principal Quality and Enhanced Learning is able to withdraw coaching and mentoring and escalate their concerns to the relevant Head of School to address accordingly.

Related Policies

- Assessment of coursework
- Appeal against an assessment decision
- Internal and external verification/ moderation
- Conflicts of interest in assessment, verification and examination practice
- Competence procedure

Policy Review

The effectiveness of this document will be monitored annually and reviewed every three years in light of experience and best practice.

Implementation Date	**September 2025**
First Review Date	September 2028