

Apprenticeship Assessment Policy

Registry Services

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Apprenticeship assessment (was end-point assessment) is the final stage of an apprenticeship. It provides an impartial judgement of whether the apprentice has developed the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the apprenticeship standard.
- 1.2. This policy sets out the University's approach to the governance, quality assurance and delivery of apprenticeship assessment for programmes where De Montfort University (DMU) acts as the assessment organisation (previously end-point assessment organisation/EPAO). This policy covers, delivery of the following:
- integrated degree apprenticeships
 - statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) apprenticeships and responsibility for the following:
 - where DMU acts as assessment organisation only (i.e. where another organisation is the training provider)
 - the University's obligations in respect of external quality assurance
- 1.3. This policy should be read in conjunction with the associated procedures (annex A) for apprenticeship assessment, the relevant Skills England assessment plan for each apprenticeship standard, and the University's wider academic quality framework. The University's External Examining Policy should be consulted regarding External Examiner requirements, given the relationship between the External Examiner and External Assurer roles.
- 1.4. Where a Skills England assessment plan specifies requirements that differ from this policy, the assessment plan takes precedence.
- 1.5. Where required by Skills England, and subject to the requirements of the relevant assessment plan, an apprentice may transfer to a revised version of an apprenticeship standard during their programme. Any such transfer will normally be permitted only where there is sufficient time remaining for the apprentice to complete all required assessment components under the revised standard.
- 1.6. Any transfer must be agreed by the apprentice, employer and the University, with confirmation that all parties are ready to proceed under the revised assessment arrangements, having regard to the complexity of delivery and assessment. Employers must confirm their ability to support and verify the required knowledge, skills and behaviours under the revised standard. All transfers will be subject to institutional

quality assurance and approval processes and must be implemented in accordance with regulatory and assessment plan requirements.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all apprenticeship provision within the University's taught academic portfolio where DMU is registered as the assessment organisation (i.e. where DMU is responsible for the independent grading of the apprenticeship assessment) on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR), including integrated and statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) apprenticeships delivered at DMU Leicester and DMU London.
- 2.2. This policy also applies where DMU acts as assessment organisation for programmes delivered by an external training provider.
- 2.3. This policy additionally applies to non-integrated apprenticeship programmes, where the independent grading of the apprenticeship assessment is undertaken by an external assessment organisation. In such cases, this policy applies to the University's responsibilities for:
- the quality and standards of the academic award;
 - preparation for and support through the gateway to completion process; and
 - institutional oversight of arrangements supporting progression to apprenticeship assessment.

Responsibility for the delivery, independent grading and quality assurance of the apprenticeship assessment remains with the external assessment organisation. Academic assessment matters relating to the award continue to be governed by the University's Programme Approval and Management Policy and Assessment and Feedback Policy, in line with apprenticeship funding rules and assessment plan requirements.

- 2.4. This policy and its associated procedures are intended for use by all stakeholders involved in, or affected by, the delivery, quality assurance and governance of apprenticeship assessment at the University. This includes:
- University staff responsible for the design, delivery, quality assurance and oversight of apprenticeship provision;
 - external stakeholders involved in apprenticeship assessment, including Independent Assessors, Apprenticeship Assessment External Assurers, employers and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies; and
 - apprentices undertaking apprenticeship assessment.

3. Glossary

- 3.1. **Apprenticeship assessment** (was end-point assessment/EPA) - the holistic assessment of the apprenticeship that tests whether the apprentice meets the occupational standard. Under the reformed assessment framework, assessment may take place at any stage of the apprenticeship as defined in the assessment plan.
- 3.2. **Apprenticeship Assessment External Assurer** (was EPA External Assurer) - a role undertaken by the programme's External Examiner, with additional responsibilities specifically focused on the quality assurance of apprenticeship assessment delivery. This role fulfils external quality assurance requirements for integrated apprenticeships. Referred to as 'External Assurer' elsewhere in this policy.
- 3.3. **Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR)** - the register maintained by the Department for Education of organisations approved to deliver apprenticeship training and/or assessment.
- 3.4. **Assessment organisation (AO)** (was end-point assessment organisation/EPAO) - the organisation registered to deliver apprenticeship assessment for an apprenticeship standard.
- 3.5. **External quality assurance (EQA)** - the processes by which an external body monitors the quality and consistency of assessment delivery across assessment organisations.
- 3.6. **Statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) apprenticeship** – no separate apprenticeship assessment is required post-gateway. The apprenticeship's summative assessment is integrated into the main qualification and is typically concluded through the Assessment Board. Where relevant, these arrangements may include requirements set by a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB). No additional assessments are required after gateway for completion.
- 3.7. **Gateway to completion** (was gateway) - the point at which the apprentice, employer and training provider confirm that the apprentice has met the prerequisites to proceed to apprenticeship assessment, as specified in the relevant assessment plan.
- 3.8. **Independent Assessor** - an individual appointed to assess apprentices against the occupational standard during an integrated apprenticeship assessment. Independent Assessors must meet the criteria specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan and have no conflicts of interest with the apprentice, employer or training provider.
- 3.9. **Integrated apprenticeship** - an apprenticeship where the assessment is credit-bearing and integrated within the programme. The apprentice must pass the assessment to achieve both the qualification and the apprenticeship; however, the apprenticeship assessment grade is based solely on the apprenticeship assessment module.

- 3.10. **Internal quality assurance (IQA)** - the University's own processes for ensuring apprenticeship assessment is conducted fairly, consistently and robustly.
- 3.11. **Non-integrated apprenticeship** - an apprenticeship where the qualification is assessed separately from the apprenticeship assessment. The qualification must normally be achieved before the apprentice passes through the gateway to completion. An external assessment organisation delivers the assessment.
- 3.12. **Skills England assessment plan** - the document published by Skills England (formerly the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education) that sets out the assessment requirements for each apprenticeship standard, including assessment methods, grading criteria and assessor requirements.

4. Responsibilities

Academic Board

- 4.1. The University's Academic Board is responsible for overseeing the academic standards and quality of the University's taught academic provision, including apprenticeship programmes. This includes oversight of procedures for the quality assurance of apprenticeship assessment and the approval of this policy.

Academic Quality Committee

- 4.2. The University's Academic Quality Committee is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy and the outputs of assessment quality assurance activity. The committee will:
- oversee critical risks relating to assessment quality raised from faculty risk registers or External Assurer reports
 - oversee external body audit reports and action plans arising from EQA monitoring checks
 - receive reports on assessment quality and compliance from Academic Quality Services

External Examiner and External Roles Appointments Panel (EEERAP)

- 4.3. The External Examiner and External Roles Appointments Panel is responsible for the approval and oversight of Independent Assessor and External Assurer appointments, including consideration of nominations, reappointments and terminations.

Academic Quality Services

4.4. The University's Academic Quality Services team is responsible for the development and maintenance of this policy and its associated procedures, for supporting assessment quality assurance activity and related external visits. This includes:

- managing appointment administration for Independent Assessors and External Assurers (integrated apprenticeships only)
- delivering External Assurer induction briefings
- processing External Assurer annual reports
- maintaining the University's registration as assessment organisation on APAR for all relevant apprenticeship standards
- verifying and claiming apprenticeship completion certificates
- gathering stakeholder feedback from apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors following each assessment, and circulating to Programme Leaders and External Assurers (integrated apprenticeships only)
- gathering CPD logs from Independent Assessors and External Assurers, and circulating to Programme Leaders and External Assurers for review against requirements
- maintaining the assessment quality assurance evidence base, including records required for EQA monitoring checks, and reporting on assessment quality to the Academic Quality Committee
- supporting faculties in preparing for and responding to EQA activity, including readiness checks and monitoring checks, and coordinating the review of OfS reports and development of action plans
- conducting internal quality assurance (IQA) readiness check meetings to support robust preparation for apprenticeship assessment, which will normally include:
 - an initial readiness check, normally undertaken approximately 12 months prior to apprenticeship assessment, to support confirmation of assessment resourcing requirements, including the anticipated number of Independent Assessors required
 - a subsequent readiness check, normally undertaken approximately 8 months prior to apprenticeship assessment, to provide internal quality assurance of assessment materials and arrangements against the requirements of the relevant Skills England assessment plan

Faculties

- 4.5. Faculties are responsible for the operational delivery of apprenticeship assessment within their programmes, including:
- ensuring programme teams comply with this policy and its associated procedures
 - maintaining risk registers for their assessment provision and escalating critical risks
 - endorsing Independent Assessors and External Assurers nominations (integrated apprenticeships only)
 - responding to External Assurer annual reports and EQA monitoring check findings
 - ensuring that any assessment plan-specific continuing professional development (CPD) requirements are met (for IAs, EAs and EEs)
 - contributing to the Annual Enhancement Review process, including school-level summary reports setting out actions and priorities
 - monitoring assessment quality through Programme Management Boards and Faculty Academic Committees, including overseeing formal responses to stakeholder feedback (from apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors) and External Assurer reports
 - scheduling timely Assessment Boards (where applicable), normally within four weeks of apprenticeship assessment (integrated only)
 - ensuring compliance with the respective assessment plan by revisiting the assessment plan on Skills England site before commencing delivery to be assured of the most up to date version
 - processing Independent Assessors and External Assurers fees and expenses

Programme Leaders

- 4.6. Programme Leaders are responsible for the academic oversight and day-to-day coordination of apprenticeship assessment for their programme.
- The responsibilities set out below apply to integrated and statutory integrated apprenticeships, unless otherwise stated. Responsibilities relating to non-integrated apprenticeships are limited to academic award oversight and gateway preparation and

are governed by the University's Programme Approval and Management Policy and Assessment and Feedback Policy.

- sourcing the appropriate number of Independent Assessors in good time prior to apprenticeship assessment (integrated apprenticeships only)
- preparing apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors for assessment
- ensuring apprentices and employers are informed of the apprentice's rights in relation to resits, retakes, complaints and appeals in advance of the assessment
- ensuring timely production of assessment materials, and access to appropriate equipment (integrated apprenticeships only)
- ensuring that assessment design, mark schemes, grading criteria, delivery, appropriate inclusion of external stakeholders and moderation are aligned with the relevant version of the Skills England assessment plan throughout the assessment cycle, and complies with DMU assessment and feedback policy where not in conflict with the assessment plan (integrated apprenticeships only)
- coordinating gateway to completion confirmation processes
- arranging Independent Assessor training (ensuring frequency is in line with the respective assessment plan) (integrated apprenticeships only)
- arranging and recording Independent Assessor standardisation and moderation sessions, both before and after apprenticeship assessment (integrated apprenticeships only)
- supporting External Assurer induction briefings and providing them information required to fulfil their role, including assessment documentation and arranging observations, assessment dates and meetings (integrated apprenticeships only)
- ensuring reasonable adjustments are identified, assessed and implemented (e.g. extra time, adapted assessment materials, assistance with reading, etc.) (integrated apprenticeships only)
- ensuring timely communication of provisional results and assessment feedback in alignment to assessment and feedback policy timeframes (integrated apprenticeships only)
- receiving and reviewing continuing professional development (CPD) logs for Independent Assessors and External Assurers as provided by Academic Quality Services, and assuring that any assessment plan-specific CPD requirements are met and maintained. (integrated apprenticeships only)

- responding to stakeholder feedback arising from apprenticeship assessment, including via formal stakeholder meetings and structured feedback questionnaires from apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors; ensuring that feedback is formally considered and addressed through the Annual Enhancement Review and Programme Management Board processes; maintaining a clear record of actions taken in response to feedback; and communicating key enhancements and outcomes to subsequent cohorts to demonstrate how feedback has informed improvement. (integrated apprenticeships only)

Apprenticeships and Technical Education Services (ATES)

4.7. Apprenticeships and Technical Education Services are responsible for:

- maintaining the University's registration as training provider for apprenticeship standards on APAR
- gateway to completion evidence management
- scheduling timely Assessment Boards (where applicable), ideally within four week of apprenticeship assessment, ensuring compliance with the respective assessment plan
- learner record management
- liaison with Academic Quality Services on gateway completion and certificate claims and assessment organisation registration
- upload evidence of the certificate claim onto the Learner Management System and e-Portfolio

5. General principles/Policy statements

Apprenticeship assessment delivery

- 5.1. The University is committed to the delivery of apprenticeship assessment that is fair, consistent, robust and in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Skills England assessment plan, the conditions of the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register, and applicable external quality assurance frameworks.
- 5.2. Assessment must be delivered in accordance with the methods, grading criteria and timescales specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan. Where this policy, its

associated procedures, or any other DMU policies or requirements differ from the requirements of an assessment plan, the assessment plan takes precedence.

5.3. Programme teams must verify that they are working from the current version of the relevant Skills England assessment plan at least three months prior to each assessment, to ensure that any amendments to the plan are identified and reflected in assessment preparation.

5.4. The University recognises the distinct assessment requirements for different categories of apprenticeship:

- For **integrated apprenticeships**, the assessment is a credit-bearing component of the programme, assessed by Independent Assessors appointed by the University to independently grade the assessment. The External Assurer acts as the External Examiner for the apprenticeship assessment. The qualification will also have an External Examiner. The same person will act in both roles but will complete separate focused reports – for both programme and Apprenticeship Assessment.
- For **statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) apprenticeships**, the assessment conforms to the assessment arrangements required by the relevant professional body. The assessment typically is the Assessment Board and concludes once the assessment organisation submits the required documentation to the professional body. There is only an External Examiner since the apprenticeship assessment is fully-integrated into the programme. No additional summative assessments are required post-gateway to completion.
- For **statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) employer provider apprenticeships**, the University is responsible for the quality and delivery of the assessment (including the assessment board), while the training provider retains responsibility for apprenticeship training and gateway to completion preparation. The assessment is the Assessment Board and concludes once the required documentation is submitted to the relevant professional body where required. There is only an External Examiner since the apprenticeship assessment is fully-integrated into the programme, with no distinct summative assessment. The external Examiner fulfils the role of Independent Assessor within this process. DMU will not prepare the apprentices for gateway due to not being the training provider.

For statutory integrated (also known as fully-integrated) apprenticeships, the External Examiner must attend the Assessment Board to act as the independent party within the assessment process, fulfilling both the External Examiner and Independent Assessor roles.

- For **non-integrated apprenticeships** where an external assessment organisation is responsible for the independent grading and quality assurance of the apprenticeship assessment, the University does not deliver or assure the apprenticeship assessment. The University's responsibilities are limited to the quality and standards of the academic award and supporting apprentices and employers through preparation for gateway to completion, in accordance with the relevant Skills England assessment plan. These arrangements operate in line with the Department for Education's Apprenticeship Assessment Principles, which apply to all apprenticeship assessment models. Academic assessment matters relating to the award continue to be governed by the University's Programme Approval and Management Policy and Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Independence and conflicts of interest

- 5.5. The University is committed to ensuring the independence of apprenticeship assessment, recognising the particular importance of robust safeguards given DMU's dual role as both training provider and assessment organisation for integrated and fully-integrated apprenticeships.
- 5.6. For integrated apprenticeships, all individuals involved in the delivery and quality assurance of the assessment must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Conflict of interest declarations must be completed:
- at the point of appointment for Independent Assessors and External Assurers (as part of the nomination form), and upon reappointment for Independent Assessors
 - at an early stage of assessment preparation, normally no later than six months prior to apprenticeship assessment, to confirm eligibility in relation to the specific cohort, employers and other stakeholders involved

Early confirmation of conflicts of interest is required to enable timely mitigating action, including the recruitment or reassignment of Independent Assessors where necessary, and to safeguard the independence and integrity of assessment delivery. Where circumstances change, further declarations may be required in accordance with institutional procedures.

- 5.7. Specific independence and conflict of interest requirements for Independent Assessors and External Assurers, including restrictions on the appointment of former staff members, are set out in the appointment criteria for each role within this policy.

External quality assurance

- 5.8. The University will comply with the external quality assurance requirements of the Office for Students (OfS), as the Designated Quality Body, and any other relevant EQA body. This includes participation in readiness checks and monitoring checks as required.
- 5.9. The University will maintain internal quality assurance processes that support compliance with the OfS EQA framework and the EQA principles of relevant, reliable, efficient and positive assessment, and will ensure that EQA findings are responded to and monitored through its governance structures.
- 5.10. EQA monitoring check reports must not be published by the University or any part of it, in accordance with the EQA framework.
- 5.11. Where external quality assurance activity identifies areas for improvement, the University will produce and implement an action plan to address the findings. Action plans and their progress will be monitored at Programme Management Boards, Development and Review Committee, and by the Academic Quality Committee.
- 5.12. Where external quality assurance activity identifies areas for improvement, the University will produce and implement an action plan to address the findings. Progress against action plans will be monitored through the University's academic governance structures, with oversight at programme, faculty and institutional level, until actions are completed. The Academic Quality Committee will maintain strategic oversight of progress and will receive updates as required to assure the effective and timely resolution of findings.

Independent Assessors (integrated apprenticeships only)

- 5.13. The University will appoint Independent Assessors who meet the requirements specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan and the appointment criteria set out in this policy.
- 5.14. A minimum of two Independent Assessors should normally be appointed to each integrated apprenticeship programme, dependent on cohort size and the moderation requirements set out in the Skills England assessment plan or the University's Apprenticeship Assessment Procedure that, where relevant, will align to the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy in relation to moderation.

One Independent Assessor will act as the primary marker of the apprenticeship assessment.

A different Independent Assessor, who was not involved in the original marking, must undertake internal moderation. Internal moderation must be conducted independently and must not involve moderation of an assessor's own marking.

Internal moderation must include documented consideration of the assessment decision against the relevant assessment criteria. Where Independent Assessors are unable to reach agreement through internal moderation, the matter will be escalated in line with the Apprenticeship Assessment Procedure that, where relevant, will align to the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Assessment evidence must be recorded and retained in a manner sufficient to enable independent internal moderation, external assurance and regulatory review, in accordance with the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy.

5.15. Independent Assessors are appointed through the Examiner and External Roles Appointments Panel. Appointments must meet all Independent Assessor requirements specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan. In addition, the University may specify further requirements. Key requirements identified in the assessment plan and by the University determine that the assessor must:

- be reasonably considered occupationally competent and credible in the opinions of employers and peers
- have, maintain and be able to evidence up-to-date knowledge and expertise of the occupation, undertaking at least two days sector/occupation specific CPD per year
- have no actual or potential conflict of interest which could compromise their role as an Independent Assessor (including: having no involvement with the training or employment of the apprentice, nor conflicts of interest with the University as the assessment organisation or the apprentice's employer organisation)
- have suitable, sufficient and up-to-date qualifications and experience, as set out in the assessment plan
- have experience and competence in delivering a variety of assessment tasks, including grading, providing feedback and moderating of assessment
- deliver the apprenticeship assessment in line with the assessment plan
- make valid assessment and grading decisions during the assessment
- typically, have experience in the delivery and/or assessment of the same apprenticeship standard, or a closely related standard, at another institution, to support assurance of comparability across providers
- comply with internal quality assurance requirements
- comply with EQA requirements for the apprenticeship

- meet the applicable criteria and have the authority to represent the professional body where the assessment is acting as the professional body's assessment process (if necessary and permitted in the assessment plan)
- make the final judgement on an apprentice's occupational competence
- comply with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate
- have fluency in English

An understanding of the occupational standard and the requirements of the assessment, as set out in the assessment plan, is desirable but not essential as training will be provided.

- 5.16. Former staff members of the University must not be appointed as Independent Assessors before a lapse of at least five years.
- 5.17. A conflict of interest declaration must be completed prior to each assessment, once gateway to completion is confirmed, listing key stakeholders including apprentices, their employers, University staff involved in the assessment, and External Assurers.
- 5.18. Independent Assessors must complete mandatory training and standardisation sessions prior to undertaking assessment to ensure a common understanding of assessment criteria, grading standards and assessment delivery requirements. External Assurers should have access to the standardisation documentation or recording.
- 5.19. Independent Assessors must participate in post-assessment standardisation sessions to ensure that moderation processes are consistently documented, transparent and aligned to agreed grading standards. External Assurers should have access to the standardisation activity outcomes.
- 5.20. Independent Assessors must maintain their occupational knowledge through a minimum of two days of sector-specific CPD per year, or as specified in the relevant assessment plan.
- 5.21. Appointments are for a period of four years, subject to annual reconfirmation of eligibility and the ongoing meeting of CPD, training and conflict of interest requirements.

Apprenticeship Assessment External Assurers (integrated apprenticeships only)

- 5.22. The University will appoint Apprenticeship Assessment External Assurers (was EPA External Assurers, referred to as 'External Assurers' in this policy) to provide independent external quality assurance of assessment delivery for integrated

apprenticeship programmes. The External Assurer role is undertaken by the programme's External Examiner.

- 5.23. External Assurers must be independent from those involved in the assessment, including apprentices, employer organisations, Independent Assessors and DMU programme staff. They must meet the appointment requirements set out in this policy and any additional requirements specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan.
- 5.24. Because the roles are typically undertaken by the same individual, External Assurer and External Examiner nominations are managed by the Examiner and External Roles Appointments Panel at the same time. Appointments must meet all External Assurer requirements specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan, where applicable. In addition, nominees must meet the following appointment criteria:
- be independent from the apprentices, employers, Independent Assessors and training provider(s), and from the delivery of the assessment (unless specified otherwise in the assessment plan), with no conflicts of interest
 - be impartial in judgement and wholly independent of the University and its staff (including the governing body), and any relevant employers and/or partners
 - be knowledgeable about, and competent in, assessing apprentice achievement in higher education at levels relevant to the subjects and awards to which their appointment relates
 - have broad and current knowledge, relevant experience and occupational competence in the area of work related to their appointment (i.e. from experience in managing/delivering a similar apprenticeship)
 - have a high level of competence and experience in the fields covered by the assessment, and have a good understanding of apprenticeships
 - be appropriately experienced in apprentice assessment design and delivery at the level of the award
 - be able to assess standards in an effective manner, identify good practice and recommend enhancements to enable informed assessment development
 - have experience in acting as an external quality assurer (i.e. an External Examiner), or be supported by the University in undertaking their duties (i.e. through training and mentoring)
 - have had sufficient experience in quality assurance to enable them to discharge their role effectively

- be able to engage in open and transparent dialogue with key stakeholders within the University to build relationships and provide guidance and support
- be prepared to undertake relevant training and CPD
- normally have experience in the delivery and/or assessment of the same apprenticeship standard, or a closely related standard, at another institution, to support assurance of comparability across providers
- comply with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate

- 5.25. Former staff members of the University must not be appointed as External Assurers before a lapse of at least five years. Former External Examiners and External Assurers must not be reappointed before a lapse of at least five years.
- 5.26. A conflict of interest declaration must be completed prior to each assessment, once gateway to completion is confirmed, listing key stakeholders including apprentices, their employers, University staff involved in the assessment, and Independent Assessors.
- 5.27. Where the External Assurer appointment is undertaken by the External Examiner, the tenure of both roles is subject to the same reappointment and termination provisions. All External Assurers must complete an induction prior to undertaking the role and must maintain their occupational knowledge through a minimum of two days of sector-specific CPD per year, or as specified in the relevant assessment plan.
- 5.28. External Assurers are responsible for ensuring alignment to the assessment plan, observing apprentices live assessments, moderating a sample of assessed work, reviewing internal quality assurance processes, and submitting an annual report on the quality and standards of assessment. Their findings inform both the University's internal quality monitoring and evidence for OfS monitoring checks.

Gateway to completion and readiness for assessment

- 5.29. No apprentice may proceed to apprenticeship assessment without confirmation that they have met all gateway to completion requirements as specified in the relevant Skills England assessment plan. These requirements will normally include:
- confirmation from the employer that the apprentice is consistently meeting the competence required by the standard
 - achievement of any mandatory qualifications
 - apprenticeship length meets the minimum duration requirement in line with the apprenticeship funding rules

- completion of minimum off-the-job training requirements in line with the apprenticeship funding rules. A signed statement must be produced where the actual off-the-job hours delivered are less than the planned hours
- where required, apprentice must complete English and maths qualifications in line with the apprenticeship rules
- any additional requirements specified in the assessment plan

- 5.30. Gateway to completion confirmation must involve the apprentice and employer and must be evidenced and recorded in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Skills England assessment plan. An Assessment Board (or Progression & Award Board, where applicable) will receive confirmation that gateway requirements have been completed and will record this as part of its proceedings. For a fully-integrated apprenticeship this confirmation occurs within the board that acts as the apprenticeship assessment.
- 5.31. Employers involved in the assessment process, including those acting as project supervisors or contributing to gateway decisions, must receive appropriate guidance and briefing on their role, the assessment criteria, and how their input will be used in the assessment and gateway to completion process.
- 5.32. Once the gateway to completion requirements have been satisfied, apprenticeship assessment must be delivered within the timescales set out in the relevant assessment plan.
- 5.33. If the apprenticeship assessment is not undertaken within the timescales set out in the relevant assessment plan, the circumstances for the delay should be reviewed in line with the requirements of the assessment plan. Where justified and permitted, the apprenticeship assessment may be rescheduled or placed on hold without requiring the apprentice to repeat the entire assessment. All decisions and supporting evidence will be documented to ensure compliance with external quality assurance requirements.
- 5.34. No new teaching of curriculum content may be delivered to an apprentice between the confirmation of gateway to completion and the commencement of apprenticeship assessment. Assessment preparation and support, including mock assessments, briefings on assessment methods and familiarisation with the assessment process, may continue during this period. Tripartite meetings should continue for ongoing apprentice and employer engagement. Where a retake is required, additional learning will be provided in accordance with paragraph 5.46.

Assessment, grading and moderation (integrated apprenticeships only)

- 5.35. Assessment materials, tools and grading criteria must be developed in accordance with the relevant Skills England assessment plan and must be subject to approval by the External Assurer prior to use.
- 5.36. The University will take reasonable steps to verify the identity of each apprentice prior to the commencement of assessment. For face-to-face assessments conducted remotely, identity verification must include photographic identification. Where work-based evidence, including projects, forms part of the assessment, the employer must confirm the authenticity of the work and that it was completed by the apprentice in an appropriate workplace setting, where required by the relevant assessment plan.
- 5.37. Where apprenticeship assessment is credit-bearing and contributes to the academic award, a validated marking-to-grading conversion must be in place to ensure alignment between academic marks and apprenticeship grades as specified in the relevant assessment plan. The approved method of arriving at the calculated value must be documented on the apprenticeship assessment module specification and will typically be based on the overall apprenticeship grade. The conversion must be approved as part of programme validation and must be communicated to External Assurers and apprentices in advance of the assessment.
- 5.38. All grading decisions must be evidenced through the use of grading and feedback sheets and must be subject to both internal and external moderation to ensure the reliability and consistency of assessment outcomes. Internal moderation will normally involve at least one other Independent Assessor reviewing a sample of grading decisions, unless alternative internal moderation arrangements are agreed by Skills England or specified in the assessment plan (for example, where internal moderation is to be undertaken by staff within the University). Internal moderation and feedback, including sample sizes, will be undertaken in line with the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy, except where in conflict with the assessment plan. External moderation will be undertaken by the External Assurer, who must be provided with the grading and feedback sheets and evidence of internal moderation.
- 5.39. Apprentices must be provided with provisional results and assessment feedback, in line with the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy timeframes. When communicating provisional results, it must be made clear that grades are subject to ratification by the Assessment Board and that such records are not formal apprenticeship certificates.
- 5.40. Assessment grades (component and overall) must be ratified by the Assessment Board, in accordance with the University's Assessment and Feedback Policy.

Certification

- 5.41. The University, acting as assessment organisation, is responsible for claiming apprenticeship completion certificates on behalf of apprentices who have successfully completed their assessment. Permission must be obtained from the apprentice for the University, as claiming organisation, to apply for the certificate on their behalf.
- 5.42. Certificates must be applied for within 20 days of grades being confirmed at the Assessment Board, and only once all requirements have been met and results have been agreed.
- 5.43. Where an apprentice fails to successfully complete the apprenticeship assessment, they may still receive an academic lower award commensurate with the credits achieved.

Resits and retakes (integrated apprenticeships only)

- 5.44. Where an apprentice fails one or more assessment components, they will normally be entitled to resit or retake in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Skills England assessment plan.
- 5.45. A resit involves the apprentice retaking one or more failed components without additional learning. A retake involves additional learning before re-attempting the assessment. The maximum grade available for resits and retakes will be as specified in the relevant assessment plan.
- 5.46. Resits and retakes must be agreed with the employer and training provider and must take place within a reasonable timescale as stipulated in the assessment plan.
- 5.47. Where an assessment plan does not supply details with respect to any aspects of resits and retakes, standard DMU regulations will apply.

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations (integrated apprenticeships only)

- 5.48. The University is committed to ensuring that all apprentices have fair access to apprenticeship assessment, irrespective of any permanent or temporary disability or other protected characteristic. Reasonable adjustments will be made where appropriate, while maintaining the validity, reliability and integrity of assessment decisions.
- 5.49. Reasonable adjustments will normally be a continuation of the support the apprentice received during their apprenticeship. Requests must be made as early as possible in advance of the assessment to allow adequate time for review and implementation.

- 5.50. The University's Disability Team will review reasonable adjustment requests as appropriate. Records of all requests and decisions must be maintained for EQA audit purposes.

Complaints and appeals

- 5.51. Employers and apprentices have the right to make a complaint or appeal in relation to apprenticeship assessment, including:
- an assessment or moderation result, on the basis that DMU as assessment organisation did not apply procedures consistently, or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly
 - a reasonable adjustments application being refused, where it is considered that the apprentice was wrongly refused access to fair assessment
- 5.52. Complaints and appeals relating to apprenticeship assessment will be managed in accordance with the University's Student Complaints and Academic Appeals procedures, as applicable. Apprentices and employers must be informed, in advance of the apprenticeship assessment, of the appropriate routes for raising complaints or appeals and how to access further advice and support.

Annual quality monitoring

- 5.53. The University is committed to the continuous monitoring and enhancement of its apprenticeship assessment provision. Quality monitoring will be embedded within existing institutional quality assurance frameworks, including:
- risk registers
 - the Annual Enhancement Review process, including reflection on External Assurer reports, stakeholder feedback and risk registers
 - stakeholder feedback gathered from apprentices, employers and Independent Assessors following each assessment
 - oversight by PMB and Academic Quality Committee
- 5.54. Faculties should ensure that key areas of improvement arising from quality monitoring activity are communicated to the next cohort at a minimum, and overseen at PMBs, to demonstrate how feedback is addressed. Formal stakeholder meetings (e.g. employer meetings) should also be considered as part of the quality monitoring cycle.

Consequences of non-compliance

- 5.55. Non-compliance with this policy may result in regulatory action by external bodies, including the OfS and Skills England, and may jeopardise the University's registration as an assessment organisation on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register.
- 5.56. The University will take appropriate action to address any identified non-compliance, which may include escalation through institutional governance structures and, where necessary, suspension of assessment activity pending an appropriate and timely resolution that aims to minimise disruption to apprentices.

6. Monitoring and review

- 6.1. This policy and its application will be monitored by the University's Academic Quality Committee and Academic Quality Services team. A full review of the policy will take place every three years, with policy revisions considered and approved by the University's Academic Board.
- 6.2. The associated procedures will be reviewed annually by Academic Quality Services to ensure they remain current and aligned with regulatory requirements.
- 6.3. This policy will be reviewed following the publication of any significant new or revised regulatory, statutory or sector guidance relating to apprenticeship assessment, where such changes may affect the University's responsibilities as a training provider and/or assessment organisation. This may include, but is not limited to:
- OfS external quality assurance guidance for statutory integrated (fully-integrated) higher and degree apprenticeships;
 - Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions, Skills England or other government guidance relating to apprenticeship assessment, certification and grade recording;
 - Ofqual regulatory requirements, conditions or guidance relating to apprenticeship assessment;
 - revised Skills England Apprenticeship Assessment Plans affecting standards delivered by the University.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 7.1. Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations are central to the quality and fairness of apprenticeship assessment. The University is committed to ensuring that assessment processes do not disadvantage any apprentice on the basis of a protected characteristic.

- 7.2. In this context, assessment processes, reasonable adjustment procedures, and guidance for assessors, apprentices and employers will embed explicit requirements for equality, diversity and inclusion to support fair and inclusive assessment practice. Assessment instruments and processes will be designed and reviewed to minimise bias and ensure accessibility.

8. Sustainability

- 8.1. The University will consider the environmental impact of assessment delivery, including the use of digital assessment tools and remote assessment methods where appropriate and permitted by the relevant assessment plan. Assessment processes should support the University's wider sustainability commitments where this does not compromise assessment validity or regulatory compliance.

9. Related policies and standards/documentation

- 9.1. [Office for Students \(OfS\) Regulatory Framework](#), particularly the B Conditions of Registration for quality and standards and the C Conditions of Registration for the protection of student interests.
- 9.2. [Quality Assurance Agency \(QAA\) UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).
- 9.3. [Skills England](#) (formerly IfATE) EQA Framework and assessment plans, as appropriate to the University's apprenticeship provision.
- 9.4. OfS guidance on external quality assurance of end-point assessment for integrated higher and degree apprenticeships.
- 9.5. [Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register: conditions of acceptance \(Department for Education\)](#).
- 9.6. Department for Education Apprenticeship Assessment Principles
- 9.7. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body requirements, as appropriate to the University's professionally accredited and regulated provision.
- 9.8. Other internal policies relevant to apprenticeship assessment:
- [Assessment and Feedback Policy](#)
 - [Data Protection and Information Security Policies](#)
 - [External Examining Policy](#)
 - [Programme Approval and Management Policy](#)

- [Student Complaints and Appeals Policies and Procedures](#)
- Student Disability Policy

10. Appendix: List of Associated Procedures

10.1. This policy is implemented via the following associated procedures:

- Apprenticeship Assessment Procedure (Integrated Apprenticeships)
- Apprenticeship Assessment Procedure (Fully-Integrated/Statutory Integrated Apprenticeships)
- Apprenticeship Assessment Procedure (Non-integrated Apprenticeships)
- Independent Assessor Appointment, Training and Management Procedure
- Apprenticeship Assessment External Assurer Appointment and Reporting Procedure
- Apprenticeship Assessment Annual Quality Monitoring Procedure

11. Document and version control information:

Version control information heading	Details
Policy number	TBC
Owner	Deputy Director and Head of Academic Quality
Author	Academic Quality Services
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of approval of this version	06/05/2026
Next review date	Not to exceed 3 years after approval date
Version number	001
Applicable statutory, legal, or national best practice requirements	Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register conditions of acceptance; IfATE EQA Framework; OfS EQA guidance for integrated higher and degree apprenticeships; OfS Conditions of Registration (B4); Ofqual regulatory framework for apprenticeship assessments
Equality impact assessment completion date	Not applicable
Data protection impact assessment completion date	Not required
Coverage	DMU Leicester, DMU London