Apprenticeship Assessment Policy 2026/27–2029/30

APPROVED BY ACADEMIC BOARD ON 12 OCTOBER 2026

Applies to:	
Harrogate College	
Keighley College	
Leeds City College	
Leeds Conservatoire	
Leeds Sixth Form College / Pudsey Sixth Form College	
Luminate Group Services	
University Centre Leeds	X

CHANGE CONTROL

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to University Centre Leeds (part of Luminate Education Group) higher and degree apprenticeship provision, which includes that offered within the FE colleges in the Luminate Education Group, namely Leeds City College, Harrogate College and Keighley College.

University Centre Leeds is committed to providing high-quality education and services to all its learners and any potential client organisations. As an apprenticeship training provider, our aim is to ensure high-quality Apprenticeship Assessment for our integrated and fully integrated apprenticeships approved by University Centre Leeds.

The policy will not affect the independence of University Centre Leeds' decisions to make awards relating to underpinning qualifications, except where the design of the programme and the AA are interlinked, for example, integrated apprenticeships, and are therefore reliant on each other. This policy also outlines the roles and responsibilities in relation to AA and quality assurance.

The policy details the need for a clear AA delivery plan for each AA service University Centre Leeds offers, considers the process for appeals to AA decisions (where AA is provided by University Centre Leeds) and considers the requirements of both Internal (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA) as outlined by the Requirements and guidance for apprenticeship assessment (Skills England, 2026).

This policy should be considered and implemented in conjunction with the Quality and Standards Handbook for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships.

2. POLICY AIMS/OBJECTIVES

This policy outlines University Centre Leeds' approach to Apprenticeship Assessments including the processes and procedures for internal and external quality assurance so that University Centre Leeds can provide services for students that are of the high standard that employer partners expect.

2.1. Delivering integrated/fully-Integrated AA services

Where an apprenticeship programme is identified as 'integrated or fully- integrated', University Centre Leeds can act as both training provider and assessment organisation, providing that we meet the conditions of and successfully applies to the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR).

3. DETAILS OF THE SUBJECT MATTER

3.1. Becoming an AO for an Integrated/fully integrated apprenticeship

In order for University Centre Leeds to deliver Apprenticeship Assessments for its own Integrated/fully- integrated Degree Apprenticeships, it must register to join the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations for each Apprenticeship that it wishes to offer within 12 months prior to delivering the AA.

Organisations that wish to deliver any form of AA must be able to demonstrate that they have suitable expertise and are able to deliver AA services and comply with the external quality assurance (EQA) requirements as set out in the External Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship End-Point Assessments for Integrated Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Guidance (OfS, 2023).

In particular, all applicants to the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register must understand the conditions for applying which must be met. The University must assess its capability and capacity in delivering AA provision by demonstrating its expertise and its plan in accordance with the Apprenticeship Standard. The AA Proposal Form provides the basis for an assessment of the capability and capacity relating to each apprenticeship standard and must be completed to support each application and submitted to the HE Quality Team and the Luminate Education Group Apprenticeship Team. This assessment must be robust in order to comply with external quality assurance requirements for AA as set out in the External Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship End-Point Assessments for Integrated Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Guidance (OfS, 2023).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS THE ASSESSMENT ORGANISATION

University Centre Leeds must appoint to the roles of External Examiner (EE), Independent Apprenticeship Assessor (IAA) and External Assessor (EA) for apprenticeships where it delivers the AA.

For full details of these roles in relation to both fully-integrated and integrated apprenticeships, please see Appendix 1.

4.1 Recruitment and onboarding process for Independent Apprenticeship Assessors/External Assessors/External Examiners

Registry is responsible for notifying Programme Manager and Head of Department that an Independent Apprenticeship Assessor and/or External Examiner and/or External Assessor needs to be recruited. All Apprenticeship programmes require an External Examiner, Independent Apprenticeship Assessor and an External Assessor to be appointed.

Recruitment criteria for IAA roles in Integrated Apprenticeships:

a. knowledge and understanding of the standard and assessment plan;
b. knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points to maintain academic standards and assurance of quality;
c. active occupational competence and if appropriate professional registration with relevant professional statutory and regulatory body;
d. familiarity with AA performance criteria;
    - compliance with University Centre Leeds & PSRB (if appropriate) requirements;
e. knowledge to undertake AA activities with integrity and impartiality, offering fair, reliable and consistent assessment;
f. IAAs to be independent of the apprentice, University Centre Leeds or employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship;
g. all IAA appointments are subject to meeting the individual criteria for the individual Apprenticeship standards as set out by Skills England.
h. Re-sits and re-takes will be approved in accordance with the University Centre Leeds Academic Regulations and specific requirements of the AA assessment plan aligned to the apprenticeship Standard (Skills England).

Note: where fully-integrated apprenticeship standards permit one person to be appointed to the role of EE, IAA and EA, this must be specified when commencing recruitment.

4.2 Appeals

Refer to University Centre Leeds' Academic Appeals for any appeals related Apprenticeship programmes. An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student/apprentice progression, assessment and awards.

4.3 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance of AA is:

a) **Efficient** - The process is high-quality, easy to use, cost-effective and facilitates the entry of new employers and University Centre Leeds. To ensure that the right aspects of quality are measured, the right activity is undertaken by the right people, at the right time, and enabled by a digital system that generates actionable Management Information and supports a risk-based approach that is specific to apprenticeship assessment.

b) **Positive** - AA is trusted and respected by employers, apprentices and providers to deliver the right outcomes. The experience is open, transparent and accessible.

c) **Learning** - Continuous improvement is embedded in all areas of the EQA framework to ensure an enduringly proactive and progressive approach to quality.

Prior to delivery, University Centre Leeds will be expected to declare readiness and at this point compliance with any conditions applied at the point of registration will be further checked by the Designated Quality Body (OfS) through technical evaluation of assessment materials and related activities including University Centre Leeds self-reporting; and review of support materials, AA delivery plans, IPEA recruitment and training, and policies and procedures including internal quality assurance. In order to apply to the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR) and prepare for EQA readiness, Programme Managers / Heads of Department must complete the documentation in the AA Proposal Form.

4.3.1 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

The purpose of quality assurance is to monitor assessment activities and ensure that the principles of assessment are met, in line with the relevant regulatory and external quality assurance requirements as set out by the Designated Quality Body. University Centre Leeds will recruit External Assessors to undertake the quality assurance activity.

University Centre Leeds is committed to ensuring there is a standardised approach to internal quality assurance practice. The quality assurance process will be open, fair and free from bias and there will be accurate and detailed recording of all external quality assurance decisions.

a. The QA process monitors and maintains the quality (validity, reliability), transparency and integrity of apprenticeship assessment, in line with the requirements of the Designated Quality Body (OfS) and the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education.

The Quality Assurance process relating to AA including roles and responsibilities can be found in the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook.

4.3.2 External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Each apprenticeship 'Standard' published has a Designated Quality Body (DQB, which is the OfS) responsible for providing External Quality Assurance (EQA). Their role is primarily to regulate and monitor the quality of all those AOs registered for that standard are consistently applying the relevant 'Assessment Plan' and are operating effectively. The DQB require University Centre Leeds to engage in the External Quality Assurance process and will expect evidence and reports from University Centre Leeds to be provided in order to fulfil their role in accordance with the External Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship End-Point Assessments for Integrated Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Guidance (OfS, 2023). Ensuring the quality of AA is crucial and, in order to secure this, three tiers of assurance exist:

a. the first tier is undertaken by University Centre Leeds, using Internal Quality Assurance processes, to ensure that their assessments are valid and reliable;
b. the second tier assures that assessments comply with the requirements of the assessment plan and meet the needs of employers and apprentices, and that these assessments are fair, comparable and consistent. This will be undertaken by the OfS as the Designated Quality Body and supported by professional and employer-led bodies where suitable bodies are available;
c. the third tier is the work done by University Centre Leeds to oversee and assure the quality of the oversight of AA, including a coherent risk management process and the outcomes of EQA provision.

EQA principles include:

a. **Relevant** - The AA is current and genuinely measures occupational competence. Achievement of the apprenticeship is a dependable predictor of success in the occupation.
b. **Reliable** - The AA produces consistent outcomes irrespective of context, cohort, timing or the organisations involved.

4.4 Conflicts of Interest

All assessment decisions made by University Centre Leeds in respect of AA tasks **must** be independent and delivered by an Independent Apprenticeship Assessor with no conflict of interest in the outcome of the decision. A Luminate Education Group Conflict of Interest Policy is in place which requires Independent Apprenticeship Assessors to declare any interest they may have in making decisions for each employer/apprentice so that action can be taken to mitigate the risk of a compromised assessment.

4.5 Complaints

Should an apprentice be dissatisfied with the process, or outcome of the process, they should refer to University Centre Leeds' Academic Appeals for any appeals related Apprenticeship programmes or alternatively refer to the Complaints Policy.

Where an employer is dissatisfied with the process, or outcome of the process, they should first discuss with their contract contact. Should an employer wish to make a formal complaint, please refer to the University Centre Leeds Complaints policy.

5. REVIEW

University Centre Leeds reserve the right to review the policy at any time and will regularly monitor and review this policy, and its associated procedures, to assess the effectiveness and inclusivity of its implementation and outcomes. This aligns with the QAA Quality Code 2024 Sector Agreed Principle 12 – Operating concerns, complaints and appeals processes.

Owner: HE Quality and Standards
Introduced: September 2026
Last review:
Next Review: September 2030

Change Summary		
Version	**Date**	**Summary of Changes**
1	September 2026	First implementation

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Roles and responsibilities

UCLeeds responsibilities in becoming an AO for fully-integrated or integrated apprenticeships

Activity	Lead	Responsibility
1) Applying to the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register and ensuring AA services are delivered	Curriculum PM and HoD (supported by Apprenticeships Team)	Complete the AA Proposal Form and Cost Model Pricing agreed for each assessment task and resits/retakes – as well as rescheduling/withdrawal fees. Academic Board consider the Proposal and Costing
	HE Quality	Once approved, complete and submit an application to the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register – informing Curriculum PM and HoD of the outcome
2) Prepare for readiness in accordance with the External Quality Assurance of Apprenticeship End-Point Assessments for Integrated Higher and Degree Apprenticeships Guidance (OfS, 2023).	Curriculum PM/HoD/Director of Apprenticeship/Deputy Head of Apprenticeships/HE Quality	Develop and agree the monitoring arrangements for an AA Delivery Plan that sets out how and when the services will be delivered – including marketing and contracting (for commercial AA services), recruitment and training of Independent Apprenticeship Assessors, production of sample assessment materials, customer service for AA services, recruitment of an EA. As part of the internal quality assurance processes (see the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook).
	Apprenticeship Team/HE Quality /External Quality Assurance Assurer/Lead Quality Assurer	AA delivery plans are monitored and reviewed. If an associated issue or risk is identified (i.e. if AA plans are not delivered efficiently or of sufficient quality, the issue will be referred by the Validation and Approval Committee and escalated if necessary to the Academic Board where the AA provision may be discontinued)
	Registry/Data and Student Records/Curriculum	Set up ProSolution/SITS/Blackboard programmes with registry to record AA learners

	PM (with support from the Apprenticeships Team) HE Registrar/Deputy Head of Apprenticeships, Lead Quality Assurer, Director of Apprenticeships /Apprenticeship Assessor	Co-ordination (with employers and providers where applicable) of: • Gateway to completion sign off arrangements • Venue booking • AA Bookings requests • AA Booking confirmations • AA event delivery Recruit, Train and support Independent Apprenticeship Assessors and EA's to undertake their roles effectively (IAA's/EA's will be recruited to a standard term of office of 4 years. Record apprentice gateway to completion and assessment tasks appropriately (Blackboard/SITS) IAA delivers the AA in accordance with the AA/Assessment Plan Moderation of activities takes places followed by finalising grading decisions. Hold AA Board of Examiners (Integrated/fully integrated). Fully Integrated AA Boards are usually chaired by the AA. See the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook. Production of an AA report for each cohort to be sent to Curriculum PM and HoD, Apprenticeship Team, employers and apprentices of the outcome of assessments and process any appeals. Arrange and deliver any required retakes and inform Apprenticeship Team, employers and apprentice Record and report the outcomes to the DfE for certification Liaison with External Quality Assurance (EQA) organisations as required.

Fully-integrated apprenticeship standards

For fully-integrated apprenticeship standards where there is an end point assessment, the apprentice is not required to carry out any assessment as part of the AA, and the AA starts with an examination board and finishes when University Centre Leeds makes the required declaration to the Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB). The Designated Quality Body (OfS) specify that a single individual, appointed by University Centre Leeds, should undertake the roles of Independent Apprenticeship Assessor (IAA), External Examiner (EE) and External Assessor (EA).

The IAA role for fully integrated apprenticeships should be carried out in accordance with the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook.

External examining duties for Apprenticeship programmes will be carried out in accordance with the Contract Letter for External Examiners.

For the purposes of EQA monitoring, EA's are required to carry out internal quality assurance processes in accordance with the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook.

The following activities for fully-integrated apprenticeships must therefore be undertaken by the EA:

a. review documentation relating to the AA, including, for example, the AA delivery plan and associated quality assurance documentation;
b. meet with University Centre Leeds staff involved in the delivery of the AA;
c. review documents relating to gateway to completion approval for individual apprentices;
d. attend the AA Board of Examiners at which the final decision on the AA is confirmed, in accordance with the Quality and Standards for Higher Level and Degree Apprenticeships Handbook.;
e. review the process for confirming the AA result with the PSRB.

The EA is expected to conduct at least one visit to University Centre Leeds for each cohort of apprentices completing an AA. Visits do not always require the EA to attend on site and can be conducted online, where it is appropriate and practical to do so without compromising the ability of the EA to undertake their role. The scheduling of activities for the EA should be agreed between University Centre Leeds and the EA and details shared with the Designated Quality Body (DQB), the Office for Students (OfS). This will be monitored by a named DQB Officer appointed by the OfS as part of the ongoing monitoring activity within the EQA approach.

The activities above should enable the EA to provide feedback and commentary to the DQB and University Centre Leeds on AA delivery and, specifically, whether:

a. the AA is delivered in line with the published AA assessment plan for the Standard;
b. any requirements of the Standard (in terms of achievement of gateway to completion and mandatory qualifications and requirements) have been achieved, and that the employer and University Centre Leeds are satisfied that gateway to completion requirements for AA have been met prior to the start of the AA period;
c. procedures and processes are fit for purpose and cover the requirements of the AA assessment plan when applied in practice, including independence of the AA and timely completion;
d. the procedures and arrangements for confirming the final outcome (such as the AA Board of Examiners) are in accordance with the Standard and University Centre Leeds procedures and requirements, and enable valid and reliable decisions;
e. information and data that forms the basis for AA decisions and for confirming the final outcome is accurate and reliable;
f. resources are adequate to support AA delivery and internal quality assurance;
g. the uploading of the apprentice's course and personal details to the PSRB database/register, and the declaration of the apprentice's good health and character to the PRSB, are dealt with appropriately.

Note: Where any of the above activities are not covered, or where the evidence outlined above is not generated by the EA appointed by University Centre Leeds, the DQB will appoint its own External Assessor to visit and conduct these activities. This is to ensure that, collectively, evidence on all the above is obtained and reported to the DQB for EQA monitoring purposes.

Upon successful appointment, for fully integrated apprenticeships only, any individual specifically recruited as the single individual taking on the roles of IAA, EE and EA will normally be contracted to a 4-year term of office. Note, where there are large numbers of learners, the EE and IAA/EA may be separate appointments.

The Independent Apprenticeship Assessor/External Assessor for a fully-integrated Apprenticeship as a minimum should:

a. understand the occupational standard and end-point assessment plan;
b. be occupationally competent and hold professional registration with relevant PSRB (if appropriate);
c. comply to the requirements of University Centre Leeds and PRRB Approved Education Provider (if appropriate);
d. be independent of the apprentice, and the employing organisation who are involved in delivering the apprenticeship;
e. be willing to take on roles of IAA, EA and EE (if required);
f. not have been involved in the teaching or on-programme assessment of the apprentice other than, in their role as an External Examiner (Fully-integrated apprenticeships only);
g. undertake External Examiner duties in line with QAA Guidance on External Examiners/ Expertise for HE programmes (unless a separate EE is appointed).

For Integrated Apprenticeship standards

For integrated apprenticeship programmes Independent Apprenticeship Assessors (IAA) must be a separate appointment to the External Examiner to avoid conflict of interest as the IAA will deliver the AA and the External Examiner has a key role in the internal quality assurance of the assessment. The External Examiner can however take on the role as EA if they are willing to take on the additional role.

- **Role of External Assessor (EA) for Integrated Apprenticeships**

In addition to any University Centre Leeds requirements (should the EA be undertaking external examining requirements for the degree), University Centre Leeds should ensure that an appointed EA can demonstrate that they:

a. are independent from the apprentices, employer, assessors and training provider(s) involved, and from the delivery of AA1, with no conflicts of interest;
b. are impartial in judgement and wholly independent of University Centre Leeds and its staff (including the governing body), and any relevant employers and/or partners;
c. are knowledgeable about, and competent in, assessing apprentice achievement in higher education at levels relevant to the subjects and awards to which their appointments relate;
d. have broad and current knowledge, relevant experience and occupational competence in the area of work related to their appointment;
e. have a high degree of competence and experience in the fields covered by the AA, and have a good understanding of degree apprenticeships;
f. are appropriately experienced in apprentice assessment design and delivery at the level of the award;
g. can assess standards in an effective manner, identify good practice and recommend enhancements to enable informed AA development;
h. have experience in acting as an internal quality assurer or are supported by University Centre Leeds in undertaking their duties, for example, through training and mentoring;
i. have had sufficient experience in quality assurance to enable them to discharge their role effectively;
j. can engage in open and transparent dialogue with key stakeholders within University Centre Leeds to build relationships and provide guidance and support;
k. are prepared to undertake relevant training and continuing professional development;
l. comply with all relevant employment legislation, including safeguarding, as appropriate.

The role of the Independent Apprenticeship Assessor differs depending on whether they are undertaking the AA for an integrated or fully integrated apprenticeship programme. An overview

[1] Unless specified otherwise in the Assessment Plan for the Apprenticeship Standard.

of the specific duties aligned to the role including requests for IAA's to undertake EA duties will be confirmed with upon appointment. IAA's are required to attend initial induction training upon appointment followed by annual training to ensure that quality standards are maintained in accordance with this policy and Apprenticeship standards set out by Skills England.

- **Responsibilities of an IAA for Integrated Apprenticeships**

Responsibilities of an IAA may include:

a. reviewing and confirming evidence regarding AA criteria and guidance;
b. providing detailed, appropriate feedback to support AA processes;
    - confirming independence and impartiality of the process;
    - undertaking a prescribed assessment and grading the completed examination papers/assessments;
    - chairing a presentation panel;
c. determining the AA assessment grade;
    - determining the final apprenticeship grade;
d. attending an initial meeting with the programme team at the start of the apprenticeship programme;
e. appropriate, timely, scheduling of the end point assessment;
f. attending the AA Board of Examiners associated with the listed programmes(s) and confirming successful apprentices with award classifications as described in the relevant AA Assessment Plan;
    - completing Grading Decision Reports and Cohort Reports;
    - contributing to external quality assurance (where appropriate);
g. submitting conflict of interest declarations in line with the Luminate Education Group Conflicts of Interest Policy .