



“Enabling Students to Accomplish their Academic Goal”

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Sampling Plan & Record Policy & Procedure

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Policy Number: LTP5

Version: 4.0

Date: March 2026

Owner: Head of Quality and Operations

Approved By: Board of Directors

Next Review: March 2027

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March 2026

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1. Introduction

Bellmont College is committed to maintaining high standards of academic quality, assessment integrity, fairness, consistency and student outcomes through a robust Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Sampling Plan and Record process. Internal Quality Assurance is a key part of Belmont College's quality assurance framework and provides assurance that assessment decisions are valid, reliable, fair, accurate, sufficient, authentic and aligned with learning outcomes and academic standards.

Bellmont College currently delivers higher education provision through collaborative arrangements with Liverpool Hope University. Belmont College therefore operates within both Belmont College operational procedures and the academic regulations, assessment expectations and quality assurance requirements of Liverpool Hope University where they apply. Belmont College is also seeking Office for Students approval for its own funding arrangements and future institutional development. These developments may affect future processes, regulatory responsibilities and partnership arrangements, but Belmont College protects student interests, maintain academic standards and ensures that students are treated fairly and transparently throughout any transition.

This policy retains and strengthens Belmont College's existing IQA Sampling Plan and Record Policy and Procedure. It also reflects sector expectations relating to assessment quality, external examining, partnership delivery, student protection, consumer transparency, equality, data protection and governance oversight.

This policy is read alongside (*QGP1 Belmont College Quality Assurance Handbook*), (*LTP4 Belmont College Internal Verification Policy*), (*LTP6 Belmont College Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy*) and (*CAP1 Belmont College Student Protection Plan and Policy*).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and comprehensive framework for IQA sampling, recording, monitoring and improvement. The policy explains how Belmont College plans, carries out, records and reviews IQA activity in order to provide confidence that assessment practice is consistent, transparent, equitable and academically sound.

The policy provides assurance to students, staff, Liverpool Hope University, awarding organisations, external examiners, external quality assurers, regulators and other stakeholders that academic standards are maintained and that assessment outcomes accurately reflect student achievement. It also supports continuous enhancement by identifying good practice, areas for improvement, staff development needs and actions arising from assessment and quality assurance activity.

The policy aims to ensure that assessment briefs are appropriate before issue, assessment decisions are checked before results are confirmed, sampling is risk-based and representative, feedback is constructive, records are complete and auditable, and actions are monitored through Belmont College committees.

3. Scope and Application

This policy applies to all programmes, modules, units and assessment activity delivered by Belmont College, including provision delivered through Liverpool Hope University partnership arrangements and provision delivered with other awarding organisations such as ATHE where applicable. It also applies to any future provision delivered under Belmont College's own regulatory or funding arrangements.

The policy applies to all staff involved in assessment design, assessment delivery, marking, moderation, internal verification, quality assurance, academic administration, student support, external quality assurance preparation and committee oversight. This includes Module Tutors, Assessors, Internal Verifiers, Lead Internal Verifiers, Programme Coordinators, the Head of Academic Programmes, the Head of Quality and Operations, Professional Services staff and relevant committee members.

The policy covers formative and summative assessment where IQA activity is required by College procedure, awarding body regulation or partnership requirements. Particular emphasis is placed on summative assessment that contributes to progression, completion, classification, credit or award outcomes.

Where Liverpool Hope University, ATHE or another awarding body specifies particular IQA, assessment, moderation, external examining or external quality assurance requirements, those requirements normally take precedence for the relevant programme. Belmont College ensures that local implementation, communication, student support and record-keeping remain clear, fair and student-centred in accordance with (*QGP5 Belmont College Information Governance, Public Information and Transparency Policy*) and (*CAP1 Belmont College Student Protection Plan and Policy*).

4. Regulatory and Legal Framework

Regulatory / Legal requirement	Relevance to Belmont College IQA sampling and records
Office for Students Conditions B1, B2, B3, B4 and B5	Supports academic quality, effective support, positive outcomes, reliable assessment and sector-recognised standards.
Office for Students Conditions C1, C2, C3 and C4	Supports clear student information, fair complaint routes, student protection and action where student interests may be at risk.
Office for Students Conditions E1, E2, E3 and E6	Supports public interest governance, effective management, accountability, transparency and safe participation.
Higher Education and Research Act 2017	Provides the statutory basis for higher education regulation in England and the role of the Office for Students.
UK Quality Code for Higher Education	Supports sector expectations for standards, assessment, monitoring, partnerships, student engagement and enhancement.

Regulatory / Legal requirement	Relevance to Belmont College IQA sampling and records
Liverpool Hope University academic regulations and external examining arrangements	Apply to collaborative provision and inform assessment, verification, external examining and standards oversight.
Consumer protection law and CMA guidance	Supports clear, accurate, timely and accessible information about assessment expectations, feedback and provisional results.
Equality Act 2010	Supports non-discrimination, reasonable adjustments and fair treatment in assessment design, feedback and sampling.
UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018	Supports lawful, secure and transparent processing of student assessment and quality assurance records.
Office of the Independent Adjudicator Good Practice Framework	Informs fair and evidence-based handling of complaints and appeals relating to assessment or quality assurance.
Awarding organisation and external quality assurance requirements	Apply where qualifications are subject to external quality assurance, sampling, certification, verification or standards monitoring.

5. Definitions and Core Principles

5.1 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Internal Quality Assurance is the in-house process through which Belmont College reviews, moderates, verifies and records assessment practice. It includes internal verification of assignment briefs, sampling of assessment decisions, review of assessor feedback, standardisation activity, observation of assessor practice, action planning and preparation for external quality assurance.

5.2 Internal Verification

Internal Verification is the systematic checking of assessment design and assessment decisions to confirm that learning outcomes, assessment criteria, marking standards and feedback are applied accurately and consistently. Internal Verification is one of the main mechanisms through which IQA is implemented.

5.3 Sampling

Sampling is the planned review of selected assessment materials, learner evidence and assessment decisions. Sampling may be interim, summative, random, targeted or risk-based. It is sufficient to provide confidence that assessment decisions are consistent across assessors, units, programmes, cohorts and assessment methods.

5.4 Standardisation

Standardisation is the process through which assessors and internal verifiers agree on a shared understanding of assessment criteria, grade boundaries, levels, marking conventions, feedback expectations and evidence requirements.

5.5 Core Principles

Bellmont College applies the following principles to all IQA activity: fairness, validity, reliability, transparency, consistency, sufficiency, authenticity, accessibility, proportionality, academic integrity, student protection and continuous improvement. IQA is not simply a compliance activity; it is a developmental process that supports staff, protects students and strengthens academic standards.

6. Policy Statement

Bellmont College maintains a documented IQA Sampling Plan and Record process for each relevant programme or qualification. This process confirm that assessment activities are fit for purpose before use, that assessment decisions are reviewed before results are confirmed, and that action is taken where sampling identifies inconsistency, risk or enhancement opportunities.

Assessment decisions remain provisional until required internal verification, internal moderation, external moderation, external examining or external quality assurance activity has been completed. Students are informed clearly where results are provisional and where final confirmation depends on the awarding body, external examiner or external quality assurance processes.

The IQA process includes the four principal objectives retained from the existing policy: sampling, standardisation, observation and feedback. These activities operate together to assure assessment standards, promote good practice and support professional development.

7. IQA Sampling Plan and Procedure

Each programme or qualification has an IQA Sampling Plan that identifies the scope, timing, sample size, sampling rationale, units or modules covered, assessors, learners, assessment methods, risk factors, action points and sign-off arrangements. IQA Sampling Plans are normally established within six weeks of programme commencement or earlier where required by an awarding organisation or partnership arrangement.

The Internal Verification process includes random and risk-based sampling across delivery staff, units, modules, programmes and assessment methods. In the early stages of programme delivery, or where a programme, assessor or assessment method is new or higher risk, up to 75 per cent of assessment decisions may be sampled. Sampling may later be reduced where there is reliable evidence of consistent assessment practice, experienced assessors, positive previous IQA outcomes and no significant external quality assurance concerns.

Sampling includes a range of grades, assessment outcomes, evidence types and learner profiles. Moderators and Internal Verifiers ensure that all grading bands are represented where possible and that additional attention is given to pass/fail boundaries, borderline cases, referrals, reassessments, extensions, mitigating circumstances, reasonable adjustments and any cases identified as higher risk.

The verification plan ensures that each student's work is sampled at least once throughout their qualification or programme where practicable and in accordance with awarding body requirements. Assessment and verification activities are completed within agreed institutional timelines. Assessors normally provide student feedback within three weeks of submission deadlines unless programme regulations or operational circumstances specify otherwise.

Relevant matters, including extensions, referrals, reassessments, mitigating circumstances and late submissions are recorded accurately and managed in accordance with (*LTP8 Belmont College Mitigating Circumstances Policy*), (*LTP7 Belmont College Academic Progress Procedure*) and (*LTP2 Belmont College Assessment and External Examining Policy*) where applicable.

8. Assessment Design, Internal Verification and Standardisation

8.1 Verification Before Assessment Issue

Before assessments are released to students, assignment briefs, assessment tasks, marking criteria, grading schemes, deadlines, student instructions and evidence requirements are reviewed by an appropriate Internal Verifier or designated academic reviewer. This stage confirms that the assessment is aligned to the intended learning outcomes, set at the correct academic level, clearly written, accessible and capable of generating valid evidence of achievement.

Assessment briefs are not issued to students until required review and approval have been completed. Required amendments are documented and confirmed before issue. This supports student protection by reducing the risk of unclear assessment requirements, inconsistent standards or avoidable assessment disputes.

8.2 Verification Following Assessment and Marking

After assessments have been submitted and marked, IQA activity reviews selected samples of student work, assessment decisions and assessor feedback. The reviewer determines whether marking decisions are accurate, consistent with assessment criteria, appropriately evidenced and comparable across assessors and groups.

Where the Internal Verifier identifies inconsistency, insufficient feedback or uncertainty around grade decisions, additional sampling is undertaken where required. The Internal Verifier requires assessor discussion, grade review, standardisation activity, amendment of feedback or referral to the Head of Academic Programmes or Head of Quality and Operations where the matter is significant.

8.3 Standardisation Activity

Standardisation activity is used to ensure that assessors share a common understanding of learning outcomes, assessment criteria, levels, marking expectations and feedback standards. Standardisation occurs before delivery, before marking, during marking, after sampling, following external examiner feedback or as part of staff development activity.

Records of standardisation discussions, decisions and actions are retained as part of the IQA audit trail and made available to internal committees, Liverpool Hope University, external examiners, external quality assurers or awarding bodies where required.

9. Sampling Methodology and CAMERA Principles

Bellmont College applies the CAMERA sampling principles when designing IQA Sampling Plans. These principles help ensure that sampling is broad, representative and risk-sensitive.

Candidates or learners: Sampling considers learner profiles including mode of study, gender, ethnicity, disability, reasonable adjustments, referrals, reassessment, borderline outcomes and any higher-risk cases.

Assessors: Sampling covers all assessors over time, with additional focus on new assessors, inexperienced assessors, assessors with previous action points or areas identified through EQA or external examiner feedback.

Methods of assessment: Sampling includes assignments, presentations, projects, practical assessments, observations, questioning, portfolios, examinations, online submissions and Recognition of Prior Learning where applicable.

Evidence types: Sampling confirms that evidence is valid, authentic, current, sufficient, reliable and aligned with qualification, module or programme requirements.

Records: Sampling reviews assessment documentation, feedback records, plagiarism or originality reports, standardisation records, verification documents and quality assurance records.

Assessment locations: Sampling includes the main campus, any additional teaching or assessment locations, online learning environments and any partnership or placement contexts where assessment activity occurs.

Sampling may be interim, summative or both. Interim sampling normally occurs during early and middle stages of assessment to identify issues before completion. Summative sampling occurs after marking and before final confirmation of results.

10. Feedback, Action Planning and Assessor Development

Feedback provided through IQA activities confirms whether assessment decisions are accepted, provide developmental guidance, highlight good practice, support consistency and identify any actions required. Feedback is constructive, evidence-based and sufficiently clear to support improvement.

Actions arising from IQA activity are recorded in an action plan. Action plans follow SMART principles: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. The action plan identifies the issue, required action, responsible person, timescale, follow-up date and confirmation of completion.

Progress against action plans is monitored by Internal Verifiers, Programme Coordinators, the Head of Academic Programmes, the Head of Quality and Operations and the Quality Committee. Where actions relate to assessment design, marking practice, staff development or student feedback, they are also reviewed where relevant by the Learning and Teaching Committee and Academic Committee.

Observation of assessor practice is used to review the consistency and effectiveness of assessment, feedback and academic support. Observations help identify effective practice,

training needs, professional development opportunities and risks requiring management action. Observation feedback is supportive and contribute to staff development rather than being used solely as a compliance mechanism.

Where assessor performance, conduct or capability concerns arise, these are managed under appropriate staff procedures, including (*HRP5 Belmont College Appraisal Guide For Employees*), (*HRP3 Belmont College Staff Grievance and Disciplinary Policy*) and (*HRP2 Belmont College Employee Handbook*) where applicable.

11. External Quality Assurance and Partnership Oversight

Bellmont College is subject to external quality assurance requirements from Liverpool Hope University, external examiners, awarding organisations such as ATHE and any future validating or awarding bodies. IQA records are complete, accurate and available for external review when required.

Liverpool Hope University academic regulations and external examining arrangements are relevant where Belmont College programmes operate under Liverpool Hope University collaborative provision. External examiners provide independent assurance that assessment frameworks and practices are robust and that academic standards are maintained. Belmont College cooperates with Liverpool Hope University requirements relating to assessment, moderation, external examining, reporting and action planning.

Where ATHE or another awarding organisation applies, the EQA process may include submission of results, EQA sampling requests, sampling review, EQA reports, identification of action plans, development points and certification decisions. Required documentation may include learner work, assessment records, IQA Sampling Plans, IQA feedback records, plagiarism reports, records of reasonable adjustments and evidence of standardisation activity.

External quality assurance findings are reported to the Quality Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee, Academic Committee, Senior Management Committee and Board of Directors as appropriate. Actions arising from external review are monitored through institutional Quality Improvement Action Plans.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Board of Directors	Retains ultimate oversight of academic standards, student protection, regulatory compliance, institutional risk and the effectiveness of quality assurance arrangements.
Chief Executive Officer	Holds executive accountability for institutional leadership, resourcing and implementation of quality assurance arrangements approved by the Board of Directors.
Head of Quality and Operations	Owns this policy, oversees implementation, monitors compliance, reports through the quality governance route and ensures IQA outcomes inform quality enhancement and regulatory readiness.

Role	Responsibility
Head of Academic Programmes	Provides academic leadership for programme quality and standards, ensures programme teams engage with IQA requirements and ensures actions arising from sampling are addressed promptly.
Programme Coordinators	Coordinate operational IQA activity within programme teams, maintain assessment records and ensure sampling plans are implemented.
Internal Verifiers and Internal Moderators	Carry out verification and sampling objectively, provide constructive feedback, record findings and confirm whether assessment decisions are consistent and reliable.
Module Tutors	Design and mark assessments in accordance with approved criteria, provide timely feedback, engage with verification and implement agreed actions.
Professional Services Team	Maintains accurate student records, assessment submissions, communication records and administrative evidence required for IQA and external review.
Student Support and Wellbeing staff	Advise on reasonable adjustments, wellbeing, safeguarding or support matters that affect assessment access or student participation.
Students	Submit authentic work, engage with assessment guidance, use feedback to improve and raise concerns promptly where assessment information or support is unclear.

13. Governance and Committee Oversight

IQA activity is implemented, monitored and reviewed through Belmont College's governance and committee structure. Committee oversight ensures that sampling outcomes, external quality assurance feedback, student feedback, assessment risks and enhancement actions are reviewed at the right level and escalated where necessary.

Committee / Body	Oversight and implementation role
Board of Directors	Receives assurance that IQA arrangements protect academic standards, student interests, regulatory compliance and institutional sustainability.
Audit & Risk Committee	Provides oversight of institutional risks relating to assessment reliability, regulatory compliance, data handling, external scrutiny and student protection.
Academic Committee	Provides academic oversight of standards, assessment governance, external examiner themes, academic assurance and policy effectiveness.

Committee / Body	Oversight and implementation role
Senior Management Committee	Oversees operational implementation, resource allocation, risk response and completion of significant assessment or IQA actions.
Quality Committee	Monitors IQA implementation, sampling outcomes, recurring issues, action plans, external examiner reports, EQA reports and quality enhancement.
Learning and Teaching Committee	Reviews assessment design, feedback quality, standardisation, assessor development, teaching enhancement and academic support implications.
Recruitment, Admissions and Registry Committee	Supports accurate records, student lifecycle data, assessment submission tracking and operational compliance relevant to IQA.
Student Staff Committee	Provides a student voice route for feedback on assessment fairness, clarity, feedback timeliness and the learning experience.

Where significant risks, recurring issues or enhancement opportunities are identified, these are recorded in departmental and institutional Quality Improvement Action Plans and monitored until completion. The Board of Directors receives assurance through reports from the Senior Management Committee, Academic Committee and Quality Committee.

14. Equality, Accessibility, Student Protection and Data Governance

Bellmont College ensures that IQA and assessment quality assurance processes are implemented fairly, accessibly and without discrimination. Sampling and assessment review activity consider whether assessment tasks, feedback and decision-making may disadvantage students with protected characteristics or additional support needs.

Reasonable adjustments are considered and recorded in accordance with *(SWP2 Belmont College Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy)*, *(SWP3 Belmont College Disability Policy)* and *(SWP1 Belmont College Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy)*. IQA sampling includes cases involving reasonable adjustments where appropriate so that Belmont College can assure fairness and consistency without disclosing sensitive information unnecessarily.

IQA records may contain student names, learner identifiers, assessment outcomes, feedback, reasonable adjustment information, plagiarism information, action records and staff comments. Such information is processed lawfully, fairly, securely and transparently. Access is restricted to staff who require the information for legitimate academic, quality assurance, regulatory or student support purposes.

Records are maintained in accordance with *(BCP5 Belmont College General Data Protection & Regulation (GDPR) Policy)*, *(QGP5 Belmont College Information Governance, Public Information and Transparency Policy)* and relevant awarding body retention requirements. The existing policy requirement to retain Internal Verification and IQA documentation for

twelve years following certification continues unless a longer or shorter period is required by law or awarding body regulation.

Where IQA activity identifies concerns relating to academic misconduct, plagiarism, contract cheating, safeguarding, harassment, wellbeing, data security or maladministration, the matter is referred under the relevant policy, including (*LTP6 Belmont College Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy*), (*HSP1 Belmont College Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy*), (*SWP4 Belmont College Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy*) and (*LTP10 Belmont College Malpractice & Maladministration Policy*).

15. Monitoring, Reporting and Continuous Improvement

This policy is monitored through regular IQA reporting, sampling records, standardisation records, external examiner reports, EQA reports, student feedback, Assessment Board outcomes, complaints and appeals data, quality assurance review and committee oversight.

The Head of Quality and Operations ensures that IQA outcomes are reviewed by the Quality Committee and that significant themes are escalated to the Senior Management Committee, Academic Committee and Board of Directors where appropriate. The Head of Academic Programmes ensures that academic teams implement agreed actions and that learning from IQA activity informs curriculum delivery, assessment design and staff development.

Monitoring activity normally includes review of sample coverage, assessor coverage, student group coverage, grade distribution, borderline decisions, feedback quality, completion of action plans, consistency across modules, external examiner comments, EQA outcomes, student complaints, academic appeals and equality considerations.

The policy is normally reviewed annually or earlier where OfS expectations change, Liverpool Hope University partnership requirements change, awarding body regulations change, external examiner or EQA findings require amendment, significant assessment risk is identified, or Belmont College changes its regulatory or funding arrangements.

16. Conclusion

The Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Plan and Record Policy and Procedure provides Belmont College with a comprehensive framework for assuring the validity, reliability, fairness and consistency of assessment decisions. Through systematic sampling, standardisation, observation, feedback, record management and committee oversight, Belmont College safeguards academic standards and supports continuous quality enhancement.

The policy supports Belmont College's current partnership arrangements with Liverpool Hope University while also preparing the institution for future development as an independently regulated higher education provider. Through effective governance, staff development, student engagement and transparent monitoring, Belmont College demonstrates its commitment to maintaining high academic standards and delivering positive student outcomes.

Appendix 1: Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Plan Template

The following template is retained from the existing Belmont College IQA Sampling Plan and Record Policy and Procedure and is used for accurate IQA record keeping.

Bellmont College Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Plan

Full Qualification Title with Level								
Number of Learners								
Course Start Date from-to End Date:					Internal Verifier's Name			
Unit Titles:	Unit 1: Unit 2: Unit 3: Unit 4:							
Assessor's Name	Learner ID	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	IQA Report Notes	Date any Actions completed	IQA Signature
Final IQA Sign-off and date								

Figure 1: Belmont College Internal Quality Assurance Sampling Plan template.

Bellmont College IQA Sampling Plan & Record Policy and Procedure					
Version	Date	Author(s)	Amendments	Approved by	Next review
1	March 2023	Head of Quality and Operations	New Document	Board of Governors	February 2024
2	February 2024	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised; no updates or changes made	Board of Governors	October 2024
3	October 2024	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised Document	Board of Governors	October 2025
4	March 2026	Head of Quality and Operations	Revised Document	Board of Directors	March 2027