

Centre Approval Report

Centre Approval Report

Centre and Contact Details

Centre Details		Our Contact Details	
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Approval Details			
Date	24 th November 2020		
Duration	0.5 days		
Approval Type (visit /remote)	remote		
Product Type (regulated / unregulated / both)	regulated		
Multi Academy Trust (MAT) details (if applicable)	N/A		

		1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1.1	The Centre's aims, policies and procedures in relation to the qualification are supported by senior management and understood by the delivery team	X					
1.2	There are procedures in place to ensure effective communication systems between all levels of staff and in all directions (including placements and staff who work remotely)	X					
1.3	Staff responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities of the assessment and internal quality assurance team across all assessment sites are clearly defined, allocated and understood	X					
1.4	Time will be allocated for regular team meetings and standardisation for all staff involved in the teaching, assessment and internal quality assurance of the qualification	X					
1.5	A staff induction and development process is in place for the assessment and internal quality assurance team	X					
1.6	There are documented policies or procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeals • Centre Contingency and Adverse Effects (to include withdrawal of Provider approval status and protection of the students' interest in the case of such a withdrawal) • Complaints • Conflicts of Interest • Equal Opportunities • Data Protection Policy • Risk Assessment and Health and Safety (incl. Public Liability) • Learner recruitment, registration and certification • Learner Support Policy/Protocol • Malpractice and plagiarism • Safeguarding • Special considerations and reasonable adjustments • RPL Policy incl. Transfer of credits • Withdrawal of learner or qualifications from NCFE • Admissions and/or enrolment 	X					
1.7	Marketing and advertising of the qualification(s) is clear, accurate and not misleading and, where applicable, complies with our guidelines	X					
1.8	The Centre has in place a robust registration and certification process and will register learners in a timely fashion to allow for external quality assurance to take place	X					
1.9	There is a process in place to notify us of any changes in relation to the delivery of the qualification which may affect the Centre's ability to meet our approval criteria	X					
1.10	Where qualification(s) have been written and developed by the Centre, there is a robust process in place to ensure the content is fit for purpose						X

1.11	Learner records and details of achievements will be accurate, kept up to date and securely stored for a minimum of 3 years and will be made available for external quality assurance reviews	X					
1.12	Feedback will be used to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of qualification provision against the Centre's stated aims and policies, leading to continuous improvement	X					
1.13	There is a process in place to disseminate any actions identified through EQA reviews	X					

Management Systems applicable to registered professions only (pharmacy and dentistry)

		1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1.15	<i>You have a Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedure</i>						X
1.16	<i>You have a work-based supervising registrant in place for each learner</i>						X
1.17	<i>You have a work-based placement procedure</i>						X
1.18	<i>You have a formal agreement in place between the learner, centre and employer/work place.</i>						X
1.19	<i>You have a procedure for checking and documenting learner vaccination (Dental Nursing only)</i>						X
1.20	<i>You have a procedure for checking good character and good health at selection stage (Pharmacy only)</i>						X

Observations and feedback regarding Management Systems and Administrative Arrangements

This centre has specialist school status (physical and sensory) and provides outreach support to mainstream and other special schools. It forms part of The Federation of The St Francis Special School and The Lincoln St Christopher's School and caters for learners between the ages of 2 to 19 with wide ranging special educational needs. These include: physical and medical needs; Autistic Spectrum Disorders; social communication difficulties; and severe and profound learning difficulties.

Many thanks to Nick Wray (Assistant Head Teacher) for providing all of the documentation requested for this remote approval review. The centre has been very proactive in preparing for today and engaged with great enthusiasm in the process.

The centre has been offering the Functional Skills suite in their Upper School with OCR from Entry Level 1 to Level 2 for several years. The main focus within Upper School is to ensure all learners are supported and encouraged in becoming as independent and self-reliant as possible in preparation for moving on to adulthood and senior management firmly believe that Functional Skills help support learners with this transition (1.1). As OCR no longer support these qualifications, the centre is seeking to continue this delivery with NCFE.

Communication in the centre is well planned and robust across the levels with a school calendar detailing key dates planned and published for the academic session. This includes training days; governance, team and standardisation meetings (including Functional Skills) (1.2/4); report submission dates; and parents' evenings. Minutes of team meetings submitted for this review already evidence that Functional Skills is a standard agenda item

The centre has submitted an organisational chart in relation to the quality assurance of the qualifications covered in this approval review which defines the lines of communication and clearly details each role, names its current holder and identifies responsibilities (1.3). The Head Teacher has overall responsibility for this delivery and Rosemary Dyer supports the administration of the qualifications as the centre's Exams Officer, responsible for Invigilators, Examinations, Access Arrangement and Certification. Lisa Penney is the Functional Skills teacher/Assessor, responsible for subject planning, delivery and assessment, intervention and monitoring and data input; whilst Nick Wray will IQA the whole suite of qualifications.

The centre has a very detailed and robust Induction Policy and checklist (1.5) with the Head Teacher responsible for the overall management and organisation of induction of new employees, relief staff, agency staff and volunteers. Induction programmes are tailored to specific individuals but all inductions provide information on training, observation and mentoring. The induction checklist includes as a minimum: an induction timetable; details of help and support available; details of work shadowing, if appropriate; a diary of induction meetings; and details of other relevant individuals with responsibility for induction, such as the designated mentor or supervisor. Safeguarding Children and Child Protection also features prominently in every induction programme.

The centre has submitted the following policies for this approval review, all of which detail specific responsibilities according to job role, including clear accountability and review dates : Race and Equality Policy; Policy for Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education; Admissions; Exams Contingency Plan; Appeals; Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy; Conflict of Interest; FED GDPR Compliance; Health and Safety; School Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy; and Malpractice (1.6). The centre is already very familiar with NCFE's Qualhub.

The centre has a detailed Admissions Procedure and Learner Recruitment, Registration and Certification policies all of which adhere to NCFE requirements (1.18). The centre understands the importance of timely registration of learner with NCFE.

The centre has a very comprehensive website where further policies and information is available. This includes the Upper School Options booklet containing the curriculum offer that is in place at St Francis School (1.7). This will be updated to reflect NCFE's Functional Skills suite following confirmation of approval to run these courses. Any changes to the delivery of Functional Skills will be agreed at senior level who will then communicate this to the relevant Awarding Body (1.9).

Learners' historical data is securely stored via the centre's data system 'Onwards and Upwards' and can be accessed by the schools Data Manager (Stacey Waters). The centre is very experienced in dealing with sensitive personal information and all staff are trained in data protection (1.11).

Senior management have ensured that there is a robust system of performance management in place for teachers and appraisal for support staff and there is a clear link between the identification of targets for staff and the opportunities for staff to develop their individual skills. Throughout the summer term, the Upper School curriculum is reviewed by staff and senior management to ensure that it is still fit for purpose and offers the breadth of curriculum that is required to the current/new cohort of learners who will be based in Upper School (1.12). Rigorous and accurate school self-evaluation ensures that the Head Teacher, the Leadership Team and members of the governing body know exactly what is working well and what needs to be done. Self-evaluation is focused on improvement.

The centre has been graded outstanding by Ofsted in its last three inspections and is very experienced at using feedback from learners, parents, staff, external agencies and awarding/inspection bodies to reflect upon and review their delivery. Dissemination of information is well structured and organised. Responsibility for sharing feedback from EQA reviews will be the Exams Officer's, supported by the Assistant Head Teacher and any actions/recommendations will feed into team/standardisation meetings (1.13).

Section 2: Resources

		1	2	3	4	5	N/A
2.1	There are sufficient competent, suitable, and knowledgeable Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers to meet the demand of assessment and internal quality assurance activities and who are appropriately registered with regulators if applicable and in accordance with Qualification Specification.	X					
2.2	Assessors and Internal Quality Assurers will have sufficient time, resources and authority to perform their roles and responsibilities effectively	X					
2.3	There will be appropriate continued professional development (CPD) provision for staff involved in the delivery of the qualification and/ or registered profession	X					
2.4	Equipment and accommodation used for the purposes of assessment comply with the requirements of relevant business legislation and qualification requirements	X					

Observations and feedback regarding Resources

The centre has submitted a staff structure which identifies who will be involved in the delivery, assessment and IQA of the products being covered today (2.1).

Lisa Penney will be the Assessor for the qualifications. Lisa holds a BA Hons in Religious Studies and a PGCE (Secondary). Lisa has taught at GCSE and 'A' level in a secondary school and has taught/assessed Functional Skills in Post 16, following the OCR Functional Skills Syllabus for 5 years. Lisa works closely with the Exams Officer following JCQ updates and recommendations and previously signed up to OCR updates related to relevant qualifications delivered. Once approved with NCFE, all relevant staff will sign up to the updates that are available and use of the website for resources.

The IQA will be Nick Wray. Nick has a BA Hons in Physical Education, with QTS. Nick has vast experience in curriculum design and implementation and has taught and marked GCSE/A Level qualifications. Nick has experience as a Subject Leader in Vocational Studies and has been the Assistant Head Teacher at St Francis since 2014 with IQA responsibilities under the previous Functional Skills delivery. Nick was also a Local Authority consultant on the Foundation Learning Programme for implementation of the curriculum pathway and developing qualifications with Pearson (2.2).

The centre has identified training days throughout the year which complements the centre's teacher appraisal process (2.3). Appraisals are planned and documented against previous objectives, new objectives and teacher assessment standards (listed within the teacher appraisal document). Training and development needs are recorded as a result of this process and support mechanisms to help the staff member achieve them identified. Any actions are approved by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for the centre's CPD programme. The centre has already committed to attend NCFE training once approval has been confirmed.

As this is a remote review, accommodation and equipment cannot be viewed but the centre has submitted a current Employer's Liability Certificate and the centre has an asset management system that is used to record equipment and resources that the centre has at its disposal. The centre's most recent Ofsted report states that the school enjoys "excellent facilities and provide high quality, individualised provision for all pupils....specialist resources are in place and the environment is appropriate to meet the needs of these pupils. The school uses trampolines, music technology, hydrotherapy and sensory spaces well to develop pupils' skills in a variety of areas." (2.4). The centre has a community nursing team and a range of therapists based in its accommodation.

Section 3: Delivery and Assessment

		1	2	3	4	5	N/A
3.1	There is a planned programme of delivery and assessment methods available for the qualification which meets our guidelines	x					
3.2	Information, advice and guidance about qualification/award procedures and practices will be provided to learners and potential learners	x					
3.3	Learners' development needs will be matched against the requirements of the qualification and an agreed individual assessment plan established	x					
3.4	Learners will have regular opportunities to review their progress and goals and to revise their assessment plan accordingly to meet their target qualification	x					
3.5	Assessment methods will be valid and reliable and will allow access to assessment for learners	x					
3.6	Learners will receive regular verbal and written feedback after assessment	x					
3.7	Assessment records are in place which will show accurate assessment tracking, progress and achievement	x					
3.8	Adequate procedures exist to ensure secure and safe storage of current and completed learner assessment records and examination materials	x					
3.9	There are suitable arrangements to administer exams to ensure compliance with our external assessment regulations	x					

Observations and feedback regarding Assessment

As part of their curriculum offer learners have a total of four GLH of Functional Skills per week (3.1). Learners are taught with a ratio of one teacher to 14 learners and there will be a minimum of two Teaching Assistants per class. The centre has submitted documents relating to the medium-term planning of Functional Skills programmes which detail learning outcomes, objectives, suggested activities and resources.

The centre has a very detailed Admissions Policy (3.2/3). As all learners at St Francis have an Education Health and Care plan all individual needs are carefully managed and catered for. Their working level of Functional Skills is carefully assessed before they start to follow the most appropriate level of course. Before an EHCP is issued, the child or young person will have completed a multi-professional assessment. Parents receive a draft EHCP describing the child's / young person's special educational needs and the various elements of special educational provision required. Accompanying the draft EHCP is a pack of written information including: assessment reports; lists of mainstream schools in the area; list of special schools in the area; information on 'expressing a preference'; information on the LA's transport policies for children and young people with special transport needs; and information on the Parent Partnership Project.

All learners have access to centre policies through their personal school drives. All learners also have access to the Upper School Options booklet that allows them to understand how the curriculum is devised and the choices they are able to make. This is also communicated via a letter in the front of the Options Booklet (also submitted for today's review).

All learners have an A4 folder in which they keep their completed work which is marked by the Functional Skills Assessor. Feedback is provided at group or individual level to support individual progression (3.4/6). Parents' evenings also provide an in-depth update on learner progress. Currently, Functional Skills intervention is timetabled for Fridays, utilising COVID catch up funding to support time missed from education due to lockdown.

All learners have a copy of the relevant level 'I Can' Statements that they are working towards in their A4 folder. Once achieved, each statement is marked with the teacher's initial and date. This is a paper exercise which then allows for data to be inputted at data points throughout the year into the centre's data collection process using 'Onwards and Upwards' to track the progress that is being made (3.7). The centre is aware that they will be required to use NCFE's Functional Skills Tracker once assessments are booked.

The centre will be using the Functional Skills assessments set by NCFE (3.5).

It is the centre's Exams Officer who maintains responsibility for the safe and secure storage of assessment materials (3.8) and password integrity for booking/downloading controlled assessments (3.9) The centre has a dedicated lockable safe that is used for this purpose and only the Exams Officer has access to this. In the event of the Exams Officer not being present when an examination is due to take place, this then becomes the responsibility of the Assistant Headteacher/Headteacher. JCQ processes are adhered to at all times.

All staff involved in the assessment process follow the centre's policy on administering examinations, which is taken and follows the JCQ requirements (3.8/9).

Section 4: Internal Quality Assurance

		1	2	3	4	5	N/A
4.1	An appropriate IQA strategy and sampling plan is in place which will be reviewed regularly and corrective measures implemented	x					
4.2	Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure adequate liaison, consistency and standardisation will take place across all sites including satellite centres	x					
4.3	Allocation of Assessor responsibilities are clear and will meet the needs of learners and Assessors	x					
4.4	Assessors will be provided with accurate advice and support to enable them to identify and meet their training and development needs	x					
4.5	Internal quality assurance procedures and activities are clearly documented, consistent with national requirements and will ensure the quality and consistency of assessment	x					
4.6	Records of internal quality assurance activity will be maintained in line with our requirements and will be made available	x					
4.7	Adequate time will be allocated to allow for internal quality assurance duties to take place	x					

Observations and feedback regarding Internal Quality Assurance

Based on the evidence submitted today, the centre clearly has quality assurance at the heart of its culture to ensure that learners are provided with the best possible experience (4.7). The centre is experienced in allocating appropriate staff to best meet learner need. The centre has a responsibilities flowchart specifically for the Functional Skills delivery which identifies requirements within each role. This includes accountability within NCFE delivery, assessment and internal quality assurance but will be updated with further experience of the processes (4.3).

Within the centre, there are three documented steps for the learner work to be assessed and internally quality assured with the focus on quality and consistency within Upper School (4.1/5). The centre may wish to develop these into an IQA Strategy document. All learners' work is continually assessed and progress is measured with 'I Can Statements' (examples provided) which are linked to the NCFE specifications. 100% of learner work will be quality assured by the IQA and feedback to the Assessor will be provided 3 times a year to coincide with the centre's data assessment collection points (4.4). IQA will occur within Upper School tutor meetings as an agenda item (4.2).

A documented professional discussion regarding the sampling will take place between the IQA and the Assessor (4.6) to ensure that the correct assessment decisions have been justified and agreed (4.1). Any concerns regarding the decisions that have been made with this process will initially be dealt with by the Assistant Headteacher, and any CPD requirements highlighted may be sought at this stage (4.4). If issues with assessment decisions continue, The Headteacher will be involved to action plan a solution which may be through internal or external support and training. Once the centre receives approval, time will be allocated to fully access QualHub for further support and training.

Section 5: Action Plan for Centre

Management Systems		
Mandatory/ Recommendation	Action including report reference:	By Whom & When:
Resources		
Mandatory/ Recommendation	Action including report reference:	By Whom & When:
2.3	It is recommended that the IQA and the Assessor attend one of the NCFE Cache training days on their activity.	Nick Wray
2.4	CPD records in relation to the qualifications covered today will be reviewed during the first EQA visit. The premises and resources are to be reviewed during the first EQA visit.	EQA First EQA review
Assessment		
Mandatory/ Recommendation	Action including report reference:	By Whom & When:
3.5 – 3.9	This is the first time that the centre has requested to offer NCFE CACHE qualifications. As a consequence, it is recommended that at the first EQA review, evidence of planning, assessment, feedback and tracking is reviewed. The centre is asked to plan for and record evidence of all meetings, activities and discussions in this regard.	Nick Wray EQA First EQA review
Internal Quality Assurance		
Mandatory/ Recommendation	Action including report reference:	By Whom & When:

4.1	<p>This is the first time that the centre has requested to offer NCFE CACHE qualifications. As a consequence, it is recommended that at the first EQA review, IQA feedback and records of IQA activity are reviewed.</p> <p>The centre is asked to create an IQA Strategy that includes all IQA/Assessor responsibilities, standardisation processes, internal and external controlled assessment requirements, documentation and sampling processes.</p>	Nick Wray
4.5		First EQA review
4.6		
Action plan devised and agreed with the Centre? Yes		

Section 6: Action for External Quality Assurer or Head Office

	Action Required	By When
External Quality Assurer		
Head Office		
Can the Centre be approved to offer our product(s)? <i>Delete as applicable</i> Yes		
If the Centre is not approved, explain the reasons why?		

Section 7: Additional Information

Please use the space below for any further comments.

Any additional comments regarding the visit

Many thanks to Nick Wray and Lisa Penney for their considerable time and effort preparing for this approval review. I am very satisfied that you have the framework, resources and experience to successfully deliver the qualifications covered today but if you require any support, please do not hesitate to contact me.