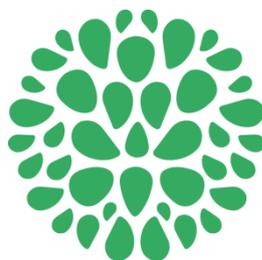




BTEC

Assessment, Internal Verification, Malpractice and Appeals Policy



Aims and objectives of the policy

Aims

Stockwood Park is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding bodies. The way students' work is assessed must serve the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our students.

Objectives

- a) To assess students' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgements and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid.
- b) To ensure that assessment standards and specifications are implemented fully (both in spirit and in letter), so that no risk is posed to the reputation of the awarding bodies or the qualifications we offer.
- c) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-departmental co-ordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer.
- d) To provide student-centred approaches to assessment, which provide opportunities for students to achieve at levels commensurate with the demands of their course.

Range and scope of the policy

The range of the policy covers all BTEC courses offered at Stockwood Park Academy but may well apply to other assignment-based courses should they become a part of the curriculum in future such as ECDL and VCET.

Assessment

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff make judgements on evidence produced by students against required criteria for the BTEC qualification. **All Academy devised assessment materials must be internally verified before being issued to students.**

- a) Completed student assignments will be assessed internally, be subject to internal verification and moderation by the Lead Internal Verifier
- b) Students must be left in no doubt that any grade awarded will be subject to internal and/or external scrutiny, (moderation) and that ultimately the final decision rests with the awarding body.
- c) The Assessor is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, and authentic and that judgement of evidence is valid and reliable.



- d) Students will be given an interim deadline for each assignment brief. Following feedback a new deadline will be set after which the work is assessed and the outcome entered on the Assessment Feedback Form. The assessment decisions are then internally verified according to the procedure outlined below. There is a further opportunity to improve assignments before the final deadline.

Role of the Assessor

The role of the Assessor is to:

- a) Set tasks which allow students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do so that they have opportunities to achieve the highest possible grades on their BTEC courses.
- b) Ensure that students are clear about the criteria they are expected to meet in their assignments and that they are fully briefed on the skills which need to be demonstrated in the coursework/portfolio components of a subject.
- c) Encourage students by giving detailed feedback and guidance on how to improve work.
- d) Set interim deadlines for coursework and advise students on the appropriate amount of time to spend on the work, ensuring it is commensurate with the credit available.
- e) Ensure that formative feedback follows promptly when students submit work.
- f) Adhere to the Awarding Body's specification in the assessment of student assignments.
- g) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate Campus Assessment and Internal Verification documentation. Outcomes will be held secure for three years, by the BTEC Administrator, measured from the point of certification. Associated IV records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort.
- h) Ensure each student signs to confirm that the work is their own and that it is endorsed by the teacher after marking the work. A completed original document must be securely attached to the work of each student and to that of each sample request.
- i) Provide accurate records of internally assessed coursework marks to the Lead Internal Verifier for the programme BTEC Administrator as required.
- j) Ensure that appropriate documentation is kept for non-written assessment e.g. assessments of performance, oral presentations, and work placements

The Role of the Lead Internal Verifier

- a) The Lead Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance on BTEC programmes. The role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards but can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.
- b) Each course will have an accredited Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) who is not otherwise involved in the assessing or setting of work which he or she is asked to verify.



- c) Lead Internal Verifiers will have knowledge, qualifications and experience relevant to the programme for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding student performance in relation to the assessment criteria.
- d) Provision will be made for Lead Internal Verifiers to support one another, to share 'best practice' and to address areas of common concern and interest. This will be achieved through a programme of meetings at which standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses.
- e) The Lead Internal Verifier should:
- Not verify his/her own work or assignments.
 - Ensure that all assignment briefs within their programme are verified as fit for purpose prior to their being circulated to students. They should enable students to meet the unit assessment criteria.
 - Plan with the programme team and publish an annual internal verification schedule linked to assignment plans.
 - Judge whether assessors and assessment decisions accurately meet the unit assignment grading criteria.
 - Ensure that appropriate documentation has been kept by all assessors for non-written assessment (e.g. assessments of performance, oral presentations, and work placements). In most cases, the documentary record of the assessor(s) will provide the basis for verification
 - Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their internal verification process using the Academy standard template.
 - If a concern is raised the LIV should discuss this with the assessor prior to the final confirmation of the marks for all the students taking the assignment. As a result of the IV process it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of students and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all marks or to some marks. This process must be recorded.
 - The LIV should ensure that re-sampling happens where a problem has been identified and should keep records that this has happened.
 - The appointed LIV will complete and successfully pass the accreditation process set by Edexcel for Lead Internal Verifiers for the programme they are leading.
 - The LIV should comply with any quality assurance processes put in place by the Quality Nominee.

Role of the Quality Nominee

- a) To ensure that internal verification is regular and rigorous and that every programme has an annual calendar of IV opportunity.
- b) To ensure that all Lead Internal Verifiers are supported to gain the relevant Edexcel qualification.



- c) To ensure that appropriate CPD is in place to enable accurate assessment.
- d) To ensure consistently high standards of assessment and internal verification to meet the Edexcel grading criteria across all programmes.
- e) To support Lead Internal Verifiers where there are concerns about individual assessors or assignment briefs.
- f) To lead the QRD process and to liaise with the allocated QRD reviewer to ensure the integrity and quality of all BTEC assessment processes at the Campus.
- g) To ensure that programme leaders are providing appropriate support and intervention for students to achieve the best grades possible.

Authentication of Students' Work

- a) On each Assignment Front Sheet students must sign that the work submitted is their own and teachers/assessors should confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the student concerned and was conducted under required conditions.
- b) If the student hands in an assignment and teachers suspect it is not the student's own work, the Academy BTEC Malpractice Policy should be followed.

BTEC Policy on Assessment Malpractice

Malpractice covers a range of offences, which can be collectively described as cheating. Malpractice includes any act which undermines the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage to the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification.

Stockwood Park Academy does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by students or by Academy staff and accepts that Edexcel may impose sanctions on students or the Academy where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven, including withholding the issuing of results or certificates while an investigation is in process.

The Academy aims to be vigilant and pro-active in ensuring that malpractice does not happen. However, if malpractice occurs we will always try to deal with it in an open and fair manner.

Student malpractice

Student malpractice covers a range of offences. The following is a non-exhaustive list and the Academy reserves the right to include any other type of cheating under the terms of this policy.

- a) Plagiarism: taking someone else's work, images or ideas, whether published or not, and with or without permission, and passing them off as your own, thereby not properly acknowledging the original source. This particularly relates to material downloaded from the internet or copied from books.
- b) Copying the work of other students with or without permission and knowingly allowing another student to copy one's own work.



- c) Colluding with other students to produce work which is then submitted individually, except where this is specifically required/allowed by assessment criteria.
- d) Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment outcomes.
- e) Submitting work done by another student as your own.
- f) The alteration of any results document, including certificates.

Preventing Student Malpractice

The Academy will take positive steps to prevent and reduce the occurrence of malpractice by students. These will include:

- a) Using the induction period and the course handbook to inform students of the Academy's policy on malpractice and consequent penalties.
- b) Showing students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Students should not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the student has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
 - The requirement for interim work to be handed in before final deadlines to give a picture of the student's progress.
 - Periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the student.
 - Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
 - The teacher assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of students.
 - Using oral questions with students to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application etc. within their work.
 - Teachers getting to know their students' styles and abilities.
 - Teachers and support staff avoid allowing students to keep exemplar work that might directly influence the outcome of the student's own assessment.
- d) Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent students from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

Investigating Student Malpractice:



There will be an investigation if student misconduct is suspected which may lead to disciplinary action.

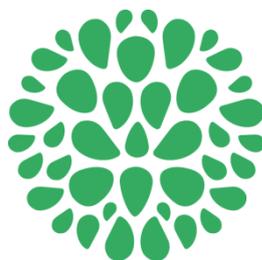
The Academy will seek to maintain fair and open practice at all times when dealing with alleged malpractice and will involve the student or the student's representative in the investigation process.

- a) Students who attempt to gain an award by deceitful means will automatically have their result(s) suspended (held) pending a thorough investigation by the BTEC Senior Management Team (BSMT). The student will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences.
- b) The outcome of the investigation will determine the appropriate course of action to be taken by the Academy. Malpractice is a breach of Academy rules and will be dealt with according to Academy policy for students compromising the integrity of examinations. Any case where student malpractice is found to be substantiated will be reported to the awarding body. The Academy accepts that during the process of investigation, Edexcel reserves the right to withhold results and/or student certification.
- c) If no evidence is found that the student cheated, then the benefit of the doubt should be given to the student and the grade achieved should be awarded.

Academy staff malpractice

The following would be examples of malpractice by Academy staff. The list is non-exhaustive and the Academy reserves the right to include any other type of cheating under the terms of this policy.

- a) Alteration of Edexcel's assessment and grading criteria.
- b) Providing support for assessed work which goes beyond guidance and has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves staff producing work for the student.
- c) Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated.
- d) Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assessment portfolio
- e) Misusing the conditions for special student requirements, for example where students are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- f) Failing to keep student computer and other files secure.
- g) Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.
- h) Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment.



Investigating Staff malpractice

- a) All alleged cases of staff malpractice will be dealt with by the BTEC Senior Management Team. The team will involve other staff as appropriate in conducting the investigation.
- b) If the Academy discovers or suspects a member of staff of malpractice, the Academy will make the individual fully aware (preferably in writing) at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven

Preventing Staff Malpractice

- a) Programme leaders will ensure that staff teaching on or supporting their programmes understand the nature of malpractice, its consequences and how it can be avoided.
- b) The malpractice policy will be made available to all staff and there will be opportunities within teams to discuss its implications for classroom practice.

Appeals against allegations of malpractice:

Stockwood Park Academy recognises that Edexcel has established procedures for centres that wish to appeal against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. The Academy will use these procedures when appropriate and accepts that any appeals process needs to be led by the Principal or the Principal's nominated representative.

Where a member of staff feels they have been investigated unfairly, they may use the campus complaints procedure to appeal to the Principal and/or the Chair of Governors.

Assessment Appeals Procedures

- a) It is the responsibility of the Academy as an assessment centre, to make all students aware of the appeals procedure and give them access to a copy of the procedure.
- b) The BTEC Senior Management Team is responsible for managing the formal appeals process in liaison with the Examinations Officer. If deemed necessary, the Examinations Officer will initiate the Academy formal appeals procedure.
- c) Written records of all appeals with dates of actions taken will be maintained by the Academy. These will include a description of the appeal, the outcome of the appeal and the reason for that outcome.

Grounds for Appeal

A student would have grounds for appeal against an assessment decision in the following situations. This list is selective and not exhaustive.

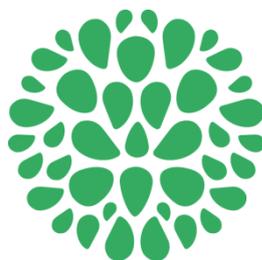
- a) The work is not assessed according to the set criteria or the criteria are ambiguous.
- b) The final grade of the work does not match the criteria set for grade boundaries or the grade boundaries are not sufficiently defined.



- c) The internal verification procedure contradicts the assessment grades awarded.
- d) There is evidence of preferential treatment towards other students.
- e) The conduct of the assessment did not conform to the published requirements of the Awarding Body
- f) Valid, agreed, extenuating circumstances were not taken into account at the time of assessment, which the Academy was aware of prior to the submission deadline.
- g) Agreed deadlines were not observed by staff.
- h) The decision to reject coursework on the grounds of malpractice.

Formal appeal procedures

- a) If, after informal discussion with the course teacher, the student wishes to make a formal appeal, the student must ask the appropriate Lead Internal Verifier, in writing, for a re-assessment. This must be done within 10 working days of receiving the original assessment result.
- b) The Lead Internal Verifier, on receipt of the formal appeal from the student, will try to seek a solution negotiated between the relevant assessor and the student. If it is not possible to reach an agreement, or if the appeal is directly related to a LIV's assessment decision, the LIV will refer the appeal to the BTEC Senior Management Team.
- c) The BTEC Senior Management Team will normally meet within two weeks of the receipt of the appeal, with re-assessment, if deemed necessary, taking place within ten working days of the appeals meeting.
- d) The outcome of the appeal may be:
 - Confirmation of original decision;
 - A re-assessment by an independent assessor;
 - An opportunity to resubmit for assessment within a revised agreed timescale.



Roles & Responsibilities

BTEC Senior Management Team

- Responsible for policy: BTEC Senior Management Team (Vice Principal- Dan Smith, Quality Nominee- Hannah Nelson-Cole)
- Responsible for policy implementation: LIVs, Programme Leaders and Course Teachers

Course Teachers/Assessors

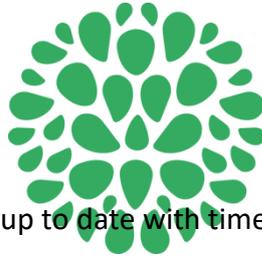
- Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of students and of the qualification.
- Provide students with a schedule of assessment.
- Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform students of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve.
- Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically, using agreed documentation.
- Comply with the Academy and Awarding Body guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following a referral decision.
- Familiarise themselves and students with the Academy Assessment Appeals procedure(s).
- be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation, moderation and verification;
- ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the Academy and Awarding Body;
- record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation;
- Provide special arrangements for students with learning difficulties and or disabilities according to the regulations of the awarding body.

Lead Internal Verifiers

- Verify assignment briefs prior to distribution to students.
- Verify a sample of assessment decisions.
- Develop the skills of assessors, especially those new to assessment.
- Maintain the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meetings with assessors

BTEC Administrator

- to facilitate the IV process;
- Register students with the awarding body before set deadlines.



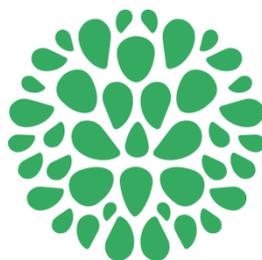
- Ensure that the awarding body data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of students.
- Claim students' certificates as soon as appropriate.
- Claim unit certification when a student has not been able to complete the full programme of study.

Quality Nominee

- Act as a conduit for information from awarding bodies to course teams, and to ensure standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes.

Access to Policy

- a) Copies of the policy will be available via R drive
- b) Student induction programmes and course handbooks will highlight key aspects of this policy.
- c) Training for assessors will be given as part of staff induction if necessary.



Glossary

Assessment criteria – those topics/aspects of a subject area that a marker would expect to be included in the piece of work being assessed including any apportionment of marks to the various elements of an assessment

Moderation – the checking of a sample of students' assessed work in order to confirm that the assessment and marking criteria have been applied so that relative grading is appropriate. Note that moderation is a normative rather than a criterion-referenced process and, as such, does not apply to vocational programmes such as BTEC.

Assessment - where Campus staff make judgements on the assessment evidence produced by students against the required standards for the qualification

Verification - the process by which the Campus and the awarding body ensure that national standards are consistently applied to the assessment of students.

Internal Verification – ensures that assessment decisions are made against specific criteria, are accurate and to the national standard.

External Verifier - A person appointed by awarding bodies to monitor the work of approved centres and ensure the consistency and quality of local assessments

Moderator – one whose role is to ensure that the marker(s) has applied assessment and marking criteria equitably and appropriately.