Ifield Community College

Policies and Procedures for Pearson BTEC qualifications – 2020/21

Rationale

This document outlines policies and procedures for Pearson BTEC qualifications which are not covered in other exams policies or procedures.

Registration, Examination Entries and Certification Policy

Aim:

- To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, Ifield Community College will:

- register each learner within the awarding body requirements
- register each learner on the appropriate programme code, before any assessment activity is completed
- provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- make each learner aware of their registration status
- inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details
- ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- audit certificate claims made to the awarding body
- audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness
- keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

Registration, examination entries and certifications procedures

Regsitration of new learners – start of the academic year

1. Learners entered onto classlists in SIMS by Data Manager (DM);
2. Exams Officer (EO) downloads BTEC registration basedata from edexcelonline.com (EOL);
3. EO creates BTEC registration marksheets in SIMS Examinations Organiser;
4. EO issues marksheets to subject leaders (SL);
5. SL indicates which students are to be registered by ticking against their name on the marksheets;
6. SL returns marksheets to EO by deadline (usually middle October to allow for checks to be conducted before Pearson deadline for registrations, usually end of October. Dates will depend upon Pearson deadline for registrations);
7. EO inputs data from marksheets into SIMS Examinations Organiser;
8. EO generates entry EDI file and sends to Pearson through A2C;
9. EO prints off record of A2C file and files in A2C folder kept in the exams office;
10. Pearson sends confirmation receipt of A2C file through to EO;
11. EO checks edexcelonline.com at the start of the next business week to see if registrations have been made.

Registration of new learners/transfer of learners – during the academic year

1. DM informs EO of a new starter;
2. EO meets with new starter to find out previous courses studied and the name of the institution studied at:
   a. If no BTECs studied at previous institution, EO will register the new learner on to any BTEC courses through edexcelonline.com, continue to step 5
   b. If the student was studying BTEC courses at the previous institution and will be continuing these courses at Ifield Community College, continue onto step 3.
3. EO contacts previous institution to find out what BTECs have been studied;
4. EO transfers the student's registration to Ifield Community College through EOL;
5. EO prints off confirmation report and files in BTEC file kept in exams office.

Top up of learners from one course to another

This is usually done at the start of the year when topping up Level 3 students from a Level 3 National Certificate to a Level 3 National Extended Certificate, but applies to all courses where a student is being topped up from on course to another.

1. EO prints lists of previous year's certificated students and issues to SL;
2. SL indicates on the lists which students are to be topped up and which course they are to be topped up to;
3. SL returns lists to EO by deadline (usually after the October 6th Form census);

4. EO tops up students using EOL;
5. EO prints off new lists of topped up learners and keeps with original marked lists in the BTEC file kept in the exams office.

Learner withdrawals

1. DM to inform EO when a candidate leaves the centre or changes to a different course
2. If the learner was registered during the same academic year and has left the course before 31st January of that academic year EO applies to Pearson for a cancelation of the learner registration in order to obtain a refund for the registration fee
3. If the learner was registered in a previous academic year or the withdrawal happens from 1st February during the academic year of registration, the EO will withdraw the candidate through EOL
4. Learners can only be withdrawn with the approval of the Assistant Headteacher (standards) if they are in years 10 or 11, or the Assistant Headteacher (6th Form) if they are in the 6th Form.

External assessment – written examinations

1. EO downloads the BTEC NQF external assessment basedata for the relevant examination series from EOL;
2. EO creates BTEC exam entry marksheets in SIMS Examinations Organiser;
3. EO issues marksheets to SL;
4. SL indicate on the marksheets which students are to be entered for that series;
5. SL returns marksheets to EO by internal deadline;
6. EO enters data from marksheets onto SIMS Examinations Organiser;
7. EO creates EDI entry file with all BTEC exam entries for that series and sends to Pearson via A2C
8. EO prints off the record of the EDI file and logs the date and file number in the A2C folder kept in the exams office;
9. EO prints record of entered students and gives to SL;
10. SL to double check that the correct students have been entered and that they have been entered at the correct level. If there are any changes:
    a. SL must inform the EO as soon as possible about all changes,
    b. EO will then make the changes on SIMS Examinations Organiser,
    c. EO will then create an amendment file and send to Pearson through A2C, printing off the record of the amendment and recording the A2C details in the A2C folder.
11. A statement of entry is issued to every student. They are to check that they are entered for the correct examinations and that the details held for them are correct. These are then returned to the EO, signed and dated, showing that the candidates have checked their entries;
12. EO arranges an appropriate room, invigilation and seating plan for the examination;
13. EO issues every students with an examinations timetable which they can keep;
14. When the exam papers arrive, EO checks that the correct amount has been delivered and stores the exam papers in a safe in the exams store. If there is a discrepancy the EO contacts Pearson straightaway to inform them;
15. Once the examination has been completed in line with both BTEC and JCQ regulations, the EO will package the completed scripts with the relevant copies of the completed attendance register and send to Pearson using the Parcelforce yellow label service;
16. If the examination finishes after the Parcelforce collection on that day, the completed packages will be stored securely in a safe in the exams store and will be sent with the script packages on the next day.

External assessment – on-screen on-demand examinations

The following process should be completed with plenty of time to ensure that all steps are carried out fully and that the Network Manager (NM) has time to ensure that all computers are working. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for this process to happen very quickly, as long as all steps are carried out properly.

1. SL to contact EO when students are ready to sit an on-screen on-demand examination (OSE);
2. SL gives EO a list of students and preferred dates for the assessment;
3. EO to liaise with the NM and Cover Manager (CM) to check availability of computer rooms;
4. EO books required computer rooms with cover manager. This is done on the basis of one student to every two computers. A maximum of 16 students without a reader can be accommodated in each computer room;

5. EO books OSE on EOL, prints off a copy of the attendance register and creates seating plans for each room;
6. EO emails seating plans to SL, Inclusion Manager and NM;
7. SL informs students of the time and venue for the OST;
8. The day before the OST, the NM assigns the students to each room, prints off the student login details and gives them to the EO;
9. EO creates an invigilation pack for each room. The invigilation pack includes:
    a. the logins for each student
    b. two copies of the seating plan
    c. a copy of the attendance register
    d. a copy of the 'Running a BTEC on-screen test' guide
10. On the morning of the exam, the EO organises the room, puts up approved JCQ notices and ensures that any notice boards are covered;
11. The processes for running an OST are outlined in the document called 'Running a BTEC on-screen test';
12. Once the test has been completed, the NM checks that the test details have been uploaded to Pearson using the Network Manager dashboard;
13. EO keeps the records of the OST in the exams office.

Issuing results and certification

This process assumes that all Pearson and Ifield Community College policies for internal verification of performance have been followed.

1. SL inputs the grades for all internally assessed units onto go 4 schools (G4S);
2. SL then contacts EO to confirm that the learners are ready for certification;
3. EO asks for confirmation from the SL that the grades on G4S are correct and up to date, once confirmation has been obtained the EO continues to step 4;
4. EO enters grades on EOL;
5. Pearson issue certificates at the end of every week;
6. When certificates arrive, EO to check that the correct certificates have been issued. If there are any discrepancies follow process outlined in step 7, otherwise continue to step 8;
7. If certificates arrive with incorrect learner personal details or grades entered, then
    a. EO to send the certificate to Pearson with a covering letter outlining what the correct details should be;
    b. When the replacement certificate arrives, EO to check that the details on the certificate are correct.
8. The certificates are then filed in alphabetical order in a plastic box and kept securely in one of the exams office safes;
9. Overall results are issued to students on the official results days in August:
    a. The BTEC Level 3 (QCF & NQF) results will be issued to students on the same day as GCE AS/A Level results;
    b. The BTEC Level 2 (NQF) results will be issued to students on the same day as GCSE/iGCSE results;
10. Students can collect their results themselves or nominate someone else to collect them.
    a. When collecting their own results, students must sign and date the results record sheet to say they have received them;
    b. If a nominated person is collecting results, they must sign and date the results record sheet and bring with them:
        I. a signed and dated note from the student which gives them permission to collect the results, and
        II. an official form of photographic ID such as a passport or driving licence.
11. All certificates for all qualifications are issued to students at the same time in the December following the end of the academic year. During the first week in December, students come to the exams office to collect their certificates. They must sign and date the certification record sheet to say that they have collected their certificates.
12. If a student cannot collect their certificates themselves, they may nominate another person to collect the certificates for them. The nominated person must sign and date the certification record sheet and bring with them:
    a. A signed and dated note from the student which gives them permission to collect the certificates, and
    b. A form of official photographic ID such as a passport or driving licence.

Stages 9 and 10 also apply when students come to collect their certificates at any time later on in the year.

Assessment Policy

Aim:

- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals
- To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

In order to do this, Ifield Community College will:

- ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- produce a clear and accurate assessment plan at the start of the programme/academic year
- provide clear, published dates for issuing assignments and deadlines for assessment
- assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria
- ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable
- not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late
- develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions
- maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure
- provide samples for standards verification as required by the awarding organisation
- monitor standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required
- share good assessment practice between all BTEC programme teams
- ensure that BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all BTEC staff
- provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with the Pearson Approval Centre Agreement

Planning Assessment

The assessment plan is a working document and as such may need to be changed during the year. The use of version numbers will create a clear audit trail if this happens. Robust assessment plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and be verified by the Lead Interval Verifier.

As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan should include:

- names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- scheduling for assignment hand out and submission
- deadlines for assessments
- scheduling for internal verification
- scheduling for the opportunity for resubmission
- scheduling of external assessments sop that a full programme plan is shown

In designing the assessment plan, the splitting of learning aims/objectives across assignments and/or the provision for extra assignments or tasks to meet the Merit to Distinction criteria must be avoided. Tasks must be written to allow the opportunity for the full achievement of Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria within each learning aim.

Internal verification is a quality assurance approach used to monitor assessment practices and decisions. Dates for this activity to take place for both first and resubmission opportunities should be established and detailed on the assessment pan before the programme commences.

When planning for assessment you should consider:

- unit sequencing or integration – including planning of synoptic assessments
- rules of combination
- values of units selected appropriate to size of qualification
- assignments and projects

- resource planning, such as when to deploy specialist staff
- timetabling, events, shows and trips
- schemes of work
- access to external resources
- planning assignment deadlines across the programme to ensure a continually balanced workload for learners
- feedback from learners and from external sources, such as progression providers
- ensuring authenticity of learner work.

Meeting deadlines

Setting and meeting deadlines for assessment is an essential part of BTEC delivery. Learners should be assessed fairly and consistently, and learners should not be advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments.

Once evidence is accepted for assessment, learners are not to be penalised purely for submitting work late, unless this is explicitly included in the Merit or Distinction assessment criteria and/or the associated assessment guidance. Only the assessment criteria for the units can be used for assessment decisions.

Conflict of interests

Assessment staff may encounter a potential conflict of interest in their work. Examples of these may include:

- A close relation, spouse or partner within the centre who is either a learner or another member of staff
- A close relation, spouse or partner acting as a Standards Verifier or other external quality assurance role

It is up to the individual to disclose an activity if there is any doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest and the college will keep a record of any potential or actual conflicts of interest.

A log must be kept of all conflicts of interest. The log should include the programme details and the names and relationships of the parties involved, along with an outline of the assessment plan in terms of who is delivering each unit on that programme. The log must also note any relationship to any other assessors e.g. line manager, internal verifier etc.

Assessment and Grading

The assessor should decide when the learner is suitably prepared to undertake the assessment and issue the Assignment. Once learner shave been issued with an assignment, it is essential they work independently to produce and prepare their evidence for assessment

Before commencing an assessment, the Assessor should take care to ensure each learner understands:

- the assessment requirements
- the nature of the evidence they need to produce
- the importance of time management and meeting deadlines, including the consequences for late submission
- the importance of submitting authentic work

Before learners start an assessment, the Assessor should:

- be confident they are sufficiently prepared to undertake the assessment and can do so independently
- encourage them to aim at ‘getting it right’ on first submission so they are not relying on a repeat submission or retake where applicable

Assessors are free to design their own Assignment Briefs around their own needs and requirements. Pearson provides Authorised Assignments Briefs (AABs) to save time. These can be found in the course materials section of the relevant specification on the Pearson Qualifications website.

Pearson also provides a free assignment checking service to help ensure that assignments allow for learners to demonstrate the appropriate evidence against the targeted assessment criteria.

Submission of evidence

Only one submission is allowed for each assignment. The assessor must formally record the assessment result and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria.

Each learner must submit:

- evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria
- a signed and dated declaration of authenticity with each assignment which confirms they have produced the evidence themselves.

Meeting deadlines

Deadlines for assessment are an important part of every BTEC qualification. Learners are encouraged to develop good habits around timeliness and preparation that will stand them in good stead in the future. It is important that learners are assessed fairly and consistently and that some learners are not advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments. Programme leaders reserve the right to refuse accept work that is late for assessment but must ensure that learners are made aware of the consequences of ailing to meet deadlines.

Learners may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness at the time of submission. A learner who has a legitimate reason may apply for an extension in writing to the Lead IV of the individual programme, outlining clearly the reasons why they are/were unable to meet the original deadline with supportive evidence, such as a doctor's note, in support of their application. Upon receipt of the written application for extension, the Lead IV must respond within 48 hours with a decision. Any extensions granted must be recorded with the individual programme quality file.

Once evidence is accepted for assessment, learners cannot be penalised purely for submitting work late, unless this is explicitly included in the Merit or Distinction assessment criteria and/or the associated assessment guidance.

Authenticity and authentication

Assessors should only accept evidence for assessment that is authentic, i.e. that is the learner's own work and that can be judged fully to see whether it meets the assessment criteria. Learners are asked to authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment by signing a declaration stating that it is their own work at the point of submission.

Assessors should ensure that authenticity is considered when setting assignments .for example, ensuring that each learner has a different focus for research could reduce opportunities for copying for collusion.

It is important that the authentication of all evidence can be validated. When practical and performance evidence is used, it is important to consider how supporting evidence could be captured using videos, recordings, photographs, handouts, task sheets etc.

If through the assessment process it is found that some or all of the evidence is not authentic, Assessors need to take appropriate actions, including invoking the centre malpractice policies as required.

Assessing the learner work

On receipt of the learner work, the Assessor should:

- mark the work against the requirements of the unit specification.
- formally record and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria on an assessment record
- complete a confirmation statement that to the best of their knowledge, the evidence they have assessed is authentic and is the learner's own work

The BTEC assessment record template captures the learner authentication, Assessor feedback and authentication, supporting you with reducing the number of forms needing to be completed at the assessment stage.

Electronic signatures are permitted on all assessment documentation if there is an audit trail to support its authenticity. The simplest way to do this is via a dated comment on the assessment documentation stating 'Signed: Assessor or Learner Name'. This would be sufficient on its own.

Alternatively, you could validate through:
- an email from the learner/Assessor with the record attached to show that it has been sent from them
- a system log to show that the learner/Assessor has submitted the record

Assessment tracking and recording
It is necessary to track and record learner achievement throughout your BTEC programme. Tracking learner progress, recording the achievement of each learner per criteria on a unit by unit basis ensures:
- the assessment evidence is clearly measured against national standards
- learner progress is accurately tracked
- the assessment process can be reliably verified
- evidence for the safety of certification
- full coverage of the units
- identification of which assessments are outstanding
- the enabling of internal verification
- samples for standards verification and other external audits can be made available as required

Assignments should not be issued until the learners are ready to work independently with no further input from the Assessor.

Marking for spelling, punctuation and grammar
It is good practice for Assessors to "mark" spelling and grammar i.e. correct mistakes on learner work. However, mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless:
- the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of learner understanding
- specific assessment criteria require communication, spelling and grammar and/or the correct use of technical language.

If learner work has consistently poor spelling, grammar or language below the standard expected at the level of the qualification, marking should be delayed before the first submission until the learner has resubmitted work considered to be up to standard. This should be within a given timeframe not considered to provide an unfair advantage to the learner. This may also indicate that the learner is not at the correct level for the programme of study.

Resubmission of Evidence
Because every assignment contributes towards the final qualification grade, learners may be eligible for one resubmission of evidence for each assignment submitted. The lead internal Verifier for each programme can authorise a resubmission which ensures any resubmissions are fairly and consistently implemented for all learners.

The Lead IV can only authorise a resubmission if all of the following criteria are met:
- the learner has met initial deadlines set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension
- the learner has correctly authenticated the evidence
- the Assessor judges that the learner will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance
- the Assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment and the evidence is accompanied by a signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner.

If the learner has not met these conditions, the Lead Internal Verifier must not authorise a resubmission

Procedure for resubmission of evidence
If the Lead Internal Verifier does authorise a resubmission, it **must**:
- be recorded on the assessment record

- state a deadline for resubmission within 15 working days* of the learner receiving** the results of the assessment
- be undertaken by the learner with no further guidance.

* 15 working days must be within term time, in the same academic year as the original submission and must not fall over a holiday period if learners are studying part time, this is equivalent of 15 days of 'study time' to ensure all learners are treated fairly

** Feedback must be received by learners close to the assessment date. It is not permissible for Assessors to retain feedback until the following term for example, just before a resubmission week or at the end of the year once the learner's overall achievement for t the qualification is known.

BTEC Standards Verifiers will require the following evidence when included in a sample:
- evidence of a signed and dated Lead Internal Verifier authorisation, with the resubmission deadline clearly stated
- the original learner work accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the first submission assessment record accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the Assessor
- the resubmitted learner evidence accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the resubmission assessment record, detailing the additional learner evidence submitted, showing any related changes to the assessment decisions and accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- documentation of the internal verification of the resubmission assessment decisions, if applicable

Retakes

Retakes are available for the following qualifications:
- BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Awards
- BTEC 2010 Level 3 Nationals (Legacy)
- BTEC Level 3 Nationals (from 2016)

Please Note:
- Retakes are not available on the BTEC 2012 Firsts due to the fallback Level 1 criteria.
- Retakes for BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Awards are targeted at the Level 1 Pass and not the Level 2 Pass criteria.

If a learner has met all of the conditions listed above in the opportunity for resubmission section but has still not achieved the targeted pass criteria following the resubmission of an assignment, the Lead Internal Verifier may authorise one retake opportunity to meet the required pass criteria.

The Lead Internal Verifier must only authorise a retake in exceptional circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

The conditions for a BTEC retake are:
- The retake must be a new task or assignment targeted only to the pass criteria which were not achieved in the original assignment
- The Assessor must agree and record a clear deadline before the learner starts a retake
- On submission of the work, both the learner and the Assessor must also submit a signed and dated declaration of authentication
- The Assessor cannot award a merit or distinction grade for a retake assignment.
- The learner will not be allowed any further resubmissions or retake opportunities

Retention of learner evidence

Original learner evidence must be kept current, safe and secure for 12 weeks after learners have been certificated. Please note that the 12 weeks starts once the certificates have been received by the centre. Due to the nature of the evidence produced for Art & Design practical work, this can be good quality photos or videos rather than the original evidence.

Current learner work needs to be made available to Pearson on request. On occasion, the regulator may also request portfolios of learner work and assessment documents. For learners undertaking a top-up qualification, the learner work must be retained for 12 weeks after receipt of certificates for the largest size qualification that the learner will be undertaking. Work that has been certificated will not be called for standards verification sampling.

It is a risk to allow learners to keep work long-term while on the programme. Evidence produced by learners still on the programme should be kept at the centre. Electronic archiving is acceptable, providing it is secure and accessible on request.

Retention of assessment documentation

Following learner certification, the following BTEC documentation should be retained for a minimum of three years for centre and awarding body scrutiny as required:

- assignment briefs
- assessment records (feedback sheets)
- the associated internal verification documentation
- achievement tracking at criteria and unit level

This will require:

- storing all assessment records securely and safely relating to both internally and externally set assessments. This may be electronic.
- maintaining records of learner achievements that are up to date, regularly reviewed and tracked accurately against national standards
- having all current learner evidence available for verification purposes. Once learners have received their BTEC certificates, you may return their work to them 12 weeks after the certification date
- retaining records of assessment decisions at criterion and unit level

All assessment documentation should be made secure against hazards like theft and fire, etc. The records should be of sufficient detail to show exactly how assessment decisions were made. Data should only be accessible by relevant staff.

It is essential records are securely kept for a Pearson audit if required and in case of learner appeals or certification issues, for example

Feedback to learners

For BTEC qualifications, feedback to learners is split into three distinct types:

- Teaching and Learning
- During Assessment
- Post Assessment

You will need to ensure you follow the information below to ensure you are providing learners with the appropriate level of feedback during the delivery and assessment of the qualification. The evidence learners submit for assessment must always be their own work.

Teachers providing additional supported learning are already aware of the line between helping a learner achieve their full potential, and doing the work for them, and the framework of rules for BTEC assessment reinforces these principles.

Stage 1: Teaching and learning

The focus of this stage is to prepare learners for the assessment, developing their decision making and personal skills to support their achievement of the assessment criteria.

Providing Learners with Feedback at this Stage

Before starting an assessment, the tutor must ensure each learner understands the:

- assessment requirements
- nature of the evidence they need to produce
- importance of time management and meeting deadlines.

Your feedback during this stage could include:

- Identify areas for learner progression, including stretch and challenge
- Explain clearly how BTEC assessment works and what learners need to do to achieve a
- Pass, Merit or Distinction
- Set "dry run" or "mock" tasks and scenarios to help learners understand what level they have reached and prepare for assessment
- Feedback on how to improve knowledge, skills, understanding, behaviour, approach, grammar etc.

The assessment rules for BTEC do not cover formative feedback, only feedback during and following assessment. Therefore, during teaching and learning you are using your best professional judgement about the nature, quantity or level of feedback.

Stage 2: During assessment

The teacher or tutor must decide when the learner is fully prepared to undertake the assessment. Once learners are working on assignments which they will submit for assessment, they must work independently to produce and prepare evidence for assessment. Teaching teams should also supervise learners when they are undertaking assignment work in class – although the work itself must be produced by the learners themselves, either in or outside class

Providing Learners with Feedback at this Stage

While learners are working on an assessment, you can continue to give general feedback and support, particularly around the development of knowledge, understanding and skills, for example:

- Guidance on how to approach the knowledge and skills requirements
- Guidance on appropriate behaviour and approach, confirmation of deadlines etc.
- Confirmation of which criteria the assessor is targeting
- Clarification of what the assignment brief requires

However, your feedback should not include formative assessment of the specific assignment evidence as your learners are generating it or confirm the achievement of or how to meet specific assessment criteria; this only happens once formal assessment has taken place.

Once we have given learners an Assignment Brief can we offer them any feedback?

Yes. You can give feedback to your learners on their work; however, you mustn't provide them with feedback that would specifically show them how to meet criteria to achieve a higher grade.

Learners must show that they can generate evidence independently using their knowledge, skills and understanding gained through the learning and teaching process.

BTECs are vocational qualifications, designed to help learners become independent workers in their chosen field. So, while it is important to continue giving general feedback and support during assessment, it is not appropriate for teachers and tutors to:

- "coach" learners to produce the evidence itself
- give them a specific list of actions they need to take to meet the assessment criteria or to achieve a particular grade

What resources can learners use when completing their Assignments?

Once learners are working on assignments, they still have access to a range of information to help them generate evidence:

- knowledge and skills gained during teaching on the programme

- handouts and learning resources available for the programme
- the unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance in the qualification specification
- the assignment brief, detailing the scenario, specific tasks, evidence and information sources

Stage 3: Following assessment

Following assessment, the assessor formally records their assessment decisions against individual assessment criteria on the assessment record. The assessment record provides a formal opportunity for the assessor to give learners feedback to support their progression.

Providing Learners with Feedback at this Stage

To help the learner learn and progress, on the assessment record you should give clear feedback on:

- the assessment criteria the learner has achieved and what the learner has done well
- which assessment criteria the learner has not achieved and what was missing
- information or guidance available to the learner they could have drawn on (e.g. class notes; handouts; resources in assignment brief)
- general behaviour and conduct, approach, grammar etc.

However

You must avoid giving direct, specific instructions on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade as this would affect any resubmission opportunity. You can justify why the criteria has been awarded or not awarded but you can't tell the learner what to do to improve their grade.

Remember that a sample of assessment decisions should be Internally Verified before returning the work and feedback to the learners.

When completing the assessment record, do I need to complete feedback for each individual criterion?

Where learners have achieved the higher-grade criteria, it is not necessary to give full feedback on the lower criteria achieved by default. e.g. if D3 is achieved there does not need to be detailed feedback on M3 and P3 that flow into this. You should indicate they have been achieved but the feedback can be given against the D3 criterion only.

Can we annotate learner work to indicate where they have or have not met the assessment criteria?

We recognise that it is good practice to make annotations on learner work during feedback. This helps the learner, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Standards Verifiers identify where evidence towards specific assessment criteria can be found.

However, the annotations must purely highlight where learner evidence contributes to the achievement of a specific assessment criteria. The annotations themselves do not constitute confirmation of achievement of specific assessment criteria; they are merely indicators to where the evidence can be found.

The assessment record should provide summative assessment feedback to the learner so it is clear why that learner has not met the individual assessment criteria but you must not add comments that indicate what needs to be added as that would affect a resubmission.

Forms and templates

The following BTEC forms and templates can be found in the staff only drive under the 'BTEC forms' folder

- Assessment Plan
- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assignment briefs
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Assessment Record
- Record of Activity
- Record of Activity Guidance
- Learner declaration
- Lead Internal Verifier declaration.

Assessment Malpractice Policy

Aims:

1. To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners
2. To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
3. To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
4. To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
5. To protect the integrity of this centre and BTEC qualifications.

In order to do this, Ifield Community College will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- Ask learners to declare that their work is their own
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre / Principal / CEO and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:
  - Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven
  - Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made
  - Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made
- Document all stages of any investigation.

Definitions

Staff Malpractice

"Staff Malpractice" means malpractice committed by a member of staff or contractor (whether employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services) at Ifield Community College, or an individual appointed in another capacity by Ifield Community College such as an invigilator, an oral language modifier, a practical assistant, a prompter, a reader, a Sign Language Interpreter or a scribe to a candidate.

Examples of Centre Staff Malpractice are set out in **Centre Staff Malpractice**. These examples are not an exhaustive list and as such do not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this document. Other instances of malpractice may be identified and considered by Ifield Community College at their discretion.

Centre staff malpractice could involve:

- Improper assistance to candidates
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- Fraudulent claims for certificates
- Inappropriate retention of certificates
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners 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

- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

Candidate Malpractice
"Candidate Malpractice" means malpractice by a candidate in the course of any examination or assessment, including the preparation and authentication of any controlled assessments or coursework, the presentation of any practical work, the compilation of portfolios of assessment evidence and the writing of any examination paper.

These examples below are not an exhaustive list and as such do not limit the scope of the definitions set out in this document. Other instances of malpractice may be considered by Ifield Community College at their discretion.

Learner malpractice could include:
- Plagiarism of any nature
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- Fabrication of results or evidence
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

Plagiarism
There are many definitions of what constitutes plagiarism. All of them agree that plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct, thus a form of cheating.

What is plagiarism?
This is in no way an exhaustive list of the different forms of plagiarism, which can include, but is not limited to:

- copying from another learner
- copying from books
- copying from the internet
- paraphrasing the work or ideas of others without referencing them
- sub-contracting the work to someone else
- submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes.

Ultimately, plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own.

Why is plagiarism wrong?
- It is fundamentally dishonest
- Learners who commit plagiarism are seeking an unfair advantage over other learners
- Learners who commit plagiarism are devaluing the value of the qualification they seek
- It is disrespectful to their Assessor, and a betrayal of their trust.

Activities to minimise the risk of plagiarism
- Explain at induction what is meant by 'plagiarism' and how it will be monitored and policed
- Explain, at an early stage of each course, the concepts of individual ownership of ideas and words, the ownership of electronic material and the difference between 'intellectual property' and 'common knowledge'
- Insist upon the use of referencing bibliographies from day one
- Include an authenticity statement with every assignment brief: learners must sign and date the authenticity statement to acknowledge that the work produced is their own and that they understand the penalties that will be imposed on learners who do submit plagiarised work

- Provide learners with opportunities to discuss any problems they may encounter, support them at each step and provide them with the resources they need to do the work properly
- Ensure that learners are not overloaded by providing them with an assessment schedule, agreed by all of the course team, and then ensure that the team adhere to this schedule.

Techniques that should be used to detect plagiarism
The expertise of individual Assessors is the best safeguard against plagiarism, supported by appropriate technology where available. Learner's work should be checked for:

- the use of unfamiliar words
- grammar or syntax of a standard far higher than that demonstrated previously
- a discontinuous rise in the quality and accuracy of the learner's work
- the use of texts familiar to the Assessor, but without appropriate referencing
- the use of American spellings and unfamiliar product names.

Investigation of malpractice and appeals
If plagiarism is suspected, the investigation process and appeals process are outlined in the BTEC Assessment Malpractice Policy which is supported by the Exams Appeals Policy.

The allegation
Suspected malpractice identified after candidate signed the declaration of assessment
Internal verifiers, tutors and subject leaders who suspect malpractice in an assessment must report this suspicion to their line manager immediately. The head of centre must then submit the fullest details of the case at the earliest opportunity to Edexcel using the JCQ/M1 form; copies can be found on the Joint Council website, (www.jcq.org.uk). Reports in letter format will be accepted providing the information given covers the same points as the form.

Suspected malpractice identified prior to candidate signing the declaration of assessment
Malpractice in a coursework component or a controlled assessment component of a specification discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to Edexcel, but will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure as outlined in **section 3**. Ifield Community College would not normally give credit for any work submitted which is not the candidate's own work, but if any assistance has been given, a note must be made of this on the cover sheet of the candidate's work or other appropriate place.

Candidate appeals
If course or portfolio work or a controlled assessment which is submitted for internal assessment is rejected by the centre on grounds of malpractice, candidates have the right to appeal against this decision. The appeals procedure can be found in **section 4.**

Learner malpractice, plagiarism and other irregularities procedure
- Reported to SLT, HOF and Form Tutor (FT) via the Pupil Information Form (PIF) which is completed by the subject teacher.
- Learner is informed of concerns by FT.
- HOF then investigates the complaint, discusses it with the subject teacher and learner, and makes a decision, which is recorded on the PIF and later kept in the learner's permanent file.
- If the learner's work is deemed to show signs of plagiarism then the work is discounted.
- Learners may have the opportunity to resubmit the work without the plagiarised elements.

Appeals procedure
- Learners can appeal against assessment decisions using the 'BETC COURSEWORK APPEAL FORM' (BCA).Learners must complete section A of the BCA form and pass it on to the programme leader (PL).
- PL speaks to the assessor about the issue
- The assessor completes section B of the BCA for and passes the form and piece of coursework to the IV.

- The IV remarks the coursework, completes section C of the BCA and passes the completed form back to PL. PL separates the BCA and distributes to relevant parties (White: learner's file; Blue: learner; Yellow: assessor ⇨ PL).
- PL makes a decision on the appeal based on the evidence found on the BCA. PL to record the decision on the 'BTEC APPEAL OUTCOME FORM' (BAO).
- If any further action is required this is to be recorded on the BAO.
- PL, learner and assessor sign the completed BAO. PL separates the completed BAO and distributes to relevant parties (White: learner's file; Blue: Learner; Yellow: Assessor ⇨ PL).

How will this be achieved?

By minimising the risk of malpractice	• Ifield Community College: promote a culture and ethos where learners take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others. Hold Assemblies; Parent Information Evenings; induction of new staff; Transition Days to inform learners of the Centre's policy on Malpractice & the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of Malpractice. • Assessors: design activities that reduce the opportunity for students to cheat. • Clear instructions about content and the use of information, course handbook, headers & footers on word processed work, selective use of witness statements, use of citations and bibliographies. • Internal Verifier, Lead Verifier: thorough checks for malpractice • Quality Nominee: to inform Edexcel of any acts of malpractice • Head Teacher: lead any investigation into malpractice
By keeping records of any investigation	**Staff** Records of any investigation will be maintained by the Head of Centre. If a member of staff is suspected to be guilty of malpractice or maladministration it is reported to the Head of Centre and they notify the exam board within 24 hours. This is done through the JCQ Form M2(a). They will submit a JCQ Form M2(b) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com within 7 working days. These records will include signed and dated statements, records of interviews and copies of the final letter describing the outcome. The Quality Nominee will inform centre staff of suspected malpractice of their responsibilities and rights. Penalties: - Suspected malpractice will be dealt with under the staff disciplinary proceedings. In the case of malpractice or maladministration the policy states that the individual will be informed immediately of the process.
	Students Malpractice by a candidate in a controlled assessment, coursework or non-examined assessment discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication need not to be reported to the awarding body (JCQ suspected Malpractice 2018). **Stage 1** If malpractice is suspected by the assessor then the assessor will stop marking the work and return it to the learner unmarked. The assessor will discuss with the learner the content of the assessment. This will ascertain the level of risk. This will happen within 2 days of the work being marked. It is the responsibility of the centre to make the individual aware at the first possible opportunity of the nature of the allegation. This will be completed in writing. They must also be informed possible consequences if malpractice in proven. They will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegation in writing. They will be informed of how to appeal against the allegation. Standard misconduct paper work will be used and kept in student files.

Records of the investigation will be made available for Pearson by the Quality Nominee, where necessary.

Stage 2

If the assessor is not satisfied the work is their own, the assessor should complete the malpractice form after the meeting, showing details of:

I. The reasons for their suspicions of malpractice
II. Details of the student's response and questioning regarding the alleged malpractice
III. The document should be signed and dated
IV. iv. A copy of the work should be attached

Stage 3

Reported to Programme Manager and discussion held between tutor and learner. This should occur within 2 days of initial meeting.

Stage 4

Reported to faculty heads, within a week of initial suspicion of malpractice, with a follow up discussion on severity of case

- Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgement made
- Document all stages of any investigation. A decision will be made by the Quality Nominee and the Examinations Officer regarding the incident and the assessor and learner will be informed in writing of the outcome. This will occur within 2 weeks of the initial incident.

The learner has 14 days to appeal. In the event of an appeal, the Principal will be required to review the case and make a final judgement.

The learner does have the opportunity to submit new evidence but it is accepted as late. Therefore, whatever grade was achieved would be the final grade for that assessment.

Penalties: - Learner given a verbal warning, which is kept on file. Their teacher is made aware. If it continues then they will be given a written warning of which is sent to parents of heads of faculty.

Final warnings are given if malpractice continues and parents are invited to a meeting with the assessor, head of faculty and student manager. This leads to leaving of the programme with recorded evidence kept on file.

When there is a malpractice for an externally assessed unit where is affects the learners assessment outcomes, the Head of centre is required to inform Pearson along with a JCQ form M1 with the supporting documentation to candidatemalpractice@pearson.com within 7 working days however, the incident is initially reported to Pearson within 24 hours.

If the malpractice is to be found after certificates have been issued then we will contact pqsmalpracice@pearson.com immediately. Our Quality Nominee will inform learners of suspected malpractice of their responsibilities and rights.

Penalties for external assessment: - reported to the exam board and it their decision to the outcome of the student. In cases of severe and deliberate malpractice, the individual will be withdrawn from the course and Edexcel advised.

By maintaining a System that is consistent, rapid and fair	Ifield Community College has a responsibility to investigate. The Head of centre, exams officer & curriculum leader and all personnel linked to the allegation will be part of the process. However, the head of centre is ultimately in charge. It will proceed in the following way: • The individual will be made fully aware of the accusation at the earliest possible opportunity, preferably in writing. This should explain the nature of the malpractice and of the possible consequences. This will be done in a fair and equitable manner. • The individual will be given the time and any support necessary to enable them to respond to the accusation • The individual will be made aware of possible sanctions should the accusation be upheld • The individual will be made aware of his/her right to appeal and support will be provided, where necessary, to enable this appeal to be enacted. Any investigation has to be commensurate with the severity of the accusation but is likely to go through the following stages 1. collection of witness statements, analysis of evidence 2. formal interview conducted by Headteacher 3. conclusive report and formal meeting to discuss recommendations and action points.
By applying relevant sanctions	Depending on severity, when malpractice is proven, sanctions for students are likely to be:- • Meeting with parents and internal KA sanctions (copying, impersonation, collusion) • Cross siting (destruction of other students' work) • Exclusion (more serious destruction of other students' work) Staff misconduct will be subject to misconduct procedures
By maintaining the integrity of Edexcel course	Through application of all of the above in a consistent fashion

Internal Verification Policy

Internal verification is the quality assurance system that is used to monitor assessment practice and decisions, to ensure that:

- Assessment plans and schemes of work are in place to ensure full coverage of the qualification
- Assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- Assessment decisions accurately match leaner evidence to the unit assessment criteria and assessment guidance
- Assessors are standardised and assessment and grading is consistent across the programme

It is essential that timely internal verification is planned for at the start of a programme. It should not be shaved until the end of the year. Assignment briefs should be written during the planning and preparation stage whereby their internal verification must take place before they are given to the learners

Aim:
- To ensure there is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in each principal subject area
- To ensure that Internal Verification is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and programme activity.
- To ensure that the Internal Verification procedure is open, fair and free from bias
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

In order to do this, the centre will ensure that:
- where required by the qualification, a Lead Internal Verifier is appropriately appointed for each subject area, is registered with Pearson and has undergone the necessary standardisation processes
- each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective Internal Verification systems in their subject area
- staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures
- effective Internal Verification roles are defined, maintained and supported
- Internal Verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff
- standardised Internal Verification documentation is provided and used
- all centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose
- an annual Internal Verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place
- an appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and Assessors is Internally Verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards
- secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained
- the outcome of Internal Verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

Internal verification of assignment briefs

The internal verifier should check that the assignment brief:
- has accurate unit/component and programme details
- has clear deadlines and an appropriate timeframe for assessment
- has a suitable vocational scenario or context
- shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit/component(s) covered in the assignment
- indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted by the assignment
- clearly states what evidence the learner needs to provide
- is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient

If you plan to re-use an assignment from the previous academic year, you should check that the assessment dates are updated, and that the assignment is appropriate for the new cohort of learners.

You will need to review assignments annually, prior to use, to ensure they remain fit for purpose and to make any improvements based on your experience of delivering and assessing them. This includes the completion of an internal verification record on an annual basis. Instances of plagiarism and malpractice can be reduced when the assessment format is changed annually.

All assignment briefs must be internally verified before being used to learners.

Internal verification of assessment decisions

During the lifetime of the programme, internal verification of Assessor decisions must cover the following as a minimum:

- every Assessor
- every unit/component
- learner work from every assignment
- learner work from every assessment site (for multi-site and consortia centres).

There is not a requirement that all learners must have been internally verified during the lifetime of a programme.

There is no prescribed sample size, but a well-constructed sample should consider the following and use a risk-based approach:

- the full range of assessment decisions made (pass, merit, distinction criteria and not yet achieved), should all be included in the sample if possible
- the experience of the Assessor. New or inexperienced Assessors should have more decisions internally verified than an experienced Assessor
- new BTEC programmes. When a unit/component or programme is first introduced, the internal verification sample should be increased
- the size of the group of learners
- known issues arising from previous internal verification or standards verification activity

Standardisation

When a programme is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation should be carried out before any formal assessment and internal verification has taken place. The aim of the standardisation process is to agree the standard of learner work by discussing and mutually assessing a sample of learner work as a team to reach consensus.

This should be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided by Pearson in the qualification specification. This should be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided by Pearson in the qualification specification.

Once agreement has been reached, the Assessors can then individually assess the work of their learners, after which internal verification will take place.

Standardisation can also be used as a staff development tool and should be repeated at different points in the year as a refresher, as well as at the start of the academic year, prior to assessment taking place. Pearson provide Centre Standardisation Materials (CSMs) for each subject area, which the Lead Internal Verifier can access via the OSCA site on Edexcel Online.

The internal verification of assessment decisions process

The Internal Verifier reviews the Assessor’s judgements against the learning aim, unit/component content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification.

This will include checking:

- the assessment criteria - this represents the national standard and all BTEC learners are measured against it
- the learner work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately
- coverage of the unit/component content in conjunction with the assessment guidance to see if the Assessor has taken this into account. Please Note: It is not a requirement of the specification that all the content is assessed. However, the indicative content will need to be covered in a programme of learning to enable learners to be able to meet the standard determined in the assessment and grading criteria
- the feedback from the Assessor to learner is accurate, linked to the assessment criteria and to confirm the level of feedback provided to the learner is appropriate

Remember
- Feedback should show which criteria have been achieved and which have not, giving clear reasons
- Feedback should not give specific instruction on how to improve the work for a higher grade
- Where learners have achieved the higher-grade criteria, it is not necessary to give full feedback on the lower criteria achieved by default. e.g. if D3 is achieved there does not need to be detailed feedback on the M3 and P3 criteria that flow into this.

Following internal verification, if there are any assessment concerns, timely feedback should be provided to the Assessor with any required actions applied to the whole cohort and not just the learners in the internal verification sample.

Timing
For internal verification of assessment decisions to take place, learner work must have been formally assessed. Internal verification must take place shortly after the assessment decisions have been made and before learners receive confirmation of their achievement and feedback. If any inaccuracies are identified by the Internal Verifier, these must be corrected by the Assessor before achievement and feedback is issued to learners.

Internally verifying resubmissions
If a request for a resubmission is made and providing there have been no issues with the Assessor's decisions at the first submission stage, then the resubmission does not need to be internally verified if the learner's grade has not improved. The Lead Internal Verifier should however check the decisions if the learner's grade has shown improvement, to safeguard against any potential malpractice issues.

Similarly, if the first submissions from learners show only pass criteria achievement and higher grade criteria are awarded for the resubmitted work, then a sample of the resubmissions must be internally verified to ensure that the award of the higher grade criteria is accurate; as this would not have been seen in the internal verification of the initial submissions.

Learner Induction Policy

Aim:

- To ensure that all BTEC learners receive a comprehensive and uniform induction at the start of each BTEC course they study
- To give guidance to subject staff on the required content of their learner induction activities enabling the College to provide a consistent approach to BTEC learner induction throughout all subject areas

Ifield Community College is committed to providing all BTEC learners with a clear and comprehensive induction programme which is consistent throughout all subject areas and qualification levels. It will the responsibility of each individual subject area to decide how they deliver their induction programme, as long as it contains the following information:

- An outline of the type of qualification studied. This may include how it is graded, the resources of the department and progression routes to further studies once this qualification is completed
- The subject content of the different units studied
- The assessment methods used for each unit with hand in and hand out dates for any internal assignments and dates of externally set assessments
- The rules regarding submission of internal assessment, the level of feedback allowed and if/when resubmission is allowed. This could include the forms that must be completed and how to reference any sources of information
- The internal appeals procedure. This can be found in the Internal Appeals Procedure for exams
- What constitutes malpractice and plagiarism

Once completing an induction programme, each learner must sign the Learner Induction Record Form to confirm they have completed and understood the induction. It is the responsibility of each subject to store the signed forms in their programme management folder so that they can be produced if called upon for audit by Pearson during the Centre Quality Management Review.

Blended Learning Policy

Aim:

- To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidance set by the awarding organisation
- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetabled to support blended learning when learners are working remotely
- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear
- Ensure that when learners submit work measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with the Pearson Centre Agreement

Standards Verification Policy

Who is involved in the process?

Quality Nominee

The Quality Nominee (QN) is the appointed member of staff to act as the main point of contact between Edexcel and Ifield Community College. The QN will ensure the effective management of all BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice.

For standards verification, the QN will:

- be the initial point of contact for all Standards Verifiers
- liaise with appropriate practitioners and internal verifiers to ensure that Standards Verifiers are able to carry out their role

Lead Internal Verifier

The Lead Interval Verifier (LIV) is the designated person who has overall responsibility for the assessment of a group of programmes. The LIV is the person designated to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area. The LIV has needs to be accredited by Edexcel, which can be achieved via www.edexcelonline.com using the online standardisation platform (OSCA).

For standards verification, the Lead Internal Verifier will:

- ensure that records of assessment and verification are available for scrutiny by Edexcel
- ensure that current learner work are available for scrutiny by Edexcel
- liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, where required
- sign a declaration to confirm that each learner has declared the sampled work is authentic and valid

Assessors and internal verifiers

The programme team for each subject consists of the teachers or tutors who are responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of BTEC programmes.

For standards verification, the assessors and internal verifiers will:

- ensure the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team
- provide records of assessment and samples of learner work as required
- undertake any actions required as a result of standards verification

No person can internally verify their own assessment decisions, where there is a single specialist practitioner delivering the programme, arrangement must be made for their assignments and assessment decisions to be internally verified by someone appropriately experienced.

Internal verification is the quality assurance system that is used to monitor assessment practice and decisions, ensuring that:

- assessment is consistent across assessors
- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions accurately match student work to the unit assessment criteria
- effective standardisation of assessors takes place

The Standards Verification process

What do I need to send to the Standards Verifier?

- The required samples of learner work
- Copies, not originals – if originals are sent, we can take no responsibility for the safe return of learner work
- Assignment briefs for the units identified
- Internal verification records for the assignment briefs
- Assessment records for the learner work
- Internal verification records for the learner work

- Learner consent declaration for each piece of learner work
- Lead Internal Verifier declaration

For each unit there must be a definitive sample of assessed work covering the whole unit. You should provide a complete sample which can be used to accurately judge your approach to assessment. If the materials are incomplete, inappropriate or appear to not be authentic then the Standards Verifier cannot complete sampling. They will contact you for clarification if there are elements missing, or the evidence is not clearly identified.

How do I get my samples to the Standards Verifier?
Edexcel have a courier service which must be used when sending samples. Full account details and instructions can be found on the Key Documents page of the BTEC website:
www.edexcel.com/quals/BTEC/quality/Pages/documents.aspx

Can samples be sent electronically?
Yes, providing your Standards Verifier agrees. However, you must ensure that:
- you can assure the validity of the evidence
- the evidence covers the assessment and grading criteria fully
- it includes full assessment and internal verification records
- your Standards Verifier is able to access the materials

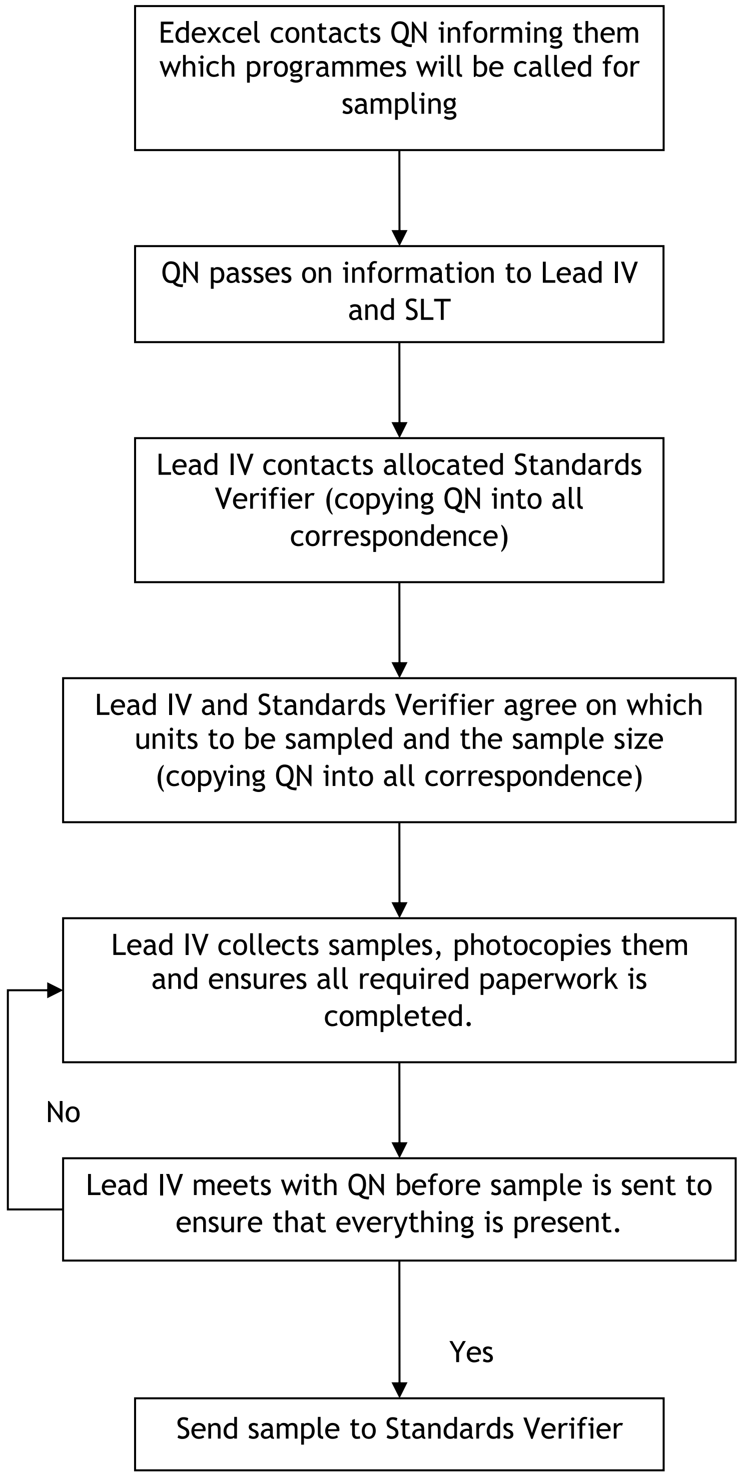
Assessment of practical activities
Many units include practical activities where assessment is recorded through observation statements. Please ensure that an observation form that clearly details the assessment and identifies the assessment and grading criteria achieved is used to record your observations. Edexcel provide a template form on their Key Documents page of the BTEC website: www.edexcel.com/quals/BTEC/quality/Pages/documents.aspx

Standards Verifiers need to be able to independently judge the validity of the assessment decisions and so they need evidence in addition to observation records. This evidence may take a variety of forms such as photographs, video, and audio.

When submitting copies of DVDs, CDs and other recording materials please ensure such materials identify the following as part of the evidence:
- centre name and number, assessor name
- learner name and Edexcel registration
- unit title and number, assessment and grading criteria attempted

You must also provide information on assessment decisions and assessor feedback. These are likely to be provided as paper or electronic documents to support DVD/CD materials.

Standards Verification Process diagram



Employer Involvement Policy (BTEC Tech Awards)

A**im**

- Employer involvement in the delivery and/or assessment of technical qualifications provides a clear 'line of sight' to work, enriches learning and raises the credibility of the qualification
- To ensure a designated lead for Employer Involvement
- requires all learners to undertake meaningful activity involving employers during their study
- To ensure that there is an accurate and detailed recording of meaningful employer involvement for every individual learner
- The contribution of meaningful activities to the qualification must be significant and relate to the qualification as a minimum.

In order to do this, the centre will

- Produce an Employer Involvement plan at the start of the programme that reflects the meaningful activities that contribute to the technical qualification.
- Produce a clear and accurate meaningful activity plan that covers all learners
- Establish and agree milestones with employers to develop, execute and review meaningful activities for learners
- Confirm learner engagement against the defined meaningful activities identified.
- Ensure effective, reliable and accurate tracking / recording of individual learner involvement in meaningful activity in relation to the individual learner field of study
- Prepare the learner to engage actively and positively with opportunities offered with employer involvement
- Develop robust and accurate recording procedures that minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- Maintain a robust and rigorous quality assurance procedure
- Provide evidence for standards verification and quality management review as required by the awarding body
- Monitor SV and QMR reports and undertake any remedial action required
- Share good practice between all Technical qualification teams in reference to employer involvement
- Ensure that all staff teaching on Technical qualifications understand the requirements and importance of meaningful employer involvement.
- Provide resources to ensure effective employer involvement and accurate monitoring and recording.
- A Standardised centre approach to documentation used across the centre for the purpose of employer involvement
- An annual review of employer involvement to ensure that activities are meaningful and appropriate and enhance all future employer involvement
- Secure records of all activities are maintained

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process

Scope of policy
This policy applies to all Pearson BTEC qualifications, including those on the National Qualification Framework (NQF), the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF), Self Regulated Framework (SRF) and other national frameworks in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and self-regulated qualifications.

Policy statement
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment [leading to the award of credit] that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and do not need to develop through a course of learning

RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Partial unit completion is not acceptable. Evidence of learning must be:
- valid
- reliable.

Pearson encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to centres and learners in facilitating assessment. Centres which use RPL must follow these principles and keep appropriate records.

Terminology
RPL policies and procedures have been developed over time which has led to the use of a number of terms to describe the process. Among the most common are:
- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA).

These terms broadly describe the same process. Pearson uses the term Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Amplification
The use and application of RPL is of particular value to learners without formal qualifications, who are either in employment, preparing to enter, or returning to employment. It enables them to gain all or part of a qualification without having to undertake a formal learning programme.

RPL can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised.

RPL focuses on assessment and awarding for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:
- a unit accumulated towards a full Pearson qualification
- a unit or units recognised by a Pearson Certificate of Achievement of a full Pearson qualification.

All evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria. Centres must have personnel with appropriate expertise and knowledge to facilitate this.

Most often RPL will be used for units. It is acceptable to claim for an entire qualification through RPL although this is not the normal practice because it would be unusual for a learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of a qualification's assessment requirements.

The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and ask for the demonstration of skills to check competence. Note that the assessment strategy for each qualification must be adhered to.

Where evidence is assessed to be only sufficient to cover one or more learning outcomes, or to partly meet the need of a learning outcome, then additional assessment methods should be used to generate sufficient evidence to be able to award the learning outcome(s) for the whole unit.

Where RPL evidence is being assessed against graded units only pass criteria can be awarded.

The RPL process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study.

The RPL process does not allow the recognition of any unit or qualification assessed by external assessment only. This is because such units are subject to specific evidence requirements.

Centres wishing to carry out RPL must ensure that:
- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence
- Records of assessment against prior learning are maintained
- Certification claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process.

The RPL process
Ifield Community College has adopted the Pearson model RPL process as outlined below.

Stage 1 – Awareness, information and guidance
Ahead of enrolling a potential learner, the possibility that they may be able to claim credit for some of their previous learning should be raised with them. If the learner is interested in this, they will need to know the:
- Process of claiming achievement by using RPL
- Sources of support and guidance available to them
- Timelines, appeals processes and any fees involved

Stage 2 – Pre-assessment; gathering evidence and giving information.
At this stage the learner will carry out the process of collecting evidence against the requirements of the relevant unit(s). In some cases the development of an assessment plan and tracking document or similar may be required, to support the learner through the process. The evidence gathered will need to meet the standards of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for.

Stage 3 – Assessment/documentation of evidence
Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgments about a learners' prior learning and experience in relation to unit standards. The assessor may be looking at work experience records, validated by managers; previous portfolios of evidence put together by the learner or essays and reports validated as being the learner's own unaided work.

Assessment must be valid and reliable to ensure the integrity of the award of credit and, as above, the evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of unit, that the evidence is being used for. The assessment process will be subject to the usual quality assurance procedures of the centre, for example internal standardisation and internal verification as well as Pearson's quality assurance procedures. Evidenced gathered through RPL should be clearly referenced and sign posted to aid internal assessment and internal and external verification.

Stage 4 – Claiming certification
Once the internal and external quality assurance procedures have been successfully completed, certification claims can be made by the centre. Assessment and internal verification records, along with any additional RPL records completed, should be retained for the standard three year period following certification.

The assessor must ensure that all learning outcomes and assessment criteria being claimed for each unit are achieved and that the records of assessment are maintained in the usual way.

Stage 5 – Appeal

As with any assessment decision on procedural grounds; if a learner wishes to appeal against a decision made about their assessment they need to follow the standard centre policy and procedures and then Pearson Enquiries and Appeals procedures.