

**WREAKE
VALLEY**



ACADEMY

**Wreake Valley Academy
BTEC Assessment, Internal
verification (IV), appeals and malpractice
policy**

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Signed on behalf of the Local Advisory Board

Chair of Governors/Chair of Committee



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BTEC Assessment, Internal verification (IV), appeals and malpractice policy

This policy covers all BTEC courses offered at Wreake Valley Academy. It should always be used in close relation to the Wreake Valley Academy Exam Policy.

1 - Aims and Objectives of the policy

1.1 Aims

- a) To ensure that standards of assessment on all BTEC programmes are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of the appropriate specification
- b) To ensure appropriate levels of care for students studying BTEC programmes at Wreake Valley Academy
- c) To foster a genuine culture of progression against BTEC grading criteria and learning objectives
- d) To facilitate the wider development of our students through encouraging personal responsibility for learning
- e) To ensure that students are fit for study at and appropriately prepared for the next stage of their education

1.2 Objectives:

- a) To assess students' work in line with national standards 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 unit content stated within each specification are implemented fully so that no risk is posed to the national standards that the qualification represents
- c) To establish quality control and recording protocols for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-faculty co-ordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer
- d) To provide learner-centred approaches to assessment, which provide opportunities for student progression against the grading criteria stated within the relevant programme specification
- e) To be in-line with Wreake Valley Academy Exams and Assessment and Marking protocol and policies.

2 - Assessment

2.1 General points relating to assessment:

- a) All assignments issued to students must be internally verified before release using the 'internal verification – assignment briefs' check list. Exemplar student briefs are available.

- b) Completed student assignments will be assessed internally and may be subject to internal verification and/or external moderation by EdExcel 'standards verifier'
- c) Students must be made aware that their work will be subject to rigorous scrutiny in relation to the assignment grading criteria and that their final grade rests with the awarding body.
- d) 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. Assessors can use an observation record pro forma or a witness statement pro forma
- e) Students will be given an appropriate deadline for each assignment. Following feedback, a new deadline will be set after which the work is assessed and the outcome entered on the student study sheet. The assessment decisions may then be internally verified according to the procedure outlined below. There will usually be a further opportunity to improve assignment grades before the final deadline.
- f) All coursework must be handed in on the stated date. If work is handed in late, a decision about whether it should be marked will be taken by the programme leader and fed back to the learner.

2.2 Role of the Assessor

The role of the Assessor is to:

- a) Set tasks which allow learners to display the knowledge and understanding required to meet the national standards as stated in the specification assessment criteria
- b) Ensure that learners have a clear understanding of 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 work generated by the constituent assignments of their programme
- c) Encourage learners by providing regular and detailed feedback and guidance on how to improve their work in relation to the relevant grading criteria
- d) Set appropriate deadlines for coursework and advise learners on the appropriate amount of time to spend on the work, ensuring it is commensurate with the credit available.
- e) Mark and return drafts within two weeks of submission.
- f) Use the specification grading criteria in the assessment of all student assignments.
- g) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation.
 1. Use the Wreake Valley electronic tracking system
 2. Outcomes will be held secure for three years
 3. Measured from the point of certification
 4. Associated IV records must be kept by the programme leader, to support and verify the decisions that relate to learners' work
- h) Ensure each candidate signs to confirm that the work is their own and that it is endorsed by the assessor after marking the work – there is usually space for this on the assignment brief itself.
- i) Provide accurate records of internally assessed work that can be made available to the internal verifier, lead internal verifier, quality nominee or the standards verifier as appropriate.

3 - Internal Verification

3.1 General points relating to internal verification:

- a) Internal Verification is the most significant aspect of quality assurance on BTEC programmes. The role of internal verifier or lead internal verifier is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards
- b) Each Programme will have an identified Internal Verifier (IV) who is not otherwise involved in the assessing or setting of work for the course.
- c) In addition, each SECTOR (Faculty) has a Lead Internal Verifier (LIV), who oversees the work of the internal verification within their sector.
- d) IVs and LIVs will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the qualification(s) and other competence-based award(s) for which they are responsible relation to competence criteria.
- e) Provision will be made for communication between course teams to share 'best practice' and areas of concern. Typically, this will be achieved through an annual meeting of Internal Verifiers at which standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses.

3.2 The role of the internal verifier:

The internal verifier should:

- a) Not verify work generated from assignments that they have assessed
- b) Ensure that all assignment briefs are verified as fit for purpose prior to their being circulated to students. They should enable students to meet the unit grading criteria
- c) Complete the template and make recommendations to the assessor on how to improve the quality of the brief if necessary
- d) Make all IV evidence available to the LIV who in turn will make it available for the 'standards verifier' (old EV)
- e) Plan with the course team an annual internal verification schedule linked to the programme assignment schedule
- f) Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria, reporting to the LIV where appropriate. Use the 'internal verification – assessment decisions' sheet
- g) Verify at least 50% of the sample for National Standards Sampling (NSS)
- h) Verify an appropriate selection of learner work prior to final grading. The amount of work verified is at the discretion of the programme leader and the LIV
- i) Consider alternative methods of moderation/verification as required for non-written assessments (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
- j) Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process using a standard template
- k) Should discuss with the assessor, if a concern is raised, prior to the final grading confirmation. As a result of the IV process (in association with the LIV) it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the grades awarded for the entire cohort of students and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all or some grades

l) Act, where a programme is blocked and re-sampling is necessary, to ensure the work is re-verified by the IV and LIV again before being seen by the 'standards verifier' and records of alterations kept.

3.3 Standards verification

From September 2010 External verifiers (EV) will be known as 'standards verifiers' (SV) and their role will be different:

- a) Much of their pre September 2010 responsibilities will fall to LIV and the QN
- b) SVs will carry out spot checks on centres for quality assurance purposes

3.4 Authentication of Candidate's Work

a) On each assignment students must sign that the work submitted is their own and teachers / assessors should confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under required conditions.

b) If a learner hands in an assignment and assessors suspect it is not the student's own work, the matter should be reported to the LIV for the appropriate sector who, in turn, will work with the QN to apply the centre's student malpractice policy

4 - Appeals

4.1 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 LIV is the first point of contact for a student wanting an appeal relating to assessment decisions

c) The QN is responsible for managing the formal appeals process. If deemed necessary, a formal appeals panel should be set up comprising at least three people, where at least one member is independent of the assessment process

d) Written records of all appeals should be maintained by the QN. These should include a description of the appeal, the outcome of the appeal and the reason for that outcome. A tracking document will be used (see appendix 6) to follow the course of an appeal, allowing it to be time tracked and verified at each stage

4.2 Grounds for Appeal

A student/candidate has 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/candidates
- 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 current Assessment Plan was not adhered to

i) The decision to reject coursework on the grounds of student malpractice

4.3 Formal appeal procedures

a) If, after informal discussion with the LIV, the candidate wishes to make a formal appeal, the candidate must ask the Internal Verifier, in writing, for a re-assessment. This must be done within 10 working days of receiving the original assessment result.

b) The QN with the LIV, on receipt of the formal appeal from the candidate, will try to seek a solution negotiated between the relevant assessor and the candidate.

c) If it is not possible to reach an agreement, the Head of Faculty and the Internal Verifier will set a date for the Internal Verification Appeals Panel to meet.

d) The Internal Verification Appeals Panel will normally meet within 2 weeks of the receipt of the appeal by the LIV, with re-assessment, if deemed necessary by the panel, taking place within 15 working days of the appeals panel meeting.

e) The outcome of the appeal may be:

I. Confirmation of original decision;

II. A re-assessment by an independent assessor;

III. An opportunity to resubmit for assessment within a revised agreed timescale.

5 - Malpractice

5.1 Student Malpractice

The following list is not exhaustive. Wreake Valley Academy reserves the right to include any other type of malpractice under the terms of this policy.

a) Plagiarism: taking someone else's work, images or ideas, whether published or not, and with or without their 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 their permission and knowingly, allowing another student to copy one's own work.

c) Colluding with other students to produce work, then submitted individually - except where this is specifically required/allowed by the 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.

5.2 Preventing Student Malpractice

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

- a) Using the programme 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 or reinterpreted appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, eg plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
 - I. The requirement for interim work to be handed in before final deadlines to give a picture of the student's progress.
 - II. Periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the student.
 - III. Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
 - IV. The assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of students.
 - V. Using oral questions with students to ascertain their understanding of the concepts, application, etc. within their work.
 - VI. Assessors getting to know their students' styles and abilities.
- d) Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent students from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.

5.3 Investigating Student Malpractice

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

- a) Learners who attempt to gain an award by deceitful means will automatically have their result(s) suspended (held) pending a thorough investigation by the sector LIV, the QN and appropriate members of the Academy's SMT. The learner 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 clear breach of Academy rules and may invoke further student disciplinary policies or procedures. Any case where student malpractice is found to be substantiated will be reported to the awarding body and may have further consequences for the student.
- c) If no evidence is found that student malpractice has taken place, then the benefit of the doubt should be given and the grade achieved should be awarded.

5.4 Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by Academy staff. This list is not exhaustive.

- a) Failure to keep any awarding body mark schemes secure
- b) Alteration of awarding body assessment and grading criteria
- c) Assisting students 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 Academy staff producing work for the student
- d) Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated
- e) Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework

- f) Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- g) Misusing the conditions for special student requirements,
- h) Failing to keep student computer files secure
- i) Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- j) Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment

Where staff malpractice is suspected, an investigation will revert to staff disciplinary procedures. Draft for review: October 2013

6 - Responsibilities

- Responsible for Policy: QN
- Responsible for implementation:
 - QN
 - Programme leaders
 - Course Assessors,
 - IVs
 - LIVs

6.1 Assessors are responsible for:

- a) Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of students and of the qualification;
- b) Provide students with a schedule of assessment;
- c) Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform students of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve.
- d) Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and using agreed systems for recording
- e) Comply with centre guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following an appeal decision
- f) Familiarise themselves and learners with the Academy Assessment Appeals procedure(s);
- g) Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation,
- h) Provide special arrangements for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities according to the regulations of the awarding body.

6.2 Programme leaders are responsible for:

- a) Meeting the deadlines for registering learners with the awarding body
- b) Be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation, moderation and verification;
- c) To ensure that awarding body data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of learners

d) To claim unit certification when a learner has not been able to complete the full programme of study.

6.3 Internal verifiers are responsible for:

- a) Verifying assignment briefs prior to distribution to learners
- b) Verifying a sample of assessment decisions

6.4 Lead Internal verifiers are responsible for:

- a) To responsible for quality assurance within their sector
- b) To facilitate the IV process within their sector
- c) Developing the skills of assessors, especially those new to assessment.
- d) Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the Academy and the awarding body.
- e) Maintaining the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meeting of assessors and IVs

6.5 The Quality Nominee is responsible for:

- a) Acting as a conduit for information from awarding bodies to course teams
- b) Ensuring the standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes
- c) Taking responsibility for quality assurance across all BTEC qualifications delivered by Wreake Valley Academy
- d) Maintaining dialogue with appropriate members of the SLG with responsibility for curriculum

7 - Access to this Policy

- a) Copies of the policy will be available via the Wreake Valley intranet and VLE.
- b) Student induction programmes and course handbooks will highlight key aspects of this policy.

Governors will monitor and review the implementation and development of this policy.