



## **BTEC - ASSESSMENT POLICY AND ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE** **- FOR STAFF**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Halesbury Special School takes its responsibility for ensuring the quality and reliability of assessment very seriously. It recognises that high quality assessment practices are an important element of the student experience and that the outcomes of assessment influence students' future lives.

This policy and procedure relates to the following BTEC programmes:

- BTEC level 1 Vocational Studies Introductory Diploma
- BTEC level 1 Jamie Oliver Home Cooking Skill Award

The BTEC qualification is a vocational qualification that involves a learning and assessment style that is different to traditional GCSE and A Level courses. Courses are assessed through teacher-marked assignments rather than end-of-module exams. Students should be aware of the volume of work that needs to be generated on an on-going basis to complete these assignments and the importance of getting that work handed in for assessment by the given deadline.

### **2. ASSESSMENT ENTITLEMENT**

Students of Halesbury Special School are entitled to:

- Fair and open assessment practices in line with the Schools Equal Opportunities policy for learners
- An Assignment Brief indicating the criteria against which they will be assessed.
- Regular advice, counselling and guidance through teachers.
- Access to an open and fair appeals procedure.
- Assessments being carried out regularly and outcomes reported within 2 weeks (10 working days), with written and/or verbal feedback.

### **3. ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES**

#### **3.1 Submitting Assignments**

It is recommended that each unit is assessed through a number of different assignments. Students are given a hand-in date for each assignment. Staff are required to mark assignments and provide students with feedback within 2 weeks. The feedback must be sufficient to give clear information on achievement and how to improve, following the marking and feedback policy.

#### **3.2 Failure to meet deadlines**

Students who fail to hand in work by the agreed deadline will be required to provide evidence of extenuating circumstances e.g. doctor's certificate. In the event of extenuating circumstances resulting on behalf of the centre e.g. Fire at site, loss of ICT availability or key facilities being unavailable the deadline maybe extended as to not unfairly disadvantage the students.

This may only be done with the Head of Centre and Quality nominees authorisation. The new deadline follows the above policy is the pupil fails to meet this deadline.

Failure to do so may result in the student's failure to meet all criteria required to pass the course.

### **3.4 Recording Progress**

Staff are required to record student grades on a grade tracking sheet kept within the student's folders within two weeks (10 working days) of the assignment being completed.

### **3.5 Academic misconduct and plagiarism**

It is the responsibility of assessors to explain what constitutes plagiarism in their courses and the seriousness of the issue.

Teachers should be on the lookout for plagiarism and run internet checks etc to guard against it. Students need to know that this will be done. Students will need to develop the habit of acknowledging sources through footnotes and bibliographies, lists of sources and acknowledgement of assistance.

Awarding Body regulations on academic misconduct and plagiarism will be followed. All coursework must be authenticated as original by the student and the teacher. The School cannot authenticate work it does not believe to be original.

If a teacher suspects plagiarism or academic misconduct has taken place it must be acted upon. The Quality nominee and Head of Centre should be informed.

The Programme Leaders for the BTEC courses are as follows:

- BTEC level 1 Vocational Studies Introductory Diploma – Mr Allsop
- BTEC level 1 Jamie Oliver Home Cooking Skill Award – Mr Allsop

If plagiarism or academic misconduct is discovered prior to the date for final entry, the assessor should resolve the matter internally and, in consultation with the Programme Leader, decide whether or not to submit work for that unit.

Where work leans too heavily on a source but stops short of plagiarism this should be reflected in the mark awarded and the comments made on the work.

If plagiarism is detected early enough it may be possible to submit a replacement assignment, but none of the work which contributed to the misconduct must be submitted.

If plagiarism is discovered at a late stage and the work of a student cannot be authenticated, then no mark should be given for that work and no work will be submitted for that unit or part of a unit. Where possible a meeting with the student should take place and the student will be informed of the appeals procedure. A letter will go to the student and to their parents with a copy placed on file in the file located inside the safe room.

Serious assessment malpractice will be dealt with by the Quality Nominee and Head of Centre (Head Teacher) or the Assistant Head (On appointment) and this will be reported to Edexcel/Pearson.

## **4. APPEALS PROCEDURE**

In the event of a student wishing to make an appeal against an assessment decision, the following steps must be followed:-

- Within 3 days the student must contact the assessor to arrange an informal meeting to discuss the assessment decision.
- If the student is still dissatisfied, then he / she may appeal to the Programme Leader.
- This will allow the student to put forward reasons why his / her assignment should be reassessed. This should be done within 3 days of meeting with the assessor.
- The assignment will be reassessed by an Internal Verifier (Mr Smart) who will provide the student with feedback within one working week.
- If the student is still dissatisfied, then he / she may appeal to the External Verifier via the Head of Centre (Head Teacher).

### **4.1 Grounds for Appeal**

Appeals may be made under the following circumstances:

- If a student has substantial evidence that work has been incorrectly marked.
- If there is a material error in the case of reassessment.
- If the student has any personal circumstances which may have affected his / her ability to complete assignments and meet deadlines.

## **5. ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1 Assessment Aims**

The purpose of assessment within BTEC programmes is:

- To identify the positive achievements of each student and the areas of their work that need to be improved. This involves both formative and summative assessment.
- To further identify learning and additional support needs so that appropriate help and guidance can be provided.
- To enable the tutor and student to know how the quality of a student's work relates to the standards of external awarding bodies.
- To inform the process by which students set targets for attainment.
- To allow teachers to evaluate students' understanding and progress and decide whether the way in which the course is taught and managed needs refinement or modification.

### **5.2 Assessment Processes**

Assessment processes will aim to promote learning and achievement of all learners from entry, through to on-programme and achievement.

The Assessor is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and that judgement of evidence is valid and reliable.

The role of the Teacher / Assessor is to: -

- Ensure that learners are fully briefed on assessment methods and procedures including Student Appeals Procedures and guidance on what constitutes plagiarism.
- Involve learners in the assessment planning process and agreement of assessment deadlines.

- Provide constructive feedback to learners on assessments (conveying levels of achievement using awarding body criteria / grading); discuss targets and areas for development on an individual basis.
- Adhere to the Awarding Body's assessment specification in the judgement of evidence towards an award.
- Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation.

Each unit is assessed using the grading grid and grading criteria at Pass, Merit and Distinction. There is also an overall qualification grade calculated from the unit grades. To achieve the BTEC all units have to be achieved at least to Pass level.

## **6. INTERNAL VERIFICATION – LEAD INTERNAL VERIFIER**

The Lead Internal Verifier (Mr Smart) is at the heart of quality assurance in all programmes. The role, in terms of managing assessment, is that it consistently meets national standards.

Lead Internal Verifier will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the vocational qualification for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria. They will be required to complete the training and exam set by Edexcel in order to carry out the role of the Lead Internal Verifier.

Internal Verification will be carried out by using the revised national standards: -

- Carrying out and evaluating internal assessment and quality assurance systems.
- Supporting assessors.
- Monitoring the quality of assessors' performance.
- Meeting external quality assurance requirements.

## **7. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNAL VERIFICATION (IV)**

### **7.1 Verification of Assessment Decisions:**

- Students work will be marked by unit / assignment tutor (in the case of a unit / assignment having more than one tutor, the class will to be split with each tutor taking assessment responsibility for half of the class).
- IV will 'sample' work assessed (top, middle and bottom).
- IV will feedback to assessor on awarding of criteria, accuracy, feedback to learner and grading decision. If remedial action is needed, this will be discussed and allocated a timeframe of review.
- IV will follow up action recommended ensuring high quality standards are being met and maintained. IV will 'sign off' assessment decisions form once satisfied.
- IV will initial and date 'IV Schedule-Assessment Decisions' form to document sampling. Form will ensure Internal Verification coverage of all pupils and all criteria within units within each academic year.

## 7.2 Verification of Assignment Briefs:

- Assessor / unit leader will write assignment brief.
- IV will check assignment is 'fit for purpose' incorporating deadline for assessment, assessment criteria, task mapping against criteria, relevance of tasks, evidence, vocational context / scenario, timescale and language / presentation.
- IV will suggest remedial action, if any, needed before brief is issued. Assessor and IV will confirm actions have been met.
- Brief will be signed and dated by IV.
- Brief will be distributed to students.

Provision will be made within Halesbury Special School for communication between programme teams to share 'best practice' and areas of concern. This will be achieved through meetings of Internal Verifiers, standardisation meetings and team meetings.

All teachers, assessors and internal verifier on Halesbury Special School BTEC programmes will be issued with a copy of this documentation.

Internal Verifier will meet with assessors on a regular basis. These meetings will concern themselves with resolving issues of interpretation, validity, sufficiency and reliability of evidence.

## 8. EXTERNAL VERIFICATION (EV)

All units are internally assessed and subject to external verification through National Standards Sampling (NSS). External verifiers will be responsible for carrying out the sampling process. Verifiers, through consultation with their centres, will agree dates when the sampling process will take place.

The verifier's role is to monitor assessment practice to ensure that all:

- assessment decisions are valid and reliable
- evidence is attributable to the learner
- evidence is current.

In addition, the verifier will offer advice and guidance on the above where the centre is not meeting the criteria.

Verification of assessment practice will normally be carried out either through postal sampling or a centre visit.

Reviewed for 2018-2019

**Next review date: August 2019**