

ASSESSMENT Policy

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Assessment Policy

Introduction

This is the key guidance for assessing the quality of student work; that it is meeting the level and the requirements of the unit across the board; that grade decisions and assessor feedback are justified and that internal verification and moderation processes are picking up any discrepancies and issues.

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, the 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 handout of 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
- 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 organization or university

- monitor standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required
- ensure that BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessors are understood by all teaching staff
- provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

Assignment Submission

This is designed with the hope that all students will understand the need to be up-to-date with their coursework; study continuously and meet the assessment criteria within the allotted time for the programme. All programmes are designed with the assurance that the depth of criteria to be achieved is consistent with the time frames for students to achieve the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

In circumstances where there is cause for special consideration, module leader shall review those circumstances as consistent with our Special Consideration Policy and forward recommendations to Programme Leader for deliberation on those identified circumstances for special consideration. Actions taken by the Programme Leader shall be copied to the Assessment Board.

Assessing decisions through applying unit-based criteria

Assessment decisions for BTEC Higher Nationals are based on the specific criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The criteria for each unit have been defined according to a framework to ensure that standards are consistent in the qualification and across the suite as a whole. The assessment criteria for a unit are hierarchical and holistic. For example, if an M criterion requires the student to show 'analysis' and the related P criterion requires the student to 'explain', then to satisfy the M criterion a student will need to cover both 'explain' and 'analyse'.

The unit assessment grid shows the relationships among the criteria so that assessors can apply all the criteria to the student's evidence at the same time. It is essential to provide clear, published dates for handout of assignments and deadlines for assessment.

Feedback

The maximum period for students to obtain assignment feedback is 15 working days. In effect, therefore, tutors/assessors may give assignment feedback anytime within this 15 working days window. Every effort should be made to give timely feedback to students to gain from any constructive leads to improve their work. Assessor feedback to learners should, however, not be overly prescriptive.

Late submission

Students must be aware of the implications for late submission. Work submitted late (after the deadline) and accepted shall be treated as late submission. This implies that the candidate's work shall be assessed (marked) as it should normally be marked and then capped at a Pass level.

This means that work submitted after the published deadline shall be capped at a Pass. Assignment submitted after the 1st submission assessment Internal Verification will not be accepted. However, if a late submission is accepted, then the assignment should be assessed normally, when it is submitted, using the relevant assessment criteria; with any penalty or cap applied after the assessment. Where the result of assessment may be capped, due to late submission of the assignment, the student should be given an indication of their uncapped mark; in order to recognise the learning that has been achieved, and assessment feedback should be provided in relation to the uncapped achievement. As with all assessment results, both the uncapped and capped marks should be recorded and ratified by an appropriate assessment board; taking into account any mitigating circumstances that may have been submitted.

Extensions

Students should only be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons and extenuating circumstances (see College Extenuating Circumstances Policy) such as illness at the time of submission. Students can formally apply for an extension if they have genuine reasons for not meeting a deadline. If an extension is granted, the new deadline must be recorded and adhered to.

Extension requests should be made prior to the assessment deadline and should be formally approved by the Programme Leader. The duration of extensions should be consistent across all students and should not be after summative feedback has been issued to the other students on the programme. All extensions granted by the Programme Leader must be recorded and made available at the Assessment Board and to the External Examiner (EE). Recording details of extensions enables the Assessment Board and the EE to confirm that the programme is operating consistently in accordance with the Centre's and Pearson's policies and guidance.

Resubmissions

Every assignment contributes to the final qualification grade, therefore it may be appropriate for the Programme Leader or Assessment Board to authorise an opportunity for a student to resubmit evidence to meet the assessment criteria targeted by an assignment. The Programme Leader can only authorise resubmissions if this responsibility has been delegated to them by the Assessment Board beforehand. A student will be offered a resubmission if they have not achieved a pass on first submission. The reassessment opportunity will be capped at Pass for that unit. A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component for which a Pass or higher has already been awarded.

A student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment.

- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted.
- Reassessment for course work, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original task.
- For examinations, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task.
- A student who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a Pass for that unit.
- A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.

Procedure for resubmission:

If the Programme Leader or Assessment Board does authorise a resubmission the following conditions apply:

- The resubmission must be recorded on the assessment form
- The student must be given a deadline for resubmission within 15 working days of the student receiving the results of the assessment
- The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance
- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted
- The original evidence submitted for the assessment can remain valid and be extended, or may need to be replaced partially or in full

- The centre will make arrangements for retaking the assessment in such a way that does not adversely affect other assessments and does not give the student an unfair advantage over others.

All cases of re-submission are granted only if there is approval by the Programme Leader. In granting the opportunity for re-submission, the agreed time-lines should be clearly stated on the re-submission form with the signature of Module or Programme Leader, Assessor and students as agreeing to the new timelines. Assignments should be covered with the college official assignment cover sheet duly completed and signed on or before the specified deadline.

Repeat Units

Conditions for repeating a unit

If a student has met all of the submission conditions, but still not achieved the targeted Pass criteria following resubmission, the Assessment Board may authorise a repeat unit opportunity to meet the required Pass criteria.

Alternatively, the Assessment Board, having reviewed and discussed a student's assessment profile, can offer one final resubmission of Pass criteria if it is agreed that it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

- If the Assessment Board does not authorise a final resubmission opportunity, the student would be required to repeat the unit.
- If the Assessment Board does authorise a final resubmission opportunity, a new assignment must be issued to the student. If, after this final resubmission opportunity, the student has still not met the Pass criteria in the unit, they would be required to repeat the unit. The Assessment Board must only authorise a repeat unit in circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

When repeating a unit:

- The student must study the unit again
- The overall grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit
- A student has only one opportunity to repeat a given unit
- The standard rules regarding assessment, including those stipulated in this guide, apply to students who are repeating units, although the assessments that they submit will be treated as first submissions
- The External Examiner (EE) is likely to want to include assessments for students that have repeated a unit as part of the sample they will review.

Any evidence previously produced by the student for the unit being repeated that did meet the Pass criteria remains valid and may be used for assignments within the repeat unit.

Students who are repeating a unit only need to generate evidence for any Pass criteria that they did not achieve in their previous submissions.

If a student repeats an RQF unit and still does not achieve a Pass, they will be required to either complete a different unit in full or take the unit as compensation.

Feedback

Assessors should give feedback that is constructive with indication of what student has failed to achieve. However, such feedback must not be overly prescriptive. The feedback must be given to students within three weeks of the work having been submitted and assessed. Students should therefore have no need to wait for a long time before they receive assessment feedback. Before assessors give feedback to learners, assessed learner work should be first internally verified (see College Internal Verification Policy for details on the internal verification process). To enhance the assessment feedback process therefore, internal verification should be timely and not slow down the assessment process.

Formative Feedback

Formative assessment is an integral part of the BTEC assessment process, involving both the Assessor and the student in a two-way conversation about their progress. It takes place prior to summative assessment and does not confirm achievement of grades, but focuses on helping the student to reflect on their learning and improve their performance. The main function of formative assessment is to provide feedback to enable the student to make improvements to consolidate a Pass, or attain a higher grade. This feedback should be prompt so it has meaning and context for the student and time must be given following the feedback for actions to be complete. Students should be provided with formative feedback during the process of assessment and be empowered to act to improve their performance. Feedback on formative assessment must be constructive and provide clear guidance and actions for improvement.