



## ASSESSMENT POLICY

(Courses up-to and including Level 3)

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## Scope

The Assessment Policy contains important information to ensure that all College staff with teaching and learning responsibilities are monitoring, assessing and checking students work in line with agreed standards and College requirements across the range of qualifications offered.

## Aims

- Providing fair and regular access to assessment for all students on qualification-based programs.
- Assessment practice will be open and consistent with the codes of practice and regulations laid down by the relevant awarding and validation bodies.
- Ensure that students receive accurate and useful information about their progress and attainment.
- Ensure that staff receive clear and effective advice on managing the assessment process.
- Ensure compliance with awarding body regulations.
- Support the planning of teaching, learning and assessment to improve student achievement and progression.

## Principles

Course teams are expected to ensure that:

- Assessment is conducted with rigor, fairness and in accordance with current awarding body regulations;
- Evidence for assessment is authentic, (the student's own work), current (the student's present competence, within the timescale of their current qualification), valid (relevant to the syllabus criteria) and sufficient (meets all relevant criteria);
- Formative assessment opportunities are planned to measure students' progress, to challenge students to achieve high standards and prepare them for summative assessments, to include; controlled assessments, external exams, coursework and End Point Assessments.
- Resubmission opportunities to be reasonable & equitable to allow differentiation; between pass, merit & distinction grades (vocational courses) and to facilitate resubmissions (within awarding body requirements);
- Appropriate feedback is provided to the student, within the timeframe stipulated by the awarding bodies, on assessed work which promotes learning and facilitates improvement and development
- Assessment decisions are recorded and documented accurately and systematically onto Mark-Book/Smart Assessor, and in accordance with the requirements of awarding bodies;
- There is a robust system for standardising and internally verifying assessment decisions and grades;
- The role of lead internal verifier is appointed, and succession planned for all BTEC qualifications;
- Assessment is coordinated between lecturers and other course teams to ensure that student workloads are staggered and manageable;
- Assessment and internal moderation and verification records are kept securely for the period stipulated by the awarding body;
- Student work is kept securely for the period stipulated by the awarding body;
- The academic misconduct policy is referred to when necessary.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now widespread and easy to access. Staff, students and parents/carers may be familiar with generative chatbots such as ChatGPT and Google Bard. Telford College recognises that AI has many uses to help students learn, but may also lend itself to cheating and plagiarism.

Students may use AI tools:

1. As a research tool to help them find out about new topics and ideas
2. When specifically studying and discussing AI in college work, for example in IT lessons or art homework about AI-generated images. All AI-generated content must be properly attributed

Students may not use AI tools:

1. During assessments, including internal and external assessments and coursework
2. To write their homework or class assignments, where AI-generated text is presented as their own work
3. As an alternative to engaging in practical learning.

Telford College considers any unattributed use of AI-generated text or imagery to be plagiarism, and will be dealt with according to the college's policy and following Awarding organisation procedures.

## Assessment Plan

Assessment plans should be produced in-line with the guidance provided by individual awarding organisations. These would normally contain details of all internal and external assessment dates for each student, and tutors should ensure that students are aware of dates for each part of the study programme e.g. Mathematics and English.

The assessment plan should be made available to students during induction.

The assessment plan for the 6th Form includes milestone and regular scheduled assessment with homework scheduled every week within this model.

## Assessment Calendar

July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learner Managers/Course Leader/Business Programme managers – to ensure all assessment plans are submitted. Mark-books set up</li></ul>
September to October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Learner Manager/Course Leader to ensure correct registration lists are forwarded to Exams via the college's MIS system "Dated Entry/Registration"</li><li>• Assessment plans issued to students</li><li>• Lead Internal Verifiers registered or re-registered for Pearson QCF and NQF courses</li><li>• Lead Internal Verifier details sent to Quality department</li><li>• Internal verification schedules for all courses completed detailing samples, assessors and internal verifiers</li><li>• Standardisation exercises carried out by course teams and minutes in course files</li><li>• All assignment briefs internally verified before being issued to students</li><li>• EV contact details to be sent to Quality department</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where awarding bodies require qualified assessors and Internal Verifiers, Learner Manager to ensure compliance within course team and arrange training where necessary</li> </ul>
October to December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EV confirms visit dates with Learner Manager/Course Leader and shared with Quality department</li> <li>Where sampling is required units and students are agreed</li> <li>Student achievement tracking is maintained using Mark-Book</li> <li>Records of assignment and student work Internal Verification are maintained</li> <li>Students informed of visit dates &amp; preparation requirements (if relevant)</li> <li>Learner Manager/BPMs to ensure teachers attend relevant awarding body training to maintain up to date knowledge.</li> <li>External Verification visits begin</li> <li>External Verification reports are sent to the Quality department and subsequently evaluated at Course Team Meetings and Quality Improvement plans agreed, with details sent to Quality department</li> </ul>
January to May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mark-Book is maintained and kept up to date in line with Assessment Plan</li> <li>Records of assignment and student work IV are maintained</li> <li>External Verification visits continue</li> <li>Continue to evaluate External Verification reports and where appropriate Quality Improvement Plan sharing detail with Quality Department.</li> </ul>
May to July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Record Forms and other awarding body forms completed and checked by course teams before submission to exams by end of June/July.</li> <li>Continue to evaluate External Verification reports and where appropriate Quality Improvement Plan.</li> <li>Submit Assessment Plans for next academic year.</li> <li>For Apprentices, Individual Learning plans are reviewed and updated throughout the year.</li> </ul>

## Setting Assignments

- During Induction, an Assessment Plan for the course is provided to students.
- Course teams should work together to agree assessment schedules that are staggered across the year and provide students with an even spread of work.
- All academic staff should ensure that students understand the grading criteria for the course during induction, to include; the difference between a Pass, Merit and Distinction; explanation of any points system for final grades; levels of response marking; competency-based assessments.
- Vocational assignments should be issued with a top sheet which meets awarding body requirements (most provide templates).
- Any formative assessment deadlines should be set sufficiently in advance of the summative deadlines to enable the students to benefit from the feedback.
- Staff are not advised to change assessment dates unless it is absolutely essential. Where changes are necessary, the learner manager should discuss with the Director of area in the first instance. Any changes will need to be agreed by the Director of area and updated onto Mark-Book (changes only accessible to Directors) student assessment schedule and in some cases awarding body may need to be informed.
- Students should be given plenty of advanced notice of any changes to the planned assessment schedule.
- All assignment briefs must be internally verified before being issued to students.

## **Receipt of Assignments**

- The Learner Manager/Course Leader is expected to set up a tracking system for recording student submission dates, these should be completed on learning plans and mark-book. Students should have this system explained to them at the beginning of the course to avoid any misunderstanding and the processes for submitting work must be consistent with awarding body guidelines.
- Pearson has specific guidelines about the meeting of initial deadlines if a student is to be eligible for a re-submission, and these must be rigorously adhered to.

## **Late Submissions**

- Late submission is defined as receipt of an assignment after the final submission time/date. An assignment that is due by noon, for example, is considered late if it is submitted at 17.00 on the same day.
- Actions taken by course teams to address late submission must always be in accordance with award body regulations.
- Students may request an extension in accordance with the procedure – Request for Late Submission Form attached (Appendix 1).

## **Formative Assessment**

- Formative assessment is proven by research to be one of the key activities that improves student achievement and lecturers should plan opportunities to feedback in class and on draft submissions that are sufficient to prepare students for summative assessment.
- Course teams must ensure that their approach to formative assessment meets the awarding body regulations.
- Formative feedback should be constructive, focused on improvement, criterion referenced where relevant.

## **Assessment Grading**

- The marking of assessments must comply with the requirements of the assessment criteria laid down by awarding bodies, or – where there are no awarding body qualifications used, as per college process relating to particular courses.
- Summative feedback should be as helpful as possible to the student, i.e. confirming what has gone well and giving clear guidance on what the student needs to do in order to improve on their performance (with the exception of Level 2 and 3 Pearson courses for which strict guidelines pertain to summative feedback).
- Where an assignment is based on group work, students must receive an individual grade which reflects their personal contribution; evidence of individual work must be clearly detailed and demonstrate that all students have met the criteria targeted.
- Allowances may need to be made for students with additional support needs. Please liaise with the Additional Learning Support team for information on an individual case.
- Where students have allowances – an awarding body will require a 'Special Allowances' form/document to be logged with them. Please refer to the awarding body guidelines and/or External Verifier for specific guidance. Copies of forms for students with special dispensations will also need to be logged within the Exams Office.
- Where the assessment forms part of the final grade for the qualification (BTEC), assessment grades must be internally verified before being returned to the students; where actions are necessary, feedback to the assessor must be acted upon by the assessor and signed off by the verifier before the final assessment decision is returned to the students .
- All course teams are strongly encouraged to attend external standardisation events and relevant training courses to share current practice in assessment and grading.

## **Return of Work**

- Student work should be marked and returned, with feedback, within 10 working days; assessors should leave adequate time to act on any feedback from the interval verification process within this period, it is recommended that first batch of assessment in any submission is passed to be Internally Verified before continuing.
- If it becomes clear that work is unlikely to be returned within two weeks, the Learner Manager must be informed, and students given a clear indication of when they can expect feedback.

## **Extensions**

- In exceptional cases (e.g. ill-health) an extension may be authorised by the Lead IV where appropriate evidence (e.g. a medical certificate) has been provided.
- Lecturers should ensure that students are aware of the procedures governing extensions at the start of their course. (see attached Appendix 1)
- Students, or their parents or guardians, must apply for an extension in writing outlining the reasons for their request. (See attached Appendix 1)
- Students should apply for an extension at least 48 hours before the work is due for submission.

## **Resubmission of Work**

- The Lead Interval Verifier will authorise a resubmission of work if the student has met initial deadlines set in the assignment or has met an agreed deadline extension; the assessor judges that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance; the assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment.
- Where all conditions have been met, students will have a period of time determined by the relevant awarding organisation to resubmit work handed in on time to achieve the grading criteria already attempted.

## **Internal Verification and Moderation**

### **Principles**

All vocational and occupational programmes are subject to an internal verification or moderation procedure in order to assure standards and consistency. Assessment will be internally verified or moderated in line with the principles of assessment set out in this policy and in accordance with Award/Validation body regulations.

### **Procedure**

The College's Internal Verification procedure is set out under Appendix 2.

### **Feedback**

It is vital that, having completed internal verification, the internal verifier gives personal feedback to the assessor (which may be to affirm good practice as well as to address problems), and that this feedback is recorded. It is this discussion that forms the basis for the Internal Verification system and provides the opportunity to review practice.

### **Disagreements**

It can be a delicate process commenting on a colleague's marking and assessment, and it needs to be handled with sensitivity and tact. The lead IV is responsible for the final internal verification of students' work, if there is a disagreement then this should be referred to the Learner Manager. If agreement cannot be reached at this stage, the relevant Director should be informed and work with the Head of Quality to seek guidance from the awarding body.

## **External Verification and Moderation**

- All vocational and occupational programmes are subject to some form of external verification, standardisation or moderation, and Learning Managers are responsible for ensuring that awarding body regulations are followed.
- All External Verifier reports must be sent to Quality department so actions can be centrally monitored.
- Learner Managers must ensure that all actions and recommendations from reports are updated and returned to the quality department by the given deadline

## **Students with access arrangements and reasonable adjustments**

- Assessment must be available to all those who have the potential to achieve the standards required for a particular qualification.
- Where arrangements need to be made to accommodate students, care must be taken to ensure that they are fair and do not undermine the integrity of the qualification.
- Support may be appropriate in a variety of ways including:
  - Help with communication and number skills
  - Adapted equipment and physical environment
  - Extended assessment time
  - Special information learning technology
- Awarding body protocols must be adhered to, including arrangement approval where required.
- For external examinations and tests, the lecturer must consult with the Examinations and Planning manager and the Learning Support Manager.

## **Malpractice**

- All incidents of academic misconduct, such as cheating and plagiarism, must be dealt with according to the college's policy and following Awarding organisation procedures.
- Students must be informed of this policy during Induction and given careful guidance about what constitutes malpractice and guidance on the study skills required to avoid it.

## **Appeals**

- Students who have concerns about the outcome of an assessment should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their subject lecturer or assessor. If they wish to take the matter further, they should do so through the college's appeals procedure against an assessment policy
- The Assessment Appeals Process should be explained to all students at the start of their course.

## **Accountabilities**

- All course teams are expected to refer to this policy and the relevant awarding body guidance when they plan their assessment strategy.
- Assessment guidance should be an integrated feature of student and subject Inductions.
- Course teams are expected to evaluate their assessment strategy at the end of each academic year as part of the course self-assessment process.
- The Learner Manager is ultimately responsible for the management of assessment practices for courses in their charge, and for the implementation of actions arising from the internal and external verification processes.

## Definitions

Assignment	This term is used to denote a SUMMATIVE assessment instrument
Summative Assessment	A form of assessment that contributes to the student's final mark/award for the course
Formative Assessment	A form of assessment designed to give the student feedback on how to improve their work before summative assessment begins
Final submission date	The final cut-off date for submission
Internal Verification	A process that ensures that assignments are written, marked and recorded in line with awarding body regulations and criteria
External Verification	A process whereby an external specialist reviews the performance, standards and quality assurance processes of the course in line with awarding body regulations

# Appendix 1 – Request for Late Submissions

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## REQUEST FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS

BTEC Guidelines clearly state that work must be handed in on or before the deadline. Late submissions need to have legitimate extenuating circumstances. If these are agreed by the lead IV to be valid you will be allowed a late submission and an opportunity to resubmit work after assessment to improve your grade.

Please give a full explanation for why this work cannot be submitted by the published deadline.

<b>Assignment Title</b>	
Student Signature	Date
<b>Lead IV decision:</b> This student will be/will not be eligible for a resubmission/retake on this assignment should this be appropriate.	
Lead IV Signature	Date

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Please give a full explanation for why this work cannot be submitted by the published deadline.

<b>Assignment Title</b>	
Student Signature	Date
<b>Lead IV decision:</b> This student will be/will not be eligible for a resubmission/retake on this assignment should this be appropriate.	
Lead IV Signature	Date

## **Appendix 2 – Internal Verification Procedure**

### **Internal Verification of Assignments**

1. The Manager or LIV allocates an IV for each assignment.
2. All assignments go through IV even if they are repeated from previous years to ensure dates and any new guidance or industrial practices have been taken into account.
3. The assessor submits the assignment to the IV in good time to make any necessary amendments before the planned hand-out date.
4. The IV follows awarding body protocols and uses any templates or checklists provided to assess the assignment.
5. Checks are likely to include, but are not limited to:
  - a. Correct course codes and titles;
  - b. Correct unit/module codes and titles;
  - c. Reasonable time for completion between hand-out and submission dates;
  - d. A clear scenario giving an employment context to the assignment;
  - e. Correct spelling, punctuation and grammar;
  - f. Language suitable for the students and the subject;
  - g. Accurate linkage of criteria to tasks;
  - h. Tasks likely to enable students to produce evidence that meets the criteria at all grades available;
  - i. Guidance about how the evidence should be presented by the student;
  - j. Tasks which provide adequate coverage of course content;
  - k. Tasks which adhere to assessment guidance in the specification;
6. If the assignment is fit for purpose, the IV includes feedback about good practice and signs and dates the IV form; a copy of the IV form and assignment are kept in the IV file and the assignment can be issued to students.
7. If the assignment is not fit for purpose, the IV completes feedback including necessary actions to make it fit for purpose, signs and dates the form and hands it back to the assessor in good time to make amendments before the issue date.
8. The assessor makes the necessary amendments and hands back the new assignment and the IV form to the IV.
9. The IV checks the assignment again to ensure it is now fit for purpose. If so, the IV signs and dates the form to agree that the actions have been met; a copy of the IV form and assignment are kept in the IV file and the assignment can be issued to students.
10. If the assignment is still not fit for purpose, the IV should repeat the cycle or alert the Learner Manager/ Head of Area if they require further support. It is vital that any issues are resolved in good time to hand-out assignment in accordance with the assessment schedule.

### **Internal Verification of Assessments**

1. The LIV completes an IV sampling planner which ensures coverage of all units, assessors, students and sites.
2. The number of pieces of work sampled in each unit must adhere to the awarding body guidelines.
3. There may be reasons for increasing the number of samples in a particular unit if the risk of safeguarding academic standards is increased by factors such as a new teacher; a new unit; a unit which was blocked in the previous year. The LIV decides the number and incorporates it in the plan.
4. When the deadline has passed the assessor marks the work and hands the submissions identified on the sampling planner to the nominated IV.
5. The IV checks the assessment decisions and feedback using the awarding body template where provided.
6. Checks are likely to include, but are not limited to:
  - a. The reliability and sufficiency of evidence;

- b. Whether the criteria awarded have been met;
  - c. Whether differentiated grades have been interpreted and awarded correctly;
  - d. Where a unit grade has been awarded, whether the grade has been calculated correctly;
  - e. Whether the awarding of grades is consistent between submissions;
  - f. Whether feedback is constructive and criterion referenced;
  - g. Whether opportunities have been taken to mark SPAG;
  - h. Whether specific guidelines for giving feedback have been adhered to (as with Pearson).
7. If the assessment is agreed, the IV includes feedback about good practice and signs and dates the IV form; a copy of the IV form and assessment top sheet are kept in the IV file and the assignment can be issued to students.
  8. If the assessment is not agreed, the IV completes feedback including necessary actions to make it fit for purpose, signs and dates the form and hands it back to the assessor in good time for them to make amendments within the three week assessment window.
  9. The assessor makes the necessary amendments and hands back the submission, the new assessment sheet and the IV form to the IV.
  10. The IV checks the assessment again to ensure it is now fit for purpose. If so, the IV signs and dates the form to agree that the actions have been met; a copy of the IV form and assignment and assessment top sheet are kept in the IV file and the assignment can be issued to students.
  11. If the assessment is still not fit for purpose, the IV should repeat the cycle or alert the Learner Manager if they require further support. It is vital that any issues are resolved in good time to hand the submission back within the three week window.
  12. Copies of sampling should be kept for three years following certification including:
    - a. The assignment and assignment IV sheet;
    - b. The student work;
    - c. The assessment top and IV sheet;
    - d. Any associated witness statements, observation records, videos, photos etc.;
    - e. Student and staff authentication declarations and permissions where required by the awarding body.;
    - f. The sampling plan;
    - g. Tracking documents at criterion level.
  13. Awarding bodies stipulate how long all student work must be kept e.g. 12 weeks following certification for Pearson; until the next EV visit for C&G.