Assessment Policy

Buxton and Leek College have the following aims:

• 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 centre will:

- provide learners with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence.
- assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria.
- ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable.
- will follow the assessment timeline
- 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 external verification, as required by the awarding body.
• Monitor standards verifier reports and undertake any remedial action required.
• Share good assessment practice between all programme teams.
• Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

Purpose/Scope
• This policy covers all qualification and levels where coursework will be completed by learners and graded by tutors.
• To ensure that there is equal and fair access to assessment for all learners.
• To ensure that learners are given realistic targets and informed of their progress.
To ensure that achievement is accurately recorded and tracked.
• To ensure that assessment leads to accurate and valid certification claims.

Malpractice in coursework

Candidates must not:
• submit work which is not their own;
• lend work to other candidates or allow their work to be copied;
• allow other candidates access to, or the use of, their own independently sourced material or assist others in the production of coursework; (this does not mean that candidates may not lend their books to one another, but candidates must not plagiarise others' research);
• use any books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement or attribution;
• submit work word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement.
These actions constitute malpractice, for which a penalty (e.g. disqualification from the assessment) will be applied.

If irregularities in coursework are discovered prior to the candidate signing the declaration of authentication this should be dealt with under our internal procedures and need not be reported to

the awarding body. Details of any work which is not the candidate's own must be recorded on the authentication form supplied by the awarding body or other appropriate place.

If irregularities in coursework are identified by a centre after the candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, the head of centre must submit full details of the case to the relevant awarding body at the earliest opportunity. Guidance is provided in the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures. The publication and Form JCQ/M1 can be found on the JCQ website

The College has an internal appeals procedure in place, relating to internal assessment decisions. To obtain the document click here

Awarding bodies reserve the right to submit candidates' work to third party IT service providers in order to detect potential and suspected malpractice. Any such submissions will be done in a way which protects the identity of the candidate.

Detection of plagiarism

There are a number of clues that point to the possibility of plagiarism, and teachers should remain alert to these.

Marking of internally-assessed coursework

In marking coursework, teachers should pay close attention to the requirements of the specification. Teachers should note that it is their responsibility to award marks for coursework in accordance with the marking criteria detailed in the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents. Teachers must show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to these marking criteria. The centre's marks must reflect the relative attainment of all the candidates.

Where a teacher teaches his/her own child, the centre must declare the conflict of interest and send the marked work to the moderator whether it is part of the sample or not.

Candidates' work must be dated by teachers to reflect the time at which it was marked.

Annotation

When coursework is marked, it must be annotated to show clearly how credit has been awarded.

Subject to any further guidance contained in specifications, one of the following approaches should be adopted:
• summary comments either on the work (usually at the end) or on a cover sheet;
• key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation either in the margin or in the text;
• a combination of the above.

Indications as to how marks have been awarded should:
• be clear and unambiguous;
• be appropriate to the nature and form of the coursework;
• facilitate the standardisation of marking within the centre;
• enable the moderator to check the application of the assessment criteria to the marking.

Where appropriate to the type of work, the evidence to support the marks awarded should:
• indicate where the assessment criteria have been met, e.g. by writing key phrases from the criteria (such as 'clear description', 'selects information', 'uses a variety of techniques') at the appropriate point in the work;
• indicate any planning and processing not undertaken individually, and provide details of any assistance or prompting given to the candidate.

Where a moderator cannot find evidence to justify the mark awarded to a candidate, the work may be returned to the centre for further explanation or the mark may be subject to adjustment.

Authentication procedures

Each candidate must sign a declaration when submitting their coursework to their subject teacher/assessor for final assessment. This is to confirm that the work is their own and that any assistance given and/or sources used have been acknowledged. Ensuring that they do so is the responsibility of the centre. Centres should record marks of zero if candidates cannot confirm the authenticity of work submitted for assessment.

Teachers/assessors must confirm to the awarding body that all of the work submitted for assessment was completed under the required conditions and that they are satisfied the work is solely that of the individual candidate concerned. If they are unable to do so, the work should not be accepted for assessment.

The teacher should be sufficiently aware of the candidate's standard and level of work to appreciate if the coursework submitted is beyond that candidate's talents.

Standardisation of marking within centres

Centres should use reference and archive materials (such as exemplar material provided by the awarding body or, where available, work in the centre from the previous year) to help set the standard of marking within the centre.

Where the work for a component/unit has been marked by more than one teacher in a centre, internal standardisation of marking must be carried out. One of the following procedures should normally be used:

- Either a sample of work which has been marked by each teacher is re-marked by the teacher who is in charge of internal standardisation;
- Or all the teachers responsible for marking a component/unit exchange some marked work (preferably at a meeting led by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation) and compare their marking standards.

Where standards are found to be inconsistent, the relevant teacher(s) should make adjustments to their marks or re-consider the marks of all candidates for whom they were responsible. The new marks should be checked by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation.

The BTEC specific internal verification of assessment decisions policy can be found here

Submission of marks for internally-assessed components

Awarding bodies will publish deadlines for the submission of final marks.

The forms and any other documentation provided must be completed in accordance with the instructions given and returned to the awarding bodies by the date specified. As an alternative, centres may submit their coursework marks electronically, as specified by the awarding body.

It is the responsibility of centres to carefully check the marks they are submitting to an awarding body in order to minimise errors.

Marks for all candidates, not just the sample submitted, must be checked by the centre for both addition and transcription errors before submission.

Where centres submit their coursework marks electronically, the awarding body may also require a copy of the marks to be submitted to the moderator, along with any other documentation needed.

Incomplete coursework

Where candidates are required to produce several distinct pieces of work (e.g. three assignments or ten essays), which are assessed separately, a candidate who fails to complete all parts of the work should be credited with the marks for the task(s) carried out unless the specification says otherwise.

A candidate who fails to submit any coursework must follow the Colleges assessment timeline

If none of the work is worthy of credit or where the authenticity of the work cannot be confirmed must consult the awarding body for specific guidance.

Applications for special consideration in respect of incomplete coursework

If a candidate has been subject to an unforeseen prolonged illness or other misfortune during the period when the coursework was produced they should be asked to complete the ECF document.

The tutor/LIV or curriculum leader will consider the application and inform the learner of the outcome within 5 working days.

Lost coursework

If a candidate's work has been **lost within the examination centre** and, despite every effort, it cannot be found or it has been accidentally destroyed, the circumstances should be reported immediately to the awarding body using **JCQ Form 15 - JCQ/LCW‡**. This form is available from the JCQ website - http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/coursework

‡AQA and OCR centres must not submit Form 15 – JCQ/LCW.
Applications must be submitted on-line using e-AQA or OCR Interchange as appropriate.

External moderation

The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of internally-assessed components in the centre to an agreed standard. All centres are required by awarding bodies to submit work to moderation if requested.

The normal procedure is either:

- Postal moderation, where the centre submits a sample of work to the moderator.
- On-site visitation by the moderator to sample the work.

By the date specified, each centre must submit to the awarding body:

- details of marks awarded;
- authentication of the work submitted for assessment;
- confirmation that internal standardisation has been carried out as required;
- any other information as the specification may require.

The awarding body (or the moderator on behalf of the awarding body) normally specifies the candidates whose work is required for moderation by name/number. The sample usually includes work from across the range of attainment at the centre.

It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that moderators receive the correct samples of work to review.

For visiting moderation, a visit is arranged for a date and time convenient to both the centre and moderator.

For both postal and visiting moderation, the moderator assesses the sample work using the published marking criteria in the specification.

If further evidence of the centre's marking is required, the moderator may request some or all of the remaining work which **must** have been kept securely and be available.

Definitions/Terminology

• Assessor/tutor/teacher: the person responsible for making decisions about whether learners' work achieves the standard required for certification.
• Formative assessment: used to review learner progress and inform improvement.
• Summative assessment: This assessment informs a unit grade where appropriate.
• Standardisation: a method of comparison to enable centre assessors to review the consistency and accuracy of their assessment.
• Learning outcomes: what the learner should know, understand or be able to do as a result of completing the unit. • Unit content: the unit content gives you the substance to devise and plan the programme of learning needed for the learning outcomes to be successfully achieved.
• Unit grading grid: each unit grading grid contains statements of the assessment criteria used to determine the standard of learner evidence. Merit and distinction grading criteria refer to a qualitative improvement in the learner's evidence, and not a quantitative one.

Responsibilities:
• Programme Leader: responsible for managing programme delivery and assessment of the learners, to ensure coverage of all units and grading criteria
• Assessor: responsible for carrying out assessment to the BTEC standard. The Assessor provides feedback to learners; assures the authenticity of learner work; records and tracks achievement.
Procedures:
Learner induction: should inform about all aspects of assessment and progress monitoring. Reference should be made to the BTEC standards, assessment deadlines, the need for authentic work, and learner appeals.
• Assignment design: should have a practical vocational focus and reference unit assessment and grading criteria. A variety of assessment methods is encouraged. A schedule of assignments and assessment dates needs to be planned and monitored during delivery of the programme.
• Assessment schedule: annually agreed to assure coverage of all assessment and grading criteria.
• Assessment of learner work: should be to the published unit assessment and grading criteria only. The punitive 'capping' or limiting of grades is not allowed
• Tracking assessment: a secure audit trail must be maintained, comprising assessment decisions; internal verification documentation for assignments and learner work; and unit achievement for the programme. These records will be held securely for 3 years after certification.
• Certificate claims: need to be based on accurate, audited records.

Date: September 2017

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months - FE Quality Enhancement Committee