

Archway School BTEC Assessment and Internal Verification Protocol

WHAT IS BTEC ASSESSMENT?

Key Terms:

NQF - National Qualifications Framework

RQF – Regulated Qualifications Framework

QCF- Qualifications and Credit Framework

All BTEC programmes are made up of units, the new RQF level 1/2 Tech Awards are made up of components. Each unit/component is assessed and counts towards an overall qualification; each programme combines both internal and external assessment. Currently all level 1/2 & 3 NQF/RQF programmes have external assessment attached to core units/components, approximately 25% of the level 1/2 NQF qualifications; 40% of the level 1/2 RQF and 60% of the level 3 RQF qualifications are externally assessed. External assessment for each unit/component can be a written exam, an online assessment or a set task. The level 3 (RQF) foundation diploma (1.5 A level equivalent) and diploma (2 A level equivalent) have a higher proportion of internally assessed units.

From September 2017 the only QCF programme to be delivered at Archway will be the level 2 Workskills qualification, this programme is completely internally assessed.

Programme Leaders are responsible for disseminating exam information and requirements to their team prior to delivery. Lead Internal Verifiers must include externally assessed units/components in assessment plans with examination dates for first entry and retake opportunities.

Internal assessment is co-ordinated by the assessors delivering BTEC programmes at Archway School, each programme area is managed by a Programme Leader that is responsible for ensuring that all delivery, assessment, internal verification, certification and tracking is monitored to maintain the quality standards outlined by the BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook.

All staff involved in delivery, assessment and internal verification must refer the assessment guidance and grading criteria published in the programme specifications. The unit/component guidance and specifications can be downloaded from each BTEC qualification subject page. Units in most BTEC programmes are graded (for example Pass, Merit, or Distinction); others (such as QCF Workskills) are only achievable as a Pass. At unit/component level learners must demonstrate the following:

To achieve a Pass Learners must evidence all Pass criteria from the grading grid.

To achieve a Merit Learners must evidence all Pass and Merit criteria from the grading grid. Partial achievement of the Merit criteria cannot attract the Merit grade.

To achieve a Distinction Learners must evidence all Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria from the grading grid. Partial achievement of the distinction criteria cannot attract the Distinction grade.

Achievement for each unit will be recorded on central tracking sheet saved in the Vocational Area on the staff O Drive. All assessors need to record grades and track work in this central area.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE INTERNAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

ASSESSMENT PLAN

The Assessment Plan is a planning and support tool that enables staff to plan assignments and deadlines effectively throughout the programme. Lead IV's will take responsibility for the co-ordination of Assessment Plans and they will be saved for all the team to access on the staff O drive. All hand out, hand in, IV sampling and resubmission dates will be recorded on the Assessment Plan and those involved in the delivery of BTEC programmes must adhere to them. Each programme area will be allocated a Standards Verifier (external verifier) who will refer to the assessment plan to agree the most appropriate time to sample. In addition to the staff O drive a copy of the assessment plan for each programme area will be made available on Archway Schools' website, to enable all of our stakeholders to have access to the information. An assessment plan can also be created via MyBTEC (available via edexcel online) Pearson offer this free digital service which can be made accessible to Standard Verifiers and will help standardise systems. If course teams produce an assessment plan via MyBTEC the document can be downloaded and saved in the quality area on the staff O drive.

ASSIGNMENT BRIEFS and LEARNER EVIDENCE

Key terms:

Learning Aims / Learning Outcomes - what the learner needs to know, understand and do. This forms the basis of delivery.

Assessment Criteria – the grade level at which the learner can achieve each learning aim/outcome

Assessment Guidance – the essential guidance on assessment which must be referred to when writing assignments, assessing students work and internally verifying

Assignments are designed to develop a learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in a defined area of study. Each assignment brief will contain a vocational scenario which will link to the unit content. On NQF/RQF programmes the unit content is split into learning aims which link directly to the assessment criteria. On QCF programmes the unit content is split into learning outcomes which link directly to the assessment criteria. For many learning aims/outcomes, you will be able to select an appropriate vocational format for evidence generation, such as:

- Written reports, graphs, posters
- Time-constrained practical assessments
- Audio-visual recordings of portfolio, sketchbook, a working logbook, etc
- Presentations.

A wide range of assessment strategies should be employed as this can enhance learning, improve knowledge of the grading criteria and of how to progress to higher grade achievement.

If group work is used, assessors must be aware of the requirement that assessment is done at individual learner level. The use of an Observation Records, preparation notes/reflective notes, photographs and filming of learners taking part in a practical activity will also be required as evidence.

The assessor will take responsibility for writing the assignment brief. All tasks must be written holistically and give all learners the opportunity to attempt the higher criteria. Assessors should not write assignments briefs using a 'task per criterion' approach.

Whenever possible assessors should choose to use BTEC Authorised Assignment Briefs which are available from each BTEC programme area page in addition to myBTEC (via edexcel online). Authorised Assignment Briefs are currently only available for NQF/RQF courses, the scenarios should be personalised to reflect local businesses and services.

ASSESSMENT RECORD

The Assessment Record is the only place where the assessor formally records their assessment decisions against individual assessment criteria. This document records the learners final grade, unless there are grounds for a resubmission. The assessor should give feedback on the achievement of criteria to support learner progression and avoid giving direct, specific instructions on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade. All feedback should relate directly to the unit content.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – THE PROCESS

Internal assessment falls into 3 distinct stages teaching and learning, research and assessment. All three areas will be carefully co-ordinated by each assessor.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

During this stage the assessor will teach the underpinning knowledge that learners will need to achieve a unit. The assessor may decide to complete practice tasks and provide formative feedback to ensure that the learner is well prepared for internal assessment.

RESEARCH

During this stage learners collect what they need for the assignment into a research folder. The assessor should check that each learner has collected sufficient evidence to ensure they can complete the assignment. Typically the assessor will organise trips, visits and guest speakers during this stage, giving feedback on the appropriateness of sources.

ASSESSMENT

During the assessment stage the learner will use their research folder to tackle the assessment tasks. At this stage the assessor must not give individual feedback or advice. Any feedback during this stage must be general and stop short of specific assessment of an individual learners evidence.

RECORD OF PRACTICAL ACTIVITY

You may use these forms to provide a formal record of observations of practical tasks (eg during presentations or work experience tasks) or to provide a written record of learner performance against targeted assessment criteria. This form is designed to be completed by an assessor or a professional with relevant vocational experience. A record of practical activity is a source of evidence and does not confer an assessment decision.

RESUBMISSIONS

Providing initial deadlines have been met and the learner is able to improve their work independently, a learner may be given one opportunity to resubmit improved evidence towards a learning aim/objective after a summative grade has been given. Resubmissions have to be approved by the Lead Internal Verifier (LIV), unless the LIV is the assessor in which case an alternative internal verifier will need to approve the resubmission. Resubmissions must be completed within 10 working days. The Standards Verifier will normally want to include resubmissions in the centre sample.

RETAKES

Retakes are available to learners studying BTEC on QCF/RQF programmes. Retakes are not available to learners on level 1/2 NQF programmes. A retake will take the form of a completely new assignment that targets the pass criteria that have not yet been achieved. The maximum grade available to the learner from a retake is a PASS. Only one retake per assignment is permitted.

DEADLINES

Deadlines for assessment are an important part of vocational qualifications. Learners must be encouraged to develop good habits that will stand them in good stead in the future. If an assignment is submitted late the learner will not be able to resubmit.

RECORDS

Teachers must keep records of learners and their assessed work. All records need to be recorded on the approved Pearson paperwork (master copies are available on the O drive in the quality area) Teacher records must be monitored and sampled by the LEAD INTERNAL VERIFIER.

Copies of learner internal verification records must be kept for three years after certification.

Learner assessment and achievement records must be kept in a secure location for a period of three years after certification.

WEAKNESSES IN ASSESSMENT

Where there is an identified weakness in the assessment process the following will happen:

Lead Internal Verifier's will initially offer support and guidance. Increased sampling and appropriate training will be put in place.

If necessary the Quality Nominee and senior staff will become part of the support and guidance process.

A copy of the BTEC policy for Assessment can be found on the VLE on the 'Staff Essentials' page, it is recommended that you print this off and put a copy in your quality file.

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

External assessment has been introduced for all NQF level 1/2 BTEC courses and level 3 RQF BTEC courses. The level 2 NQF programmes will have a either be a paper based or online test and the Level 3 RQF courses will have a paper based exam or an assessment based on a pre-released case study that is issued 2 weeks prior to the assessment. Programme Leaders will take responsibility for liaising with our Examinations Officer, Lesley Ryall to ensure that the correct entries are made.

If you deliver a level 1/2 NQF and / or a level 3 RQF course it is your responsibility to ensure that:

- Learners are fully prepared to sit the external assessment

Sample assessment materials will be available to help centres prepare learners for assessment. Specific arrangements for external assessment are available before the start of each academic year from www.uk.pearson.com. Or simply go to the staff essentials page on the VLE and click on your subject area.

Programme Leaders need to ensure that:

- Learners are entered for assessments at appropriate times, with due regard for resit opportunities as necessary.

Examination Officers need to ensure that:

- They liaise with programme leaders and enter learners for assessments at appropriate times
- All paper based and online exams are organised according to the guidelines for external assessment outlined by Pearson
- They liaise with IT Services to ensure online assessment is co-ordinated effectively

INTERNAL VERIFICATION

Internal verification is a requirement of BTEC delivery. It is carried out on two levels in subject areas:

1. Internal verification of assignment briefs.
2. Internal verification of assessment decisions.

WHAT IS INTERNAL VERIFICATION?

Internal Verification (IV) is a system of quality checks made by an appropriate person in the centre to ensure that assignments have been written correctly and that assessment decisions are accurate.

It is a recorded discussion between two professionals to ensure accuracy, fairness, consistency and quality of assessment. It does not involve the learner.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Internal Verification checks that the standards set by the awarding body are being maintained.

KEY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

There are a number of key roles in the Internal Verification and Assessment process including:

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

A member of the senior management team will be made formally responsible for ensuring that Archway acts in accordance with Pearson's terms and conditions of approval. The current allocated member is Kay Young.

Responsibilities

The allocated member of the senior management team needs to liaise with and support the Quality Nominee to ensure that all quality processes are being conducted effectively. This will include;

- Ensuring provision of appropriate resources
- Recruiting learners with integrity
- Providing fair and full access to assessment
- Maintaining full and accurate records of assessment
- Complying with all quality assurance processes
- Ensuring that all certification claims are secure and accurate

Senior management may also need to deal with appeals, investigations into malpractice and any other aspect that relates to the overall integrity and security of BTEC qualifications.

QUALITY NOMINEE

All vocational centres have to identify a member of staff as the Quality Nominee for vocational provision. This person is the main point of contact for information related to quality assurance. The current Quality Nominee is Emily Fowler.

Responsibilities

The Quality Nominee should ensure the effective management of the BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice in the centre. They will be the main person involved with Quality Review & Development and will liaise directly with the Centre Quality Reviewer.

The Quality Nominee will liaise with all staff at Archway School that are involved in the delivery and administration of BTEC programmes and Pearson staff to ensure that:

- all programmes are approved and registrations are accurate and up-to-date.

- all approval conditions and policy requirements are being implemented consistently and effectively.
- all staff are aware of all support and guidance available and understand requirements.
- An up to date 'staff essential' page that contains all the key quality and course information is created on the Archway School VLE page
- assessment and internal verification is effective on all BTEC vocational programmes.
- there is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in place for each Principal Subject Area.
- when required, Standards Verification is completed successfully.
- regular quality meetings are timetabled across the academic year to enable all staff involved with BTEC to share good practice and co-ordinate standardisation, training, tracking and internal verification.
- Produce a quality file for the examinations officer and Lead IV's
- Produce an IV record file for each programme area
- Oversee induction programmes for new staff and students
- Co-ordinate annual review of each programme area
- Review all standard verification and quality review reports arising from quality assurance and ensure that appropriate actions are taken.

Further guidance can be found on the 'Staff Essentials' page on the VLE and the the Centre Guide to Managing Quality on the Key Documents page on www.qualifications.pearson.com

EXAMINATIONS OFFICER

Responsibilities

- Liaise with programme leaders to maintain information on which programmes are running and when they start and finish.
- Register all learners before 1st November
- Register learners onto the correct programmes checking that these are the specific titles and versions that learners are following.
- Liaise with programme leaders to ensure that learners are entered for external assessment at the correct time.
- Check registrations carefully to ensure that all data is correct and follow correct procedures if amendments are required.
- For programmes that include externally assessed units, ensure that all exam entries are made according to Pearson's requirements and that learners are entered for assessments at appropriate times, with due regard for re-sit opportunities as necessary.
- Liaise with IT services to ensure the effective co-ordination of online assessment
- Give Edexcel Online access to the Quality Nominee, to Lead Internal Verifiers so that they can register onto the OSCA system and to all other Assessors to enable them to access MyBTEC.
- Liaise with Programme Leaders to obtain a list of all student achievement prior to certification. The exams officer will check all certificates against this list and report any discrepancies to Pearson.

ROLES AT PROGRAMME LEVEL

The programme team consists of the teachers or assessors who are responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of the BTEC programmes.

PROGRAMME LEADER (usually Head of Department)

The programme leader or programme manager is the person designated by the centre to take overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of BTEC . The programme leader may also act as the Lead Internal Verifier if appropriate.

Responsibilities

- Liaise with the Quality Nominee to be aware of information updates and quality assurance requirements.
- Liaise effectively with the Examinations Officer regarding the registration and certification of learners.
- Liaise with relevant Pearson appointed staff undertaking quality assurance.
- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to deliver the programmes and units.
- Ensure that learners are entered for external assessments at appropriate times, with due regard for resit opportunities as necessary.
- Ensure that programme staff have the necessary expertise and, where relevant, qualifications.
- Review reports arising from quality assurance and ensure that appropriate actions are taken.
- Integrate meaningful employer engagement activities and review annually.

LEAD INTERNAL VERIFIER

The Lead Internal Verifier is the person designated to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area. For QCF/NQF&RQF BTECs up to Level 3, the Lead Internal Verifier should register through OSCA and download standardisation materials in September each year to complete with their team. Once completed the Lead Internal Verifier for NQF/RQF programmes must log back on to OSCA and tick the 'I have completed the online standardisation box' to gain accreditation. Lead Internal Verifiers for QCF programmes are not required to tick the box but are required to complete the online standardisation test that is available to take via OSCA from August to November each year.

The Lead Internal Verifier should be:

- someone with the authority to oversee assessment. This may be the programme leader, as this would normally be a key part of their role.

- directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, so that they understand the units.
- able to coordinate across assessors and other internal verifiers for a Principal Subject Area.

Responsibilities

- ensure that there is an assessment plan for each programme in the Principal Subject Area which is fit for purpose and meets requirements.
- sign off the assessment plan and check that it is being followed at suitable points.
- ensure that all records are stored electronically for the whole team to access on the staff O drive.
- ensure that Quality files are up to date and stored in a central area for all members of the team to access
- where possible undertake internal verification and/or assessment for individual units within at least one of the programmes.
- Liaise with the Standards Verifier and ensure they receive the programmes assessment plan at the earliest opportunity. Ensure that standards verifiers are kept up to date and supplied with samples of learner work as soon as they are requested.
- Review and authorise resubmissions, ensure that resubmissions meet all requirements outlined by Pearson.
- Ensure all resubmissions take place within 10 working day and that retake assignment briefs are fit for purpose
- make arrangements for handover to a colleague if unable to carry out the role.
- ensures that relevant assessment documentation is available and used for each unit
- is responsible for the standardisation of Assessors and Internal Verifiers using Pearson approved materials
- checks samples of assessment decisions by individual Assessors and Internal Verifiers to validate that standards are being correctly applied
- ensures the implementation of all general assessment protocol developed by the centre for BTEC qualifications
- has responsibility for ensuring learner work is authenticated

INTERNAL VERIFIER

Internal verification is the quality assurance system used to monitor assessment practice and decisions, ensuring that:

- assessment is consistent across the programme.
- ensure that the assessment plan is adhered to
- all assignment briefs are fit for purpose.
- assessment decisions accurately match learner work to assessment guidance & grading criteria.
- standardisation of assessors takes place.

Internal Verifiers can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme.

Responsibilities

- check the quality of assessment to ensure it has a vocational scenario and is fit for purpose.
- ensure an effective system of recording learner achievement is in place.
- ensure that the assessment plan is adhered to
- keep accurate and up-to-date records of the internal verification process.
- advise on the appropriateness of assessment evidence with regard to level, sufficiency, authenticity, validity and consistency.
- use your subject specialism to sample assessments to verify assessors' judgements, ensuring that they are consistent, fair and reliable.
- ensure your own assessment decisions are sampled according to the assessment plan.
- ensure that all resubmissions take place within 10 working days of the learner receiving the original assessment decision.
- ensure that all retakes are carried out according to Pearson's requirements
- ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken where necessary.
- take part in the formal stages of any appeal.

Further guidance can be found on the Centre Guide Internal Verification which is produced and updated by Pearson annually.

ASSESSORS

An assessor is anyone responsible for the assessment of learners.

Responsibilities

- ensure that you have read and understood the programme specifications and the requirements of all units being assessed.
- ensure that links with the local business community are developed and integrated into delivery.
- use Pearson's authorised assignment briefs where available and adapt the scenario accordingly.
- design assessment activities which guide your learners to produce evidence that meets the learning aim /outcome, grading criteria, unit content and any associated guidance.
- ensure that all learners have been taught essential underpinning knowledge; have had enough time to gather research from a range of sources and are prepared to take an assignment before it is set.
- the assessor should not give individual feedback or advice during the assessment stage. Feedback must be general and stop short of specific assessment of an individual learners evidence.
- assess the work submitted by learners, checking authenticity and sufficiency of evidence produced against the relevant criteria within 10 working days.
- ensure your own assessment decisions are sampled according to the assessment plan. The assessor must take responsibility for forwarding IV samples to the assigned IV in a timely fashion (within 10 working days). Assignments must not be returned to the students before they have been internally verified (IV'd).
- ensure that all resubmissions are authorised by the lead IV and take place within 10 working days of the learner receiving the original assessment decision.
- Ensure that all resubmissions are IV'd before returning them to students.
- ensure that all retakes are carried out according to Pearson's requirements.
- accurately record all assessment decisions. Update central records regularly.
- follow up any advice from your internal verifier.

Further guidance can be found in the Centre Guide to Assessment and Internal Verification on the Key Documents page of the BTEC website:

www.qualifications.pearson.com

NEW STAFF

Any new member of staff (not just NQT's) will need an induction programme to make sure they fully understand all the BTEC requirements of their role. This will normally be a departmental responsibility but extra support will be offered by senior staff (usually the Quality Nominee) if necessary.

The induction programme will include:

- An introduction to BTEC and overview of quality processes co-ordinated by Quality Nominee
- An introduction to programme area, assessment practice and assignment writing co-ordinated by Lead IV
- Assessed work sampled during the induction period (Programme Manager to oversee and decide how long the induction period needs to be – this will vary with the experience of staff).
- Completion of standardisation exercises within the course team (this will be co-ordinated by Lead IV)
- The 'buddying' of new staff with experience BTEC staff (this could be from other Departments).
- Programme Manager's / Lead Internal Verifier's will identify any areas to improve and offer the necessary support.

SAMPLING

As mentioned it is a requirement of all BTEC courses to sample students work to make sure assessment is consistent across the subject area. Lead IV's will produce an assessment plan which essentially is a timetable that includes:

- hand out, hand in, IV sampling, resubmission dates and resubmission IV sampling dates for each unit
- Produce a learner tracking sheet is to identify when individual learners have their work Internally Verified.
- It is the Quality Nominee's role to check that internal verification is consistent.

The Quality Nominee and Programme Leaders will offer guidance and support. It is also essential to have cross curricular standardisation opportunities and this will be coordinated by the Quality Nominee and follow the latest internal verification guide which produced and updated by Pearson annually.

EXTERNAL SAMPLING - STANDARDS VERIFICATION

A subject specialist Standards Verifier will be allocated to verify a sample of assessed BTEC learner work and support you in working to national standards. Standards Verification applies to all BTEC programmes with internally assessed units.

When a Principal Subject Area is going through standards verification the following will apply:

- after the initial contact the Lead IV will liaise with the allocated standards verifier re the sample requested.
- The allocated unit for sampling must be available for internal verification before 15th May, to ensure that certification is not delayed.
- if there is an unsuccessful outcome from the first sample there will be a second sample.
- if the second sample has an unsuccessful outcome the Regional Quality Manager will set up a remedial action plan.

Before the agreed sample date the standards verifier will need the following:

- a copy of the specific programmes assessment plan
- A list of which learner work has been Internally Verified.

The Standards Verifier will then select a sample from the list and for the sample they will require:

- The assignment brief(s) for the whole unit with evidence of internal verification
- For each learner sampled, a portfolio of work for the complete unit with, evidence of assessment and internal verification (including internal verification of resubmissions)
- A signed learner assessment and declaration consent form for each student

Full details of the requirements for standards verification, assessment and internal verification can be found in via the 'staff essentials' page on the VLE. There are also some very useful quick links that give guidance on assignment writing; copies of essential paperwork for QCF/NQF/RQF programmes and guidance on internal verification.

Documents are updated regularly and the Quality Nominee must ensure that quality updates and changes to Pearson's quality processes are disseminated to all those involved in BTEC delivery

This protocol will be reviewed annually

Emily Fowler, Quality Nominee, will review this policy annually

Next review date: 23rd July 2018