



St. Gregory's Catholic High School

BTEC Policy

Monitoring

The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Quality Nominee, Examinations Manager and Assistant Headteacher Pupil Progress and Assessment.

Evaluation

The policy was reviewed by the Quality Nominee, Examinations Manager, Assistant Headteacher Pupil Progress and Assessment and Senior Leadership Team on 15th February 2024 prior to the submission of the policy to Governors' Standards Committee for scrutiny and recommendation to the Full Governing Board for approval.

Policy Review Dates:

Date last approved by Full Governing Board: 29th March 2023

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Review Frequency: Annually

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Section 1 Purpose of the policy Roles and Responsibilities

~~Aim~~ Purpose of the policy

St. Gregory's Catholic High School is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment and delivery on BTEC courses are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of awarding boards. The way pupils' work is assessed must meet the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our pupils.

This policy covers all BTEC courses offered at St. Gregory's but must be read alongside whole school policies. The policy recognises the requirements from the awarding board to ensure quality within our vocational BTEC courses.

St. Gregory's Catholic High School's objectives are:

- a) To assess pupils' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgements and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid.
- b) To ensure that assessment standards and specifications are implemented fully (both in spirit and in letter), so that no risk is posed to the reputation of the awarding boards or the qualifications we offer.
- c) To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, moderation, internal verification and cross-departmental coordination as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes we offer.
- d) To provide learner-centred approaches to assessment, which provide opportunities for pupils to achieve at all levels/grades.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Responsible for policy: Quality Nominee and Examinations Manager
- Responsible for implementation: Course Assessors, LIVs and HODs.

It is the responsibility of teachers to:

- a) Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of pupils and of the qualification
- b) Provide pupils with a schedule of assessment
- c) Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform pupils of their individual progress and advise them what they need to do to improve
- d) Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically, using agreed documentation,

- e) Comply with the school and awarding board guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following a referral decision
- f) Familiarise themselves and learners with the school's Assessment Appeals procedure(s)
- g) Be aware of, keep up-to-date with and ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the school and awarding board
- h) Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation
- i) Provide special arrangements for learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities according to the regulations of the awarding board and in liaison with the school's SENDCo.

It is the role of the Internal Verifiers to:

- a) Verify assignment briefs prior to distribution to learners
- b) Verify a sample of assessment decisions
- c) Develop the skills of assessors, especially those new to assessment maintaining the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meeting of assessors

It is the responsibility of the Examinations Manager

- a) To facilitate the IV process
- b) To meet the deadlines for registering learners with the awarding board
- c) To ensure that awarding board data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of learners
- d) To claim learners' certificates as soon as appropriate
- e) To claim unit certification when a learner has not been able to complete the full programme of study

It is the responsibility of the Quality Nominee

- a) To act as a conduit for information from awarding boards to course teams
- b) To ensure standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes

Section 2 Registration and Certification

Registration of learners

- At the beginning of each academic year, the Examinations Manager will contact Lead Internal Verifiers to clarify the names of learners to be registered for a BTEC course. Learner names must be emailed to the Examinations Manager before an internal deadline.
- The Examinations Manager will register learners with Edexcel before the published deadline. The school's Data Manager informs the Examinations Manager when a pupil joining school mid-year has opted to take a BTEC course.

Certification

- Lead internal verifiers will maintain tracking of learner progress.
- This will be emailed to the Examinations Manager
- The Examinations Manager will maintain copies of this communication
- The Examinations Manager is responsible for communicating certification claims to Edexcel
- The Examinations Manager is responsible for checking results and comparing certificates with results
- Where there are issues with this process, records of department tracking and examination tracking will be used to check results

Section 3 Internal Verification and Assessment

Aims

- To ensure a clear and consistent internal verification strategy is implemented through the centre.
- To meet requirements from the awarding board

The Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance on BTEC programmes. The role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards but can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.

1. Each course will have an identified Internal Verifier (IV). *OSCA is no longer used for the new Tech Awards*
2. Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the qualification for which they are responsible, to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria.
3. Provision will be made for communication between course teams to share 'best practice' and areas of concern. Typically, this will be achieved through regular meetings of Internal Verifiers at which standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses and units and to offer mutual support within and across departments.
4. Within courses where the cohort is five or less all assessment decisions about pupils will be internally verified to ensure consistency. Within courses with a cohort above five a verification assessment plan will be designed that allows assessment decisions for all learners to be verified at least once.
5. The lead internal verifier will be chosen by the appropriate head of department in liaison with the centre's Quality Nominee.
6. The lead internal verifier will:
 - Design the department's internal verification schedules.
 - Monitor the progress of the internal verification throughout the department.
 - Register as the lead internal verifier with Edexcel online.
 - Undertake the training exercise for lead internal verifiers.
 - Undertake the testing for lead internal verifiers.
 - Disseminate standardisation materials to other staff delivering the course.
 - Liaise with the external verifiers if national standards sampling is required.
 - Act as a go to person for any assessment issues within the department.
 - Not verify their own work or assignments.

- Ensure that all assignment briefs are verified as fit for purpose prior to their being circulated to pupils. They must enable pupils to meet the unit grading criteria.
- Complete the template and make recommendations to the assessor on how to improve the quality of the brief if necessary.
- Make all IV evidence available to the External Verifier.
- Plan with the course team an annual internal verification schedule linked to assignment plans.
- Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria.
- Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process using a standard template.
- If a concern is raised the IV must discuss this with the assessor prior to the final confirmation of the marks for all the pupils taking the assignment. As a result of the IV process it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of pupils and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all marks or to some marks.
- Where re-sampling is necessary the work must be verified again before being sent to the EV and records kept.
- The lead internal verifier must create an assessment plan which identifies the resubmission date for each assignment. The time granted for a resubmission must not exceed ten days. All resubmissions must be authorised by the Quality Nominee.
- Where pupils require a re-take of a unit, the lead internal verifier is responsible for setting appropriate dates for submission and assessment.

Section 4 Malpractice and Learner Appeals

Aims

This policy addresses the possibility of pupil malpractice, and sets out responsibilities and centre systems for reporting and dealing with suspected malpractice. This section of the policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Malpractice Policy, Non-Examination Assessment Policy and Internal Appeals Policy (Examinations).

Pupil Malpractice

Malpractice covers a range of offences, which can be collectively described as cheating.

- Plagiarism: taking someone else's work, images or ideas, whether published or not, with or without their permission, and passing them off as your own, thereby not properly acknowledging the original source. This particularly relates to material downloaded from the Internet or copied from books.
- Copying the work of other pupils with or without their permission and knowingly allowing another pupil to copy your own work.
- Colluding with other pupils to produce work that is then submitted individually, except where this is specifically required/allowed by the assessment criteria.
- Falsely claiming extenuating circumstances to gain an unfair advantage in assessment.
- Falsely claiming qualifications or certificates.
- Submitting work done by another pupil as your own.

Preventing Pupil Malpractice

The centre will take positive steps to prevent and reduce the occurrence of malpractice by pupils. These will include:

- a) Using the induction period and the course handbook to inform pupils of the school's policy on malpractice and consequent penalties.
- b) Showing pupils the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources including websites. Pupils must not be discouraged from conducting research; indeed evidence of relevant research often contributes to the achievement of higher grades. However, the submitted work must show evidence that the pupil has interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and has acknowledged any sources used.
- c) Introducing procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice, e.g. plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc. These procedures may include:
 - The requirement for interim work to be handed in before final deadlines to give a picture of the pupil's progress.
 - Periods of supervised sessions during which evidence for assignments/tasks/coursework is produced by the pupil.

- Altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis.
- The assessor assessing work for a single assignment/task in a single session for the complete cohort of pupils.
- Using oral questions with pupils.

Investigation of malpractice

Where malpractice is suspected staff will follow the procedure below

- Lead internal verifier to complete malpractice report.
- Lead internal verifiers to investigate in first instance, Quality Nominee to be informed of concerns.
- Quality Nominee to inform Examinations Manager, SLT and regional quality standards verifier at Edexcel.
- Outcome of investigation to be recorded and records to be kept for three years.
- If no evidence of malpractice is found then the pupil will be awarded the grade.

Appeals

It is the responsibility of the school as an assessment centre to make all pupils aware of the appeals procedure and give them access to a copy of the procedure. This will be accessible from the school website.

- The Lead internal verifier for each subject is responsible for managing appeals in the first instance (informal appeals). The Lead internal verifier will meet with the pupil and discuss the issues to negotiate a solution. Where this is not possible the formal appeals process will be implemented.
- If deemed necessary formal appeals must be referred to the Quality Nominee and Examinations Manager.
- Written records of all appeals must be maintained. These must include a description of the appeal, the outcome of the appeal and the reason for that outcome.
- All appeals for individual units must be made within two weeks of receiving formal feedback.
- All appeals on results must be made ~~three months of receiving external result~~ within the awarding board's published timescales.

Grounds for appeals

A pupil/candidate would have grounds for appeal against an assessment decision in, but not limited to, the following situations.

- a) The work is not assessed according to the set criteria or the criteria are ambiguous.
- b) The final grade of the work does not match the criteria set for grade boundaries or the grade boundaries are not sufficiently defined.

- c) The internal verification procedure contradicts the assessment grades awarded.
- d) There is evidence of preferential treatment towards other pupils/candidates.
- e) The conduct of the assessment did not conform to the published requirements of the awarding board
- f) Valid, agreed, extenuating circumstances were not taken into account at the time of assessment, which the school was aware of prior to the submission deadline.
- g) Agreed deadlines were not observed by staff.
- h) The current Assessment Plan was not adhered to.
- i) The decision to reject coursework on the grounds of malpractice.

Outcomes of appeals

There are three possible outcomes

- Confirmation of original decision
- Agreed resubmission within an agreed timescale
- Re-assessment with an objective assessor

Staff Malpractice

The following are examples of malpractice by school staff:

- a) Failure to keep any awarding board materials secure when this is so indicated by exam board
- b) Alteration of awarding board assessment and grading criteria
- c) Assisting pupils in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves staff producing work for the pupil
- d) Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the pupil has not generated
- e) Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the pupil's own to be included in a pupil's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- f) Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- g) Misusing the conditions for special pupil requirements
- h) Failing to keep pupil computer files secure
- i) Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- j) Fraudulent certificate claims, such as claiming for a certificate prior to the pupil completing all the requirements of assessment

Section 5 Appeals

Aims

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision.
- To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the assessor at the earliest opportunity.
- To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness.
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding board, where appropriate.
- To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification. In order to do this, the centre will:
 - To inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure.
 - To record, track and validate any appeal.
 - To forward the appeal to the awarding board when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted.
 - To keep appeals records for inspection by the awarding board for a minimum of 18 months.
 - To have a staged appeals procedure.
 - To take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results.
 - To monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.

BTEC Appeals Process

Purpose/Scope

- To ensure that there are clear procedures for learners to enable them to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision.
- That any appeal is recorded and documentation is retained for 18 months following the resolution of the appeal.
- That the Head of Centre facilitates the learner's ultimate right of appeal to Pearson, once the centre's appeal procedure is exhausted.

Stage 1 – INFORMAL: learner consults with assessor within a period of 2 weeks following the assessment decision, to discuss an assessment decision. If unresolved, then the issues are documented before moving to stage 2.

Stage 2 – REVIEW: review of assessment decisions by the Internal Verifier. Learner notified of findings and agrees or disagrees, in writing, with outcome within a period of 1 week. If unresolved, move to stage 3.

Stage 3 – APPEAL HEARING: Quality Nominee will hear the appeal within a period of 2 weeks: last stage by the centre. If unresolved, move to stage 4

Stage 4 – EXTERNAL APPEAL: the grounds for appeal and any supporting documentation must be submitted by the centre to Pearson within 14 days of the completion of Stage 3: a fee is levied.

Recording appeals: each stage must be recorded, dated and show either agreement or disagreement with decisions. Documents must be kept for a minimum of 18 months.

Monitoring of appeals: undertaken by senior management to inform development and quality improvement.

Section 6 Recognition of Prior Learning

Introduction

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is about using a learner's evidence of earlier learning and achievement towards part of a qualification. An assessor reviews whether the evidence is enough to show that a learner has met the assessment requirements for a current qualification. The learner needs to show that through knowledge, understanding or skills they already have, they do not need to repeat the course or complete extra assessment activity.

If there is evidence that the learner has previously shown the knowledge, skills or understanding required by a qualification, this may be used towards achieving that qualification.

RPL guidance for teachers delivering BTEC qualifications:

Centre Preparation

Before enrolling the learner, discuss with them the option of using RPL to claim units for some of their past learning or experience. If the learner is interested in this, you must explain to them:

1. The process of claiming a unit using RPL.
2. The support and guidance that is available.
3. How long the process will take, how to appeal and any costs included.

The lead IV must check that the evidence provided by the learner for RPL has been achieved before the start of their course of study.

Awareness, information and guidance

Register your learner as soon as they officially start to gather evidence. To help the learner in gathering evidence you could create an assessment plan or tracking document. The evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the unit, or part of a unit, that the evidence is being used for. Evidence from a learner's past experience could include:

1. Home or family life
2. Non-certificated education or learning
3. Paid work
4. Community or voluntary work.

Assessing

We will inform our Standards Verifier/External Examiner, before any monitoring activity starts, if we have applied RPL for any particular units or learners. The Standards Verifier/External Examiner may include these in their sample. It depends on the range of their experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. The Assessor may ask questions or ask a learner to show them skills, to check that their understanding and skills are current.

The assessment strategy, where stated, for each qualification must also be followed. Assessment as part of RPL is a structured process for gathering and reviewing evidence and making judgements about a learner's past learning and experience in relation to unit standards.

The Assessor may look at:

1. Work experience records, validated by managers.
2. Past portfolios of evidence or essays made by the learner.
3. Reports validated as being the learner's own unaided work.
4. Expert witness testimonies.
5. Professional discussions.
6. New assignment briefs or tasks that have been created to fill any gaps in the learner's work.

Standards Verifiers or External Examiners are not required to give feedback on an assignment brief or task if you choose to set one as part of RPL.

Evaluate all the evidence using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed. In assessing a unit using RPL the Assessor must be satisfied that the evidence from the learner meets the standard for all of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

If the qualification has published assessment or grading criteria, you must review the evidence against all the criteria.

If there are gaps in the learner's work through RPL, then we would need to use more assessment methods to create enough evidence to be able to award the learning outcome for the whole unit.

Documenting evidence

- Evidence collected through the RPL process needs to be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures that school uses for any other internal assessment methods.
- Ensure records of assessment against prior learning are kept and are available for verification if requested.
- Once you've checked a learner's evidence and made an assessment decision, it is important that feedback is given to the learner including the assessment decision and what options are available to the learner if you have decided not to award the unit or qualification.
- You must check that the learner understands how they can appeal if they do not agree with the assessment decision.
- If the learner wants to make a complaint they can do so using the Pearson Qualifications Website.
- If the learner can show that they have met all the learning outcomes and assessment criteria using RPL they will be able to claim for the unit or qualification.
- If Pearson identifies that all unit requirements have not been met, it will:
 - ask you to provide more evidence, or

- ask the learner to complete the standard assessment requirements if they want to achieve the qualification.

Outcomes of the RPL process

- School will claim certificates once the quality assurance process is successfully completed using the standard procedures.
- After certification, the assessment and internal verification records will be kept along with any extra RPL records for three years.

Section 7 Complaints

Any complaint about the implementation of this policy must be made in accordance with the school's complaints policy which can be obtained from school or found on the school's website.

The school will pursue any query or complaint and provide a response and/or take appropriate steps to resolve any issue raised at the earliest opportunity in line with the procedures outlined in the school's Complaints Policy.