

**Assessment Policy
(Including BTEC – Pearson)**

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**Assessment Policy
(Including BTEC – Pearson)****Introduction**

Shrewsbury Colleges Group recognises that high quality assessment practices are an important element of the student experience and that the outcomes of assessment influence students' future lives.

Assessment is the process by which a student's skills and knowledge are reviewed in order to evaluate what they have learnt or for example in the case of NVQs how they are performing against the competencies they are required to demonstrate.

Assessment will ensure that students are fairly, accurately and regularly assessed in a consistent manner and will:

- Provide diagnostic information that assists both staff and students/candidates to provide appropriate support to enable achievement of the learning outcomes (initial assessment).
- Allow students/candidates to monitor their own progress.
- Enable staff to review and develop their learning programmes to achieve their intended learning outcomes.
- Provide evidence of progress and achievement to enable accreditation and progression to take place.
- Enable a dialogue between the students and leading staff/assessors/employers to ensure progression within the provision (tracking).
- Provide a measure of the student's achievement where relevant.

Assessment Policy Aim:

1. To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of students or individuals.
2. To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards.
3. To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

In order to do this, Shrewsbury Colleges Group will:

- Ensure that students are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment.
- Produce a clear and accurate assessment plan at the start of the programme/academic year.

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- Provide clear, published dates for handout of assignments and deadlines for Assessment.
- Assess students' evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria.
- Ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid, and reliable.
- Not limit or 'cap' student achievement if work is submitted late for BTEC Programme teams. For other qualifications, refer to your own Awarding Bodies in relation to their guidance for work submitted late
- Develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice.
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions.
- Maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure.
- Provide samples for standards verification/external examination as required by the awarding organisation.
- Monitor standards verification/external examination reports and undertake any remedial action required.
- Share good assessment practice between all teaching teams within the same Awarding Body including BTEC teaching teams.
- Ensure that assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all staff including BTEC teachers.
- Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

Principles of Assessment

It is important that before assessment is planned or carried out that Shrewsbury Colleges Group staff refer to Awarding Body Assessment standards and criteria for guidance (BTEC teachers to refer to Pearson).

All assessment at the college follows the principles below:

- **Authenticity:** All assessment activity must have processes in place to ensure that the achievement is the students' own work. Students/candidates must sign a statement to this effect. Students using electronic systems must sign the relevant electronic declaration. Awarding Bodies have their own rules and regulations about authenticity and teaching staff must make themselves familiar with them and abide by them (see also Malpractice & Maladministration Policy).
- **Validity:** The evidence is relevant to the standards/criteria against which the student is being assessed.

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- **Reliability:** The student consistently achieves the same results even if the scenario is different.
- **Sufficiency:** Enough evidence as specified in the Evidence Requirements or Assessment Strategy.
- **Fair:** Ensuring everyone has an equal chance of getting an objective and accurate assessment.
- **Fit for purpose:** Assessment must be fit for the students/candidates and the learning. The assessment strategy must be clearly appropriate for the target group of students/candidates in the correct context in which they are learning e.g. directed learning must be supportive, or initial diagnostic must not be intimidating. The criteria and methods which are being used to judge the work must be clear to the student, staff and internal and external moderators/verifiers and meet or exceed the requirements of external bodies.
- **Inclusiveness:** Assessment should be based on students' needs and differences. It must allow all students to demonstrate their achievements regardless of individual circumstances. It must comply with the Single Equality Scheme.
- **Quality Feedback** is an integral part of the assessment process. Students are entitled to feedback that acknowledges their achievements and supports them to develop on all submitted assessment tasks. The nature, extent and timing of feedback should be clear in advance. The college aims to take a consistent approach to feedback so that there is equality of opportunity and to maximise student outcomes with progression and destination at its core, appropriate to the qualification(s) being studied.

Forms of Assessment

- **Initial/Diagnostic** assessment usually takes place at the start and is used to identify the current learning needs (including any gaps in written or practical work) in order to provide appropriate support. Refer to the Admissions Policy for further details about RPL.
- **Formative** assessment is developmental, supportive and encouraging and ongoing throughout the course. It is used to give feedback and support to the student on progress to date and to inform the student and tutor of action to take to maintain or improve performance.
- **Summative** assessment takes place at the end of a course or unit and counts towards a final assessment decision. It is used to measure how much learning has taken place. It is a judgement on whether the student has achieved all or some of the learning outcomes for a given level.

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- **Formal** assessment is structured and usually takes place in clearly stated conditions, e.g. the completion of a practical task, or presentation. It may be undertaken by the whole group or by an individual. It is usually summative in nature and may be assessed externally.
- **Informal** assessment is ongoing integrated and flexible. It is varied and may be recorded by the student and the staff. It can include self-assessment or verbal feedback given by the assessor. It can be formative or summative or both. If it is summative, it must be recorded, although NVQs record formative assessments to demonstrate competency over time.

Remote/Blended Learning

- To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by the awarding organisation.
- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual students.

The college will:

- Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetabled to support blended learning when students are working remotely.
- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner.
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear.
- Ensure that, when students submit work, measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the student.
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Awarding Body Agreements (For BTEC Staff - Pearson Centre Agreement).
- Ensure equality in provision of remote teaching by auditing student access to IT and WIFI and providing devices, where possible, to enable engagement.
- To provide a place to work in college for those students that are vulnerable or unable to work from home.
- Ensuring that safeguarding measures are considered during blended learning activity – refer to the 'Guidance for staff working remotely with students' found on InfoPoint.

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The timely provision of constructive feedback on marked assignments is a key element in supporting teaching and learning, monitoring students' progress and assisting their development.

It is a student's responsibility to hand in work on time and it is the leading staff's responsibility to return work within normally a two week window. Students using online tracking systems should use the appropriate 'upload evidence' facility to forward evidence to their assessor.

The college will:

- Ensure that students' work is marked and returned as soon as possible with feedback and provisional grading provided within two weeks of the submission date. Returned work will incorporate appropriate feedback and guidance to enable the students to identify both where they have demonstrated strengths and how to improve their performance in future assignments (except where this is prohibited by the awarding body). In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, the following actions should be taken:
 1. Students will be notified in advance of the expected return date and the reasons for the longer turn-round time.
 2. Where possible, staff should provide some interim oral feedback.

Procedures

- Course teams will endeavour to have an assignment/assessment plan that does not overburden the student at key points during the year. The assessment schedules must be in place with the Curriculum Director at the start of the academic year. These will be published via the relevant communication channels for that qualification.
- Course Teams will notify students using the appropriate communication tool for that qualification ranging from course handbooks, email, Teams, Moodle, Online Tracking Systems or through assessment schedules of both the submission date and the return date for all work and the awarding body penalties for late submission of work. This must be in place before the start of the course.
- **For BTEC Teams Specifically** Teachers will ensure assignment briefs must be internally verified before distribution to any students and any relevant changes made. Assessment and verification templates must include all elements required by BTEC (see assessment and verification template link at the end of this document). The internal verifier must sign and date accordingly. Copies must be retained in the course file.

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- Teachers will organise the submission and return of assignments within modules to be scheduled to enable students to receive feedback before completion of a further assignment. The return of assignments must fall within the parameters as laid out earlier in this section.
- Teachers will provide opportunities for the provision of an appropriate element of formative feedback prior to submission where the assessment design for a programme comprises a single, summative assignment. Refer to qualification specifications for guidance.
- Where an assessment grade will contribute to a qualification award, ensure that the Awarding Organisation rules are applied: to issuing the task with IV where appropriate, submission of work, internal standardisation and quality assurance. (for BTEC teachers - Refer to the BTEC Internal Verification Policy)
- Teachers must complete assessment recording and tracking through Markbook, which must be kept up to date throughout the year. Audits will take place to ensure consistency and also tracking is accurate. Markbook will also calculate how close students are to achieving their target grade. The Curriculum Director for each area will ensure that Markbook set up is accurate, before the course commences.
- All students are expected to meet the published coursework submission deadlines.

For BTEC Teaching Teams Specifically

- **For work submitted on time:** If on marking the assignment, the tutor judges that the student would be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance, then the student can resubmit work within 15 working days as granted by the Lead IV. If then the assignment does not reach the pass criteria, a new assignment can be issued but only one submission is allowed and the maximum grade achievable is pass.
- **For work submitted after the deadline:** If an assignment is handed in Late (within 10 working days past the deadline, unless there are documented exceptional circumstances), work will be marked and graded to pass, merit or distinction unless meeting the deadline was one of the assessment criteria. The late submission should be documented on Promonitor and a stage 1 disciplinary could be issued.

Failure to meet a submission deadline will result in no resubmission opportunity being granted by the Lead IV. If the late work does not meet the pass criteria, then there will be no opportunity to retake a new assignment and the unit will be recorded as fail.

Extensions can be granted and documented by the tutor in exceptional circumstances if requested by the student prior to the deadline.

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If the assignment is not handed in within 10 working days of the deadline then the assignment must be marked as fail. Repeated late submission (3 or more late submissions) should be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure by the Curriculum Director.

The following flow chart demonstrates the process:

[BTEC-Assignment-Submission-Flowchart-August2017.pdf \(pearson.com\)](#)

Consistency of implementation and management are essential. Programme Leaders/Curriculum Directors (or appropriate staff) will monitor and take responsibility for the turn-round time of coursework and provision of feedback to students. Students will be encouraged to comment on the effectiveness of feedback and the timing of student work through student forums and online surveys.

Assessment for Learning

Assessment **for** learning is central to successful teaching and learning activities. It involves both teacher and students in review and reflection and provides valuable feedback, not only to students, but to teachers who can use it to adapt their approaches to teaching and learning based on the needs of their students. Effective assessment for learning strategies includes setting clear objectives and the criteria for success, reflection and self-assessment, peer review, and effective questioning which encourages deeper learning through the 'how' as well as the 'what' of the learning taking place. Constructive feedback with a 'medal and mission' approach enables students to understand what they have done well and set personal targets to focus on what they can improve. (Where this falls within the parameters allowed by the awarding body).

Assessment **as** learning provides opportunities for students to critically reflect on their own learning and identify next steps. It encourages them to think about and understand the process of learning and the strategies used to learn successfully. Effective self-assessment, self-monitoring and self-adjustment supports the development of the expert student.

Assessment **of** learning often occurs at the end of a learning module or cycle and measures students' abilities to meet outcomes after learning and practice has occurred. It evaluates whether, and to what extent, students have achieved the learning outcomes and may be used to make decisions about the students' next steps.

**Assessment Policy
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- Assessment is not carried out exclusively for accreditation purposes – it is used to measure progress, build up self-confidence and review success.
- Assessment must consider the learning needs of all the individuals and target groups.
- Assessment tasks are always subject to internal moderation or IQA before distribution.
- Assessment documentation includes the requirement that students state the authenticity of their own work.
- Assessment procedures are explicit and public.
- Assessment procedures are varied, flexible and may be negotiable, while assessment criteria are fixed for different levels.
- Methods of assessment are creative, innovative, and varied.
- Assessment procedures allow students to work at and be assessed at the correct level.
- Assessment builds the self-esteem of the student.
- Assessment encourages self-assessment by students to promote independence.
- College staff are encouraged to evaluate the assessment procedures to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness.
- Assessors actively promote engagement through Online Tracking Systems to students and employers.

Malpractice

Malpractice refers to any deliberate act or practice which compromises or threatens to compromise the process and integrity of assessment and as a result the validity of the result or certification awarded. See the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy for examples of malpractice by students and centre staff and for the procedures for dealing with allegations of malpractice.

Responsibilities and Duties

All college staff and assessors have a responsibility to ensure the successful implementation of the Assessment Policy and associated procedures and guidelines.

- Teaching staff and assessors have the primary responsibility for implementation of assessment, reflecting the nature of the subject. Assessors have the responsibility to design and implement assessment in ways that encourage and promote effective learning, and that measure student achievement effectively with reference to state intended learning outcomes. To make reasonable adjustments to the design and conduct of assessment to meet the needs of students with special educational needs and disabilities and to provide constructive and developmental feedback on assessed

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work. They also have a responsibility to update their knowledge and skills and attend training and development.

- Internal verifiers/IQAs, have the primary responsibility for assuring the effectiveness of assessment.
- The Academic Leadership Team has responsibility for monitoring assessment procedures and standards across the college.
- The Vice Principal – Quality, Apprenticeships & Information has responsibility for setting and agreeing actions to ensure the Policy is implemented.
- The Principal has overall responsibility for creating an ethos and environment that reflects the Policy.

Related Documents:

Malpractice & Maladministration Policy and BTEC Malpractice & Maladministration Policy
BTEC Internal Verification Policy

BTEC Teams - Useful documents:

These can be found the Pearson BTEC Website under the Support Tab

Pearson Qualification Subject pages

BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Assessment –

Assessment and verification templates -