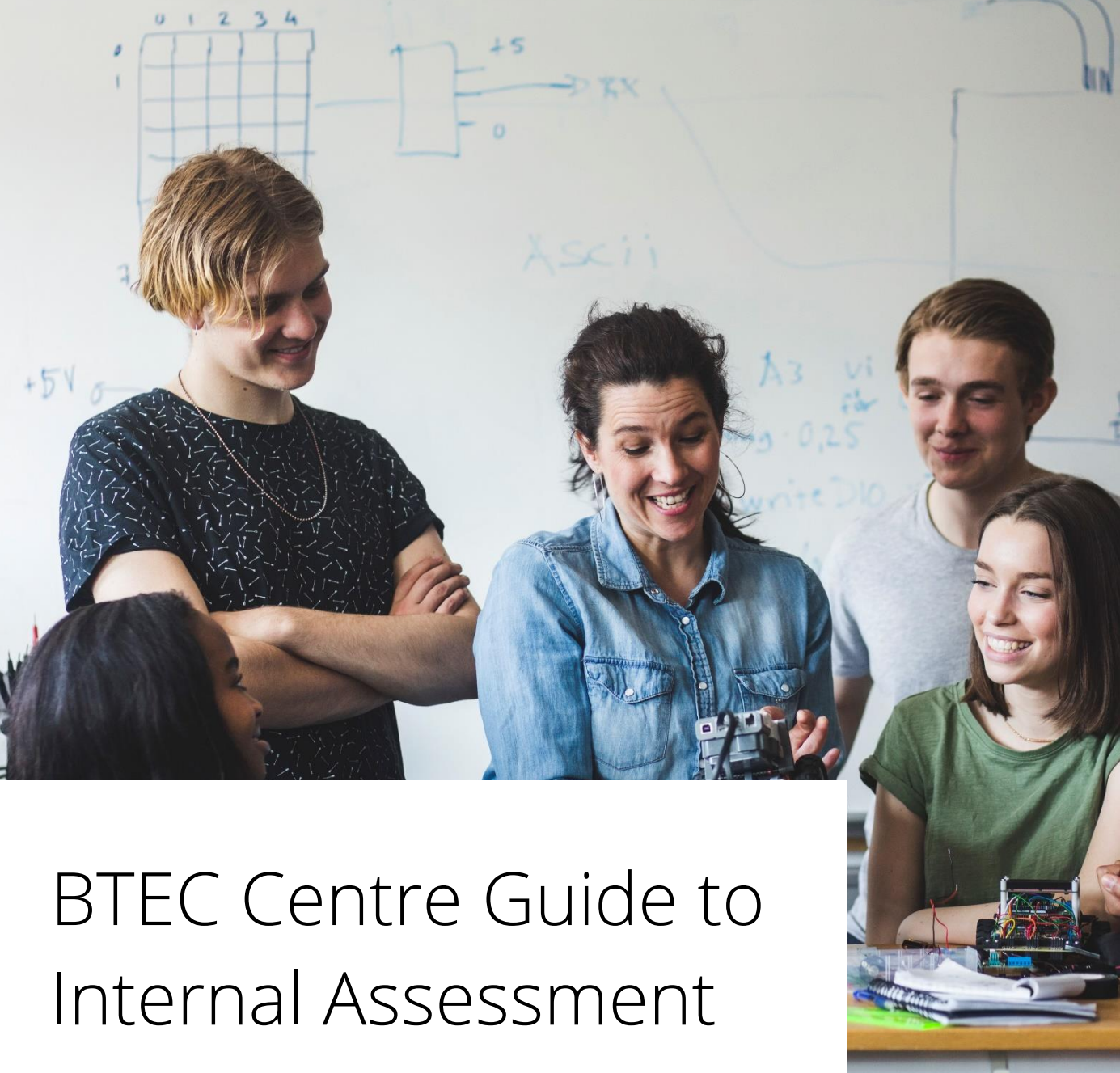




Pearson
BTEC



BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Assessment

2023 - 2024

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Version Control

Page and Change	Date of Change
Page 23 – Suspecting AI Misuse or Plagiarism	20.03.2024
Page 34 – AI misuse and marking – Working Example	20.03.2024
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Which Qualifications does this Guide Cover?

This guide provides essential information for *BTEC programme teams* on the planning and implementation of the *internal assessment of the following BTEC qualifications*:

- BTEC Level 1 / Entry Level Introductory Suite
- BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts
- BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Awards (from 2017) *
- BTEC Level 2 and 3 Technicals
- BTEC Level 3 Nationals

*Engineering only

It does not cover:

- BTEC Qualifications accredited by SQA. For guidance on BTEC Security (SQA) qualifications please refer to the BTEC Security Centre Management Handbook
- BTEC Entry Level (legacy programmes)
- BTEC Level 1 (legacy ungraded programmes)
- BTEC Specialist programmes from Entry to Level 3
- BTEC PSD, Workskills and Skilled for Life
- BTEC Tech Awards (from 2022)
- BTEC Higher Nationals (Level 4-7)

Planning for Assessment

Making time for planning is the best way of ensuring everything is in place for robust assessment.

Assessment Plans

The assessment plan is a working document and as such may need to be changed during the year. The use of version numbers will create a clear audit trail if this happens. Robust assessment plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and be verified by the Lead Internal Verifier who should ensure that the units chosen meet the rules of combination for that specific programme.

As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan should include:

- names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- scheduling for hand-out of assignments
- deadlines for assessments
- scheduling for internal verification
- scheduling of the opportunity for resubmission
- scheduling of external assessments so that a full programme plan is shown.

In designing the assessment plan, the splitting of Learning Aims/Objectives across assignments and/or the provision for extra assignments or tasks to meet the Merit or Distinction criteria is not permitted. Tasks must be written to allow the opportunity for the full achievement of Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria within each learning aim.

Planning Internal Verification

Internal verification is a quality assurance approach used to monitor assessment practices and decisions. Dates for this activity to take place for both first and resubmission should be established and detailed on the assessment plan before the programme commences.

Full guidance on internal verification can be found in the BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification. This can be accessed [here](#) on our quality assurance webpage.

When planning for assessment you should consider:

- unit/component sequencing or integration – including planning of synoptic assessments
- rules of combination (see sections 2 and 9 in subject specification)
- values of units selected appropriate to size of qualification
- assignments and projects
- resource planning, such as when to deploy specialist staff
- timetabling, events, shows and trips
- schemes of work
- access to external resources
- planning assignment deadlines across the programme to ensure a continually balanced workload for learners
- feedback from learners and from external sources, such as progression providers
- ensuring authenticity of learner work.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I structure my BTEC programme in any way that I want?

Yes. Your delivery plan needs to enable your learners to achieve the best they can however, there are a few points to consider when planning your programme such as:

- *Learners must be registered for any assessment to be valid.*
- *Checking sampling requirements and deadlines* to make sure you will have standards verification samples ready for submission at the right time. The window for standards verification runs from January and the deadline for this activity in the summer term will be confirmed shortly.
- *Does your plan make best use of synoptic units/components* so your learners can draw on their learning across the programme to develop the knowledge and skills required to achieve the very best they can?
- *Does the plan reflect the unit/component guidance* in the specification?

If you are unsure about any of these points or need any help when planning your programme, [contact your Subject Advisor](#) who will be happy to help.

Can I integrate BTEC units/components for assessment?

Yes. Both a unit-by-unit or component-by-component approach and an integrated approach are valid and appropriate delivery methods for BTEC qualifications.

For programmes where units/components will be integrated, the assessment plan should provide the appropriate assessment criteria for each unit/component. At the point of assessment, it is important to map the assessment of evidence against assessment criteria across units/components and maintain accurate records of learner achievement for each unit/component. You will also need to consider the published guidance in the unit specification.

Can I amend my assessment plan?

Yes. This is a working document. Dates planned into your assessment plans can be amended. We recommend that you use version control to avoid confusion and so that there is a full audit trail.

During the standards verification process, you will need to make sure your Pearson Standards Verifier is notified of any significant changes via email.

All my units/components are delivered throughout the year. Do I still need a plan?

You should reconsider this approach and consider whether all the units/components need to be delivered 'long and thin'. A range of units/components must be available for standards verification which means having some completed units/components available for sampling by mid-summer term at the latest.

You should also consider if learners are best supported by this method of delivery and avoid overloading them with assessment at the end of the year.

Can I use my centre's assessment and verification forms, or must I use the Pearson templates?

Yes. We're happy for centres to design and use their own forms. All we ask is that in addition to their own requirements, centres also include what we have in our templates as a minimum.

I have several late starters. How do I plan for their assessment?

You can create a separate assessment plan if these learners are following different dates so that you can show where assessment will take place for these learners.

For BTEC assessment, what is considered a conflict of interest?

Potential conflict of interests can include:

- a close relation, spouse or partner within the centre who is either a learner or another member of staff
- a close relation, spouse or partner acting as a Standards Verifier or other external quality assurance role.

Individuals should be forthcoming in disclosing any activity that might represent a conflict of interest.

What information do we need to record for a conflict of interest?

The log should include programme details and the names and relationships of the parties involved, along with an outline of the assessment plan in terms of who is delivering each unit/component on that programme. You should also note any relationship to other assessors e.g., line manager, internal verifier etc.

How can we mitigate the risk of a conflict of interest?

You should consider possibilities for amending delivery in some way; can the learner be moved to another group for that unit/component which is delivered by someone else? Can someone else assess the unit/component?

You should put steps in place to independently verify the work of any assessor or internal verifier involved. This can be indicated on your internal verification plan.

Do the assessment decisions of all learners need to be internally verified during the lifetime of the programme?

No. There is no requirement to internally verify every learner. The sample must include learners who have been awarded each grade and a sample of assessment decisions for all assessors and all assignments need to be internally verified.

Can I internally verify my own assessment decisions?

No. Assessment decisions must always be internally verified by someone other than the Assessor. Ideally, this should be someone delivering a similar qualification who has the required subject knowledge, or someone experienced in the assessment of BTEC qualifications.

Assessment and Grading

Before attempting any assessment on a BTEC qualification, learners must be registered on the programme.

Guidance on how to do this can be found [here](#). You should also refer to your centre's Registration Policy.

The Assessor should decide when the learner is suitably prepared to undertake the assessment and issue the Assignment. Once learners have been issued with an assignment, it is essential they work independently to produce and prepare their evidence for assessment.

Before commencing an assessment, the Assessor should take care to ensure each learner understands:

- the assessment requirements
- the nature of the evidence they need to produce
- the importance of time management and meeting deadlines, including the consequences for late submission, including rules of resubmission and retakes
- the importance of submitting authentic work (including the impact of plagiarism and use of Artificial Intelligence).

Before your learners start an assessment, the Assessor should:

- be confident they are sufficiently prepared to undertake the assessment and can do so independently
- encourage them to aim at “getting it right” on first submission so they are not relying on a repeat submission or retake where applicable.

This will help learners develop responsibility for their own achievement and prepare them for the world of work or Higher Education.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can we design our own Assignment Briefs?

Yes. We are happy for you to design your own assignment briefs around your needs and requirements. We provide Authorised Assignment Briefs (AABs) to save you time in case you need them, and these are found in the course materials section of the relevant specification pages on our website.

Do Assignment Briefs need to cover all unit/component content?

No. Your assignment brief needs to cover just what is being assessed so no need to include the entire unit content.

All unit/component content needs to be taught, where relevant, to provide learners with the breadth and depth to their studies. There is no formula for how much content needs to be assessed.

The amount of content the learner will need to refer to will depend on the specific requirements of the actual assignment and the requirements of the assessment criteria and associated assessment guidance which can sometimes prescribe which areas of the unit/component content needs to be assessed.

Please remember that Learning Aims should not be split across Assignments.

Can we adapt the Authorised Assignment Briefs?

Yes. We would encourage the review of AABs to ensure the scenario is relevant to your locality, community, and learners. Also consider the assessment method and feel free to adapt it to show innovation and recognition of learner needs.

Submission of Evidence

Only *one submission* is allowed for each assignment.

The Assessor is expected to formally record the assessment result and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria.

Each learner should submit:

- evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria

Assessment Language

All work should be submitted in English unless prior approval is obtained. The use of languages in qualifications policy contains full details of what is required. This can be accessed [here](#) on the Pearson policies and guidance for centres webpage.

- a signed and dated declaration of authenticity with each assignment which confirms they have produced the evidence themselves.

Using Electronic Signatures

Electronic signatures *are permitted on all assessment documentation* if there is an audit trail to support its authenticity. This also includes learner and parental signatures where required.

The simplest way to do this is to ensure that signatures are electronic and *take the format of a centre issued email address* for both the learner and the LIV. Note that a change in font style is not considered an electronic signature.

Alternatively, you could validate through:

- an email from the learner/Assessor with the record attached to show that it has been sent from them
- a system log to show that the learner/Assessor has submitted the record.

Meeting Deadlines

Setting and meeting deadlines for assessment is an essential part of BTEC delivery. Learners should be assessed fairly and consistently, and *learners should not be advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments*.

You should have in place a clear assessment procedure for a learner to formally apply for an extension if they have genuine reasons for not meeting a deadline, such as illness. If an extension is granted, the new deadline should be adhered to and recorded. This should be covered with learners in their induction at the start of the programme.

Please note that once evidence is accepted for assessment, learners are not to be penalised purely for submitting work late, unless this is explicitly included in the Merit or Distinction assessment criteria and/or the associated assessment guidance. Only the assessment criteria for the units/components can be used for assessment decisions.

If a learner is not able to use an extension opportunity, then it may be appropriate to request special considerations. For further details please refer to the *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration*. This can be accessed [here](#) on the Pearson policies and guidance for centres webpage.

Authenticity and Authentication

Assessors should only accept evidence for assessment that is authentic, i.e., that is the learner's own work and that can be judged fully to see whether it meets the assessment criteria. Learners are asked to authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment by signing a declaration stating that it is their own work at the point of submission.

Assessors should ensure that authenticity is considered when setting assignments. For example, ensuring that each learner has a different focus for research could reduce opportunities for copying or collusion.

It is important that the authentication of all evidence can be validated. When practical and performance evidence is used, it is important to consider how supporting evidence could be captured using videos, recordings, photographs, handouts, task sheets etc.

The authentication of learner evidence is the responsibility of each centre. If through the assessment process it is found that some or all the evidence is not authentic, Assessors need to take appropriate action, including invoking centre malpractice policies and reporting any suspected malpractice to Pearson as required.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use in Assessments

While the potential for student artificial intelligence (AI) misuse is new, most of the ways to prevent its misuse and mitigate the associated risks are not; centres will already have established measures in place to ensure that students are aware of the importance of submitting their own independent work for assessment and for identifying potential malpractice. The [JCQ guidance](#) reminds teachers and assessors of best practice in this area, applying it in the context of AI use.

The guidance emphasises the following requirements:

- As has always been the case, and in accordance with section 5.3(k) of the [JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), all work submitted for qualification assessments must be the students' own.
- Students who misuse Artificial Intelligence (AI) such that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice, in accordance with JCQ regulations, and may attract severe sanctions.

- Students and centre staff must be aware of the risks of using AI and must be clear on what constitutes malpractice.
- Students must make sure that work submitted for assessment is demonstrably their own. If any sections of their work are reproduced directly from AI generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student and they must understand that this will not allow them to demonstrate that they have independently met the marking criteria and therefore will not be rewarded (please see the Acknowledging AI Use section contained in the guidance [here](#)).
- Where teachers have doubts about the authenticity of student work submitted for assessment (for example, they suspect that parts of it have been generated by AI but this has not been acknowledged), they must investigate and take appropriate action.

Assessing the Learner Work

On receipt of the learner work, having confirmed authenticity, the Assessor should:

- mark the work against the requirements of the unit specification
- formally record and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria on an assessment record
- complete a confirmation statement that to the best of their knowledge, the evidence they have assessed is authentic and is the learner's own work.

The [BTEC assessment record template](#) captures the learner authentication, Assessor feedback and authentication, supporting you with reducing the number of forms needing to be completed at the assessment stage.

Assessment tracking and recording

It is necessary to track and record learner achievement throughout your BTEC programme. Tracking learner progress, recording the achievement of each learner per criteria on a unit-by-unit/component-by-component basis ensures:

- the assessment evidence is clearly measured against national standards
- learner progress is accurately tracked
- the assessment process can be reliably verified
- evidence for the safety of certification
- full coverage of the units/components
- identification of which assessments are outstanding
- the enabling of internal verification

- samples for standards verification and other external audits can be made available as required.

Up to date, securely stored assessment records help to minimise the risk of assessment malpractice and potential issues if, for an example, an Assessor leaves during the delivery of a BTEC programme.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the assignment be given out at the start of the unit/component?

No. The assignment should not be issued until the learners are ready to work independently with no further input from the Assessor.

Can I use homework or mock assignments?

Yes. Homework and mock assessments are an ideal way of deciding whether your learners are ready to work independently and to prepare them for assessment.

Learners will be generating evidence through recorded visual evidence for their assignment. Does this need to be supported by an observation record?

No. If the video evidence clearly demonstrates the learner's performance of the assessed task, an observation record is not required. They are also not a mandatory requirement for presentations when the learner is presenting to camera.

The purpose of an observation record is to support and enhance learner generated evidence if the video evidence does not clearly demonstrate how the learner has performed. An example of appropriate use could be in a group activity such as a rehearsal, where the learner is situated at the back of the group and is not always visible in the shot.

An observation record can be used to confirm skills have been demonstrated which may not have been captured on camera. They can also be used if the quality of the recording is poor or if the learner needs to be identified within a group practical activity

What if the unit/component specification states observation records are mandatory?

Some of the older BTEC specifications do refer to this. However, you should always follow the current Pearson published guidance in this guide concerning the use of observation records which confirms they are not mandatory.

Can learners work at home?

Yes. Learners can complete assignment work at home providing the Assessor is satisfied as to the authenticity of the work completed outside of the centre. If it is found that some or all the evidence is not authentic, Assessors need to take appropriate action, including invoking your centre's malpractice policy as required and reporting any suspected malpractice to Pearson.

Does the level of spelling, punctuation and grammar affect the assessment decision I make?

It is good practice for Assessors to "mark" spelling and grammar i.e., correct mistakes on learner work. However, mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless:

- the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of learner understanding
- specific assessment criteria require communication, spelling and grammar and/or the correct use of technical language.

If learner work has consistently poor spelling, grammar or language below the standard expected at the level of the qualification, marking should be delayed before the first submission until the learner has resubmitted work considered to be up to standard. This should be within a given timeframe not considered to provide an unfair advantage to the learner. This may also indicate that the learner is not at the correct level for the programme of study.

For BTEC qualifications, can we apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)?

Recognition of Prior Learning is a method of assessment that considers whether learners can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit/component through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess and so do not need to develop through a course of learning. It is used sparingly and is likely to be more applicable to adult learners returning to education.

Centres are expected to develop their own policy in line with Pearson policy. Further guidance on Recognition of Prior Learning can be accessed [here](#) on the Pearson policies and guidance for centres webpage.

Can my learners retake units if they are 'topping up' in Year 2?

A top-up registration reopens a learner's registration following the certification of a smaller size BTEC qualification. After you have made a top-up registration for your learner, the achievement of the certificated units will be imported into your records on Edexcel Online.

Therefore, there is no opportunity to retake the assessments in internally assessed units via a top-up registration, as the imported grades are final. It is possible for a learner to retake externally assessed units.

If your learner did not realise their full potential in a BTEC that they have been certificated for and wishes to study a larger size BTEC at a new centre, an entirely new registration will be required. In this case the learner will need to produce entirely new assessment evidence generated by your centre devised assignment briefs or via an Authorised Assignment Brief where used.

Remember:

Your groups may contain a mix of learners studying the qualification for the first time as well as learners who are topping up. Care should be taken to ensure that all members of these cohorts are equally engaged and challenged, for example by ensuring all team members in group activities have an opportunity to perform the leadership roles.

Resubmission of Evidence

Opportunities for Resubmission of Evidence

Because every assignment contributes towards the final qualification grade, learners may be eligible for one resubmission of evidence for each assignment submitted.

When can a Lead Internal Verifier authorise a resubmission?	What if a learner does not meet all the conditions?
<p>The Lead Internal Verifier can only authorise a resubmission if all the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learner has met initial deadlines set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension • The learner has correctly authenticated the evidence • The Assessor judges that the learner will be able to produce improved evidence without further guidance • The Assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment 	<p>If a learner has not met these conditions, the Lead Internal Verifier must <i>not</i> authorise a resubmission.</p>

Your Lead Internal Verifier can authorise a resubmission which ensures any resubmissions are fairly and consistently implemented for all learners.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can all learners have a resubmission?

Whilst all learners are eligible for a resubmission, it is not automatic, and they must meet the criteria above for an opportunity to be authorised by the Lead IV. There

may be a situation where all learners have been impacted by something which has disadvantaged them but there must be clear evidence of this.

Are resubmissions capped at a Pass only?

No. If a learner meets the criteria for a resubmission opportunity and one is authorised, the learner should be given the opportunity to submit to the full range of the assessment criteria targeted by the Assignment. It is not necessary to resubmit the whole assignment, only the criteria identified as needing further work by the Assessor and Lead IV.

Procedure for Resubmission of Evidence

There should be a clear, simple procedure which will be applied consistently across all learners and centres.

Forms and Deadlines

If the Lead Internal Verifier does authorise a resubmission, it must:

- be recorded on the assessment record
- state a deadline for resubmission within 15 working days* of the learner receiving** the results of the assessment
- be undertaken by the learner with no further guidance.

** 15 working days must be within term time, in the same academic year as the original submission and must not fall over a holiday period. If learners are studying part time, this is the equivalent of 15 days of "study time" to ensure all learners are treated fairly.*

*** Feedback must be received by learners close to the assessment date. It is not permissible for Assessors to retain the feedback until the following term, for example, just before a resubmission week or at the end of the year once the learner's overall achievement for the qualification is known.*

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does the resubmission timeframe need to fall within term time?

This is in place to safeguard against potential malpractice and to also avoid disadvantaging learners who may be unable to access resources outside of their centre during non-term time.

We have a large cohort. How do I manage resubmissions?

For BTEC teams who are overseeing large cohorts, it's even more important for the Lead Internal Verifier to:

- ensure at the start of the programme that there is an agreed procedure in place to manage submission and resubmission of evidence
- brief the BTEC programme team and the learners up front to ensure everyone is clear about the deadlines and the processes involved
- ensure that all this detail is shown on the assessment plan at the start of the year.

Resubmissions are not an automatic right for learners, the assessor must ensure the three criteria are valid and appropriate to give the learner the opportunity to improve the assessment outcome.

I am the Lead IV for a programme and the Assessor for an assignment. Can I authorise resubmissions for an assignment I am assessing?

Yes, this is permitted. However, as good practice we recommend you work with your IV to confirm the resubmission authorisation and remember that you cannot IV your own assessment decisions.

Will my Standards Verifier want to see a resubmission in their sample?

Yes. Your Standards Verifier can request resubmissions as part of their sample. If selected, they will require you to include:

- evidence of a signed and dated Lead Internal Verifier authorisation, with the resubmission deadline clearly stated
- the original learner work accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the first submission assessment record accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the Assessor
- the resubmitted learner evidence accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the resubmission assessment record, detailing the additional learner evidence submitted, showing any related changes to the assessment decisions and accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- documentation of the internal verification of the resubmission assessment decisions, if applicable.

Retakes

Retakes are available for the following qualifications:

- BTEC Level 1 / Entry Level Introductory Suite
- BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Awards (from 2017) *
- BTEC Level 2 and 3 Technicals
- BTEC Level 3 Nationals

* Engineering only

Retakes are *not* available on the BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts due to the fallback Level 1 criteria.

Opportunity for a Retake

If a learner has met all the conditions listed above in the opportunity for resubmission section but has still not achieved the targeted pass criteria following the resubmission of an assignment, the Lead Internal Verifier may authorise one retake opportunity to meet the required pass criteria.

The Lead Internal Verifier must only authorise a retake in exceptional circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

Conditions for a retake

- The retake must be a new task or assignment targeted only to the pass criteria which were not achieved in the original assignment.
- The Assessor must agree and record a clear deadline before the learner starts a retake.
- The deadline must fall within the same academic year that the initial submission was made.
- On submission of the work, both the learner and the Assessor must also submit a signed and dated declaration of authentication.
- The Assessor cannot award a merit or distinction grade for a retake assignment.
- The learner will not be allowed any further resubmissions or retake opportunities.

Whilst retakes do NOT need to be taken within a set time frame and can be completed at any time, they must still take place within the same academic year that the initial submission was made. It is also important to remember that a unit/component is not complete until all resubmissions and retakes are finalised.

Leaving a retake opportunity until the end of the academic year can impact your centre's ability to complete standard verification activity. More importantly, it can also impact a learner's ability to recall information which could disadvantage them.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does this mean that a learner who missed the original deadline cannot have a retake?

Yes. The learner must have met the original submission deadline. Learners who do not meet the initial submission date will not have the opportunity for resubmission nor a retake. It is important that learners are made aware of the importance of meeting deadlines. The only exception would be where an extension to the initial deadline has been granted by the Lead IV due to extenuating circumstances.

If a learner is granted a retake opportunity, do they need to be assessed against all the pass criteria for the unit?

No. A retake opportunity means a new assignment which targets only the pass criteria that the learner has not yet met following submission and resubmission.

Will the Standards Verifier want to see a retake in their sample?

Yes. Standards Verifiers can request learners who have been granted a retake as part of their sample. If selected, they will require you to include:

- evidence of a signed and dated Lead Internal Verifier authorisation, with the retake deadline clearly stated
- the original learner work accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the first submission assessment record accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the Assessor
- the resubmitted learner evidence accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the resubmission assessment record, detailing the additional learner evidence submitted, showing any related changes to the assessment decisions and accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the new Assignment for the retake and the associated internal verification document

- the retake learner work accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- the retake submission assessment record accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity by the Assessor
- documentation of the internal verification of the retake assessment decisions, if applicable.



Learner Appeals and Malpractice

You should have in place a mechanism for ensuring all learners and staff are aware of the following:

- what constitutes an appeal and what is considered assessment malpractice
- the related processes for instigating an appeal or investigating malpractice
- the possible outcomes that may be reached
- the consequences of both internal and external outcomes
- the process that exists to enable learners to make an appeal to Pearson relating to the external or internally awarded assessment outcomes.

Procedures should be known and understood by both learners and staff. Malpractice issues can be minimised by ensuring learners and staff are aware of the issues including:

- plagiarism (including the use of AI)
- collusion
- fabrication of results
- falsifying grades
- fraudulent certification claims
- referencing skills
- promoting a zero-tolerance approach.

The appeals process must be understood by learners and staff. It should be transparent and enable formal challenges to assessment grades.

A thorough learner induction programme should cover both appeals and malpractice. The learner handbook is also a useful way to ensure the key information about your centre's assessment, malpractice and appeals policies are communicated.

Further guidance on preventing malpractice, plagiarism and AI misuse can be found in:

- [BTEC Centre Guide to Plagiarism](#)
- JCQ [Plagiarism in Assessments](#)
- JCQ [AI Use in Assessments](#)
- JCQ [Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#)

What if I suspect AI misuse or plagiarism?

If you discover any irregularity in the internally assessed elements of qualifications before a learner has signed the declaration of authentication, you don't need to report this to us. Instead, you should follow your centre's academic misconduct/malpractice policy in resolving the matter. This should include ensuring that students are aware of what malpractice is, how to avoid malpractice, how to properly reference sources and acknowledge AI tools, etc.

If you discover an irregularity after a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, or you suspect any malpractice by a candidate during an external assessment, you must report this to Pearson and submit full details of the case at the earliest opportunity by emailing the [JCQ Form M1](#) with supporting documentation to:

candidatemalpractice@pearson.com.

Pearson will then consider the case and, if necessary, impose a sanction in line with the sanctions given in the JCQ *Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures* (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>).

The sanctions applied to a student committing plagiarism and making a false declaration of authenticity range from a warning regarding future conduct to disqualification and debarment from taking Pearson qualifications for a number of years.

Examples of AI misuse cases dealt with by Pearson can be found in Appendix A: Misuse Examples, at the end of this document.

Further guidance can be found in:

- [BTEC Centre Guide to Plagiarism](#)

- JCQ [Plagiarism in Assessments](#)
- JCQ [AI Use in Assessments](#)
- JCQ [Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#)



Retention of Learner Evidence

Original learner evidence must be kept current, safe, and secure for 12 weeks after learners have been certificated (unless specifically advised longer due to unforeseen circumstances). *Please note that the 12 weeks starts once the certificates have been received by your centre.*

Due to the nature of the evidence produced for Art & Design practical work, this can be good quality photos or videos rather than the original evidence. Current learner work must be made available to Pearson on request. On occasion, the Regulator may also request portfolios of learner work and assessment documents.

For learners undertaking a top-up qualification, the learner work must be retained for 12 weeks after receipt of certificates for the largest size qualification that the learner will be undertaking. This means that you must retain learner work throughout the second year of the qualification. Work that has been certificated will not be called for standards verification sampling.

It is a risk to allow learners to keep work long-term while on the programme. Evidence produced by learners still on the programme should be kept at the centre. Electronic archiving is acceptable, providing it is secure and accessible on request.

Retention of Assessment Documentation

Following learner certification, the following BTEC documentation should be retained for a *minimum of three years* for centre and awarding body scrutiny as required:

- assignment briefs
- assessment records (feedback sheets)
- the associated internal verification documentation
- achievement tracking at criteria and unit/component level.

This will require:

- storing all assessment records securely and safely relating to both internally and externally set assessments. This may be electronic
- maintaining records of learner achievements that are up to date, regularly reviewed and tracked accurately against national standards
- having all current learner evidence available for verification purposes. Once learners have received their BTEC certificates, you may return their work to them 12 weeks after the certification date
- retaining records of assessment decisions at criterion and unit/component level.

All assessment documentation should be made secure against hazards like theft and fire, etc. The records should be of sufficient detail to show exactly how assessment decisions were made. Data should only be accessible by relevant staff. It is essential records are kept securely for this for a Pearson audit if required and in case of learner appeals or certification issues, for example.

Feedback Stages

For BTEC qualifications, feedback to learners is split into three distinct types:

- Teaching and Learning
- During Assessment
- Following Assessment

You will need to follow the information below to ensure you are providing learners with the appropriate level of feedback during the delivery and assessment of the qualification.

The evidence learners submit for assessment must always be their own work. Teachers providing additional supported learning are already aware of the line between helping a learner achieve their full potential, and doing the work for them, and the framework of rules for BTEC assessment reinforces these principles.

The assessment rules for BTEC do not cover formative feedback, only feedback during and following assessment. Therefore, during teaching and learning you are using your best professional judgement about the nature, quantity or level of feedback.

Stage 1: Teaching and Learning

The focus of this stage is to prepare learners for the assessment, developing their decision making and personal skills to support their achievement of the assessment criteria.

Providing Learners with Feedback at Stage 1:

Before starting an assessment, the tutor must ensure each learner understands the:	Your feedback during this stage could include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment requirements • Nature of the evidence they need to produce • Importance of time management and meeting deadlines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify areas for learner progression, including stretch and challenge • Explain clearly how BTEC assessment works and what learners need to do to achieve a Pass, Merit or Distinction • Set “dry run” or “mock” tasks and scenarios to help learners understand what level they have reached and prepare for assessment • Feedback on how to improve knowledge, skills, understanding, behaviour, approach, grammar etc.

Stage 2: During Assessment

The teacher or tutor must decide when the learner is fully prepared to undertake the assessment.

Once learners are working on assignments which they will submit for assessment, *they must work independently* to produce and prepare evidence for assessment.

Teaching teams should also supervise learners when they are undertaking assignment work in class; although the work itself must be produced by the learners themselves, either in or outside of class.

Providing Learners with Feedback at Stage 2:

While learners are working on an assessment, you can continue to give general feedback and support, particularly around the development of knowledge, understanding and skills, for example:

- Guidance on how to approach the knowledge and skills requirements
- Guidance on appropriate behaviour and approach, confirmation of deadlines etc.
- Confirmation of which criteria the assessor is targeting
- Clarification of what the assignment brief requires.

Your feedback should not include:

- Formative assessment of the specific assignment evidence as your learners are generating it or confirm the achievement of or how to meet specific assessment criteria; this only happens once formal assessment has taken place.

Frequently Asked Questions

Once we have given learners an Assignment Brief can we offer them any feedback?

Yes. You can give feedback to your learners on their work; however, you mustn't provide them with feedback that would specifically show them how to meet criteria to achieve a specific grade.

Learners must show that they can generate evidence independently using their knowledge, skills and understanding gained through the learning and teaching process.

BTECs are vocational qualifications, designed to help learners become independent workers in their chosen field. So, while it is important to continue giving general feedback and support during assessment, it is not appropriate for teachers and tutors to:

- “coach” learners to produce the evidence itself
- give them a specific list of actions they need to take to meet the assessment criteria or achieve a particular grade.

What resources can learners use when completing their Assignments?

Once learners are working on assignments, they still have access to a range of information to help them generate evidence:

- *knowledge and skills* gained during teaching on the programme
- *handouts and learning resources* available for the programme
- *the unit/component content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance* in the qualification specification
- *the assignment brief*, detailing the scenario, specific tasks, evidence, and information sources.

Are we still able to provide predicted grades to our learners?

Yes. Predicted grades are a useful indicator of expected achievement and can be provided to learners prior to commencing an assignment. However, its important learners understand that they are just an indicator rather than a confirmation of final achievement. They do not count as formal assessment nor confirmation of achievement. The assessment rules help to reinforce this by making a clear separation between:

- the feedback given during teaching and learning (which could include predicting grades and on-going progress reporting) and
- support supervision and feedback during and following assessment.

Once a learner has started to receive results from their assessments, they will have concrete information on how well they are achieving and how that achievement translates into a grade.

This means that BTEC teachers, assessors, internal verifiers and learners can all be clear about how they are achieving and progressing during the programme or course, and this information can also:

- inform predicted grades
- help identify and focus on areas for stretch and progression.

Stage 3: Following Assessment

Following assessment, the assessor formally records their assessment decisions against individual assessment criteria on the assessment record. The assessment record provides a formal opportunity for the assessor to give learners feedback to support their progression.

Providing Learners with Feedback at Stage 3:

To help the learner learn and progress, on the assessment record you should give clear feedback on:	Your feedback should not include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assessment criteria the learner has achieved and what the learner has done well • Which assessment criteria the learner has not achieved and what was missing • Information or guidance available to the learner they could have drawn on (e.g., class notes; handouts; resources in assignment brief) • General behaviour and conduct, approach, grammar etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct, specific instructions on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade as this would affect any resubmission opportunity. You can justify why the criteria has been awarded or not awarded but you cannot tell the learner what to do to improve their grade.

Remember that a sample of assessment decisions should be Internally Verified before returning the work and feedback to the learners.

Frequently Asked Questions

When completing the assessment record, do I need to complete feedback for each individual criterion?

Where learners have achieved the higher-grade criteria, it is not necessary to give full feedback on the lower criteria achieved by default. e.g., if D3 is achieved there does not need to be detailed feedback on M3 and P3 that flow into this. You should indicate they have been achieved but the feedback can be given against the D3 criterion only.

Can we annotate learner work to indicate where they have or have not met the assessment criteria?

We recognise that it is good practice to make annotations on learner work during feedback. This helps the learner, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Standards Verifiers identify where evidence towards specific assessment criteria can be found.

However, the annotations must purely highlight where learner evidence contributes to the achievement of a specific assessment criteria. The annotations themselves do not constitute confirmation of achievement of specific assessment criteria; they are merely indicators to where the evidence can be found.

The assessment record should provide summative assessment feedback to the learner so it is clear why that learner has not met the individual assessment criteria, but you must not add comments that indicate what needs to be added as that would affect a resubmission.

Other Essential Guidance

BTEC Qualification Specification

The specification for each BTEC qualification is the document that programme leaders and teams should use as their first point of reference for all planning and assessment. Specifications are accompanied by important assessment and delivery guidance which provide instructions and advice for each unit/component in the qualification. All BTEC specifications are freely available on the BTEC website under the relevant subject page.

Forms and Templates

We publish a range of useful forms and templates [here](#) for you to use in your centre. These templates are not mandatory, and you can devise your own.

They include:

- Assessment Plan
- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assignment briefs
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Assessment Record
- Record of Activity and guidance

You should also view our policies for centres, which can be found [here](#) and our guidance on policies which can be found on the [Quality Assurance webpage](#).

If you have a question, please contact BTEC Assessment or your Vocational Quality Assurance Manager via [The Pearson Contact Portal](#).

In addition, you will find further information on our [Quality Assurance webpages](#).

Appendix A – AI Misuse and Marking

The following is an example of how the JCQ [AI use in Assessments](#) guidance relating to students using AI tools such that they have not independently met the marking criteria can be applied by teachers and assessors. It is important to note page 6 of the [JCQ Guidance](#): “b) Students should also be reminded that if they use AI so that they have not independently met the marking criteria, they will not be rewarded.” The below example demonstrates a learner that has not independently met the assessment criteria due to their over reliance on AI tools.

Awarding Body: Pearson

Qualification: BTEC Level 3 National Extended Diploma in Business

A student has produced work for unit 1: Exploring Business. The student has produced work of a good standard in which they have compared two different businesses in some depth. The candidate has used a range of sources and AI tools which have been appropriately cited within the work. In the work the student has assessed the relationship with stakeholders by the two companies, analysed the two organisations’ structures, discussed the effects of the business environment on the companies – including their response to recent and potential future changes in the market, and reviewed the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship in the success of one of the companies.

The assessor to whom the work has been submitted carefully reviews the assessment criteria for unit 1, which are as follows:

Assessment Criteria			
Pass	Merit	Distinction	
Learning Aim A: Explore the features of different businesses and analyse what makes them successful			
A.P1 Explain the features of two contrasting businesses.	A.M1 Assess the relationship and communication with stakeholders of two contrasting businesses using independent research	AB.D1 Evaluate the reasons for the success of two contrasting businesses, reflecting on evidence gathered.	
A.P2 Explain how two contrasting businesses are influenced by stakeholders.			
Learning aim B: Investigate how businesses are organised			
B.P3 Explore the organisation structures, aims and objectives of two contrasting businesses.	B.M2 Analyse how the structures of two contrasting businesses allow each to achieve its aims and objectives.		

Assessment Criteria		
Pass	Merit	Distinction
Learning aim C: Examine the environment in which businesses operate		
C.P4 Discuss the effect of internal, external, and competitive environment on a given business.	C.M3 Assess the effects of the business environment on a given business.	C.D2 Evaluate the extent to which the business environment affects a given business, using a variety of situational analysis techniques.
C.P5 Select a variety of techniques to undertake a situational analysis of a given business.		
Learning aim D: Examine business markets		
D.P6 Explore how the market structure and influences on supply and demand affect the pricing and output decisions for a given business.	D.M4 Assess how a given business has responded to changes in the market.	C.D3 Evaluate how changes in the market have impacted on a given business and how this business may react to future changes.
Learning aim D: Examine the environment in which businesses operate		
E.P7 Explore how innovation and enterprise contribute to the success of a business.	E.M5 Analyse how successful the use of innovation and enterprise has been for a given business	E.D4 Justify the use of innovation and enterprise for a business in relation to its changing market and environment

The assessor is content that the work meets all Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria. However, the assessor is aware that in the section in which the student discusses how one of the businesses might react to future changes in the business environment, the student has relied upon the use of an AI tool (appropriately acknowledged, with the input and output from the AI tool submitted together with the assignment) and has not independently demonstrated their own understanding beyond this. The assessor therefore cannot award criterion D.D3 and, as the work has not met all Distinction assessment criteria (which is required to achieve an overall Distinction grade), the work is awarded a Merit grade overall.

The assessor ensures this decision regarding the student's AI use and its impact on marking is clearly recorded. This provides feedback to the student and provides clarity in the event of an internal appeal, or the work being selected for standards verification.