

BTEC Centre Guide to  
**Internal Assessment**  
**2017/18**

# Introduction

## Welcome to BTEC and we hope you enjoy teaching the qualification

This guide provides essential guidance for **BTEC programme teams** on the planning and implementation of the **internal assessment of BTEC qualifications**. As the majority of BTEC units are internally assessed you can tailor the assessment criteria to suit your learners and/or local employers.

Internal assessment should be fair and consistent as defined by the requirements for national standards.

## Which qualifications does this guide cover?

This guide covers BTEC qualifications from Entry Level to Level 3. This includes:

- BTEC 2010 Firsts and Nationals (Legacy)
- 2012 Firsts
- 2016/17 Nationals
- 2016 Introductory Suite
- Tech Awards
- L2 Technicals

BTECs accredited on the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) from 2010 and BTECs accredited on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). 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.

# Planning

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

## Assessment Plans

A BTEC qualification is comprised of individual units that cover specific topics. Both a unit-by-unit approach and an integrated approach to delivery are valid and appropriate methods. However, what should be avoided is the splitting of Learning Aims/Learning Objectives across assignments and/or the provision for extra assignments or tasks to meet the Merit or Distinction criteria. Tasks are expected to be written to allow opportunities for the full achievement of Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria.

If deciding to deliver through an integrated approach, it is important, in this instance, to map the assessment of evidence against unit criteria across units and maintain accurate records of learner achievement.

It is also important to consider the published guidance in the unit specification as a whole for each unit so that a coherent programme of study can be ensured. For example, core units often provide a foundation of knowledge for other units.

Robust assessment plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and verified by the Lead Internal Verifier. Suggested key areas of focus are:

- unit sequencing or integration
- assignments and projects
- resource planning, such as when to deploy specialist staff
- timetabling, events, shows and trips
- schemes of work
- 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

For programmes where units are successfully integrated, a suitable assessment plan should provide the appropriate assessment criteria. As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan should include:

- names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- scheduling for assignment hand out and submission
- deadlines for assessments
- scheduling for internal verification and the opportunity for resubmission

## Planning internal verification

Internal verification represents a quality assurance approach used to monitor assessment practices and decisions to ensure that:

- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions accurately match learner evidence to the unit assessment criteria and assessment guidance
- Assessors are standardised and assessment and grading is consistent across the programme.

The internal verification process should be established before the programme commences. There is not a requirement that all learners are internally verified during the lifetime of a programme.

Full guidance on internal verification can be found in the **BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification**: [www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments)

### myBTEC

myBTEC is designed to support the team delivering BTEC, so the entire delivery team can get access, whatever their department or role. It is designed to save you time by automatically generating the documents and tracking screens you need.

Further information and guidance on how to use **myBTEC** can be found at: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/Services/myBTEC.html>

## Conflict of interest

Assessment staff may encounter a potential conflict of interest in their work.

Examples of these may 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.

A formal up to date log of potential and actual conflicts of interest should be kept within your centre and be made available upon request. This should include any actions taken to minimise risks. Individuals should be forthcoming in disclosing any activity that might represent a conflict of interest.

# Assessment and grading

The Assessor should decide when the learner is suitably prepared to undertake the assessment. Once learners are working on assignments which will be submitted for assessment, it is essential they work independently to produce and prepare 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.

## Assessing Unit Content

The learner must have the opportunity within the delivery of the unit to cover all of the unit content. It is not a requirement of the unit specification that all of the content is assessed. However, the indicative content will need to be covered in a programme of learning in order for learners to be able to meet the standard determined in the assessment and grading criteria. The merit and distinction grading criteria enable the learner to achieve higher levels of performance in acquisition of knowledge, understanding and skills.

Professional judgement will always be required but the following principles apply to all BTEC programmes:

A centre is expected to deliver (i.e. 'teach') the unit content fully. You must cover all the elements of content, apart from anything preceded by 'e.g.' which is merely an example of what you may choose to cover.

A learner is not required to provide evidence for all the unit content, but is required to provide sufficient evidence to address the assessment & grading criteria in order to successfully achieve the unit.

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

The assessor should then:

- formally record and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria
- complete a confirmation that the evidence they have assessed is authentic and is the learner's own work.

Before your learners start an assessment, you should:

- be confident they are sufficiently prepared to undertake assessment
- encourage them to aim at "getting it right" on first submission so they are not relying on a repeat submission or retake.

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

# Resubmission of evidence

## Opportunities for resubmission of evidence

Because every assignment contributes towards the final qualification grade, learners are allowed one resubmission of evidence for each assignment.

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

### When can a Lead Internal Verifier authorise a resubmission?

The Lead Internal Verifier can only authorise a resubmission if all of the following conditions are met:

- ✓ the learner has **met initial deadlines** set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension
- ✓ the Assessor judges that **the learner will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance**
- ✓ the **Assessor has authenticated the evidence** submitted for assessment and the evidence is **accompanied by a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity** by the learner.

### What if a learner does not meet all of these conditions?

- ! If a learner has not met these conditions, the Lead Internal Verifier must not authorise a resubmission.

## Procedure for resubmission of evidence

If your Lead Internal Verifier does authorise a resubmission, there is 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**
- ✓ **given a deadline** for resubmission within 15 working days\* of the learner receiving the results of the assessment
- ✓ 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.*

*If learners are studying part time, this is the equivalent of 15 days of "study time" to ensure we are being fair to all learners.*

### Standards Verification

Our Standards Verifiers will require you to include evidence of resubmitted work in sampling, including:

- ✓ **evidence of Lead Internal Verifier authorisation**, signed and dated, with the resubmission deadline clearly stated
- ✓ the **initial assessment record**
- ✓ 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 and showing any related changes to the assessment decisions
- ✓ confirmation from the assessor that the **resubmitted evidence is authentic** and is the learner's own work.

## Managing large cohorts

For BTEC teams who are overseeing large cohorts, it's even more important 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.



# Retakes

Retakes are available for the following qualifications:

- BTEC 2010 Firsts and Nationals (Legacy)
- 2016/17 Nationals
- 2016 Introductory Suite
- Tech Awards
- L2 Technicals

BTEC Firsts and Nationals on the SRF developed using QCF methodology will follow this rule for retakes.

Compensation is available for the BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts and pre 16 Nationals on the NQF do not require learners to achieve every pass criterion in order to successfully achieve the qualification. SRF qualifications developed using NQF methodology will also follow this rule.

## Conditions for retaking a new assignment

If a learner has met all of the conditions listed above in **Opportunities for resubmission**, but still not achieved the targeted pass criteria following 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.

- ✓ 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 learner and the assessor must sign declarations of authentication as they both did for the previous submissions.
- ! The assessor cannot award a merit or distinction grade for a retake.
- ! The learner will not be allowed any further resubmissions or retakes.

Standards Verifiers will require you to include evidence of any retakes in sampling.

## Meeting deadlines

Setting and meeting deadlines for assessment are an important part of BTEC delivery. Learners should be assessed fairly and consistently and learners should not be advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments. Assessors are at liberty to refuse to accept work that is late for assessment but should ensure first, that learners are made aware of the consequences of failing to meet deadlines.

It is best practice to have 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.

**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 can be used for assessment decisions. The **Pearson Policy for Assessment and Grading** can be found here: [www.edexcel.com/Policies](http://www.edexcel.com/Policies)

## 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. 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 collaboration.

Learners are asked to authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment by signing a declaration stating that it is their own work when they submit it.

It is important that all evidence can be validated through verification. When practical and performance evidence is used, it is important to consider how supporting evidence could be captured through the use of 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 of the evidence is not authentic, Assessors need to take appropriate action, including invoking malpractice policies as required.

If through the assessment process it is found that some or all of the evidence is not authentic, Assessors need to take appropriate action, including invoking malpractice policies as required.

Electronic signatures are permitted as long as there is an audit trail to support its authenticity. This could include either:

- 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

# Feedback Stages

## 1. Teaching and Learning

During teaching and learning, you are using your best professional judgement about the nature, quantity or level of feedback.

**Your feedback could include, for example:**

- ✓ 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.

## 2. During Assessment

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.

**Your feedback could include, 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 and **clarification** of what the assignment brief requires.

## 3. Following Assessment

On the assessment record, you should give clear feedback on:

- **the criteria the learner achieved** (explaining the assessor’s decisions)
- **the criteria not achieved** (and why) although you should **not provide a list of instructions on how to** get a higher grade.

**Your feedback could include, for example:**

- ✓ Which **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 etc)
- ✓ **General behaviour and conduct**, approach, grammar etc.

## Teaching and learning: giving feedback to learners

### Teaching and learning – preparing for assessment

As a BTEC teacher or tutor, you are using your best professional judgement to actively monitor and support progression during teaching and learning, although you must stop short of confirming grades before assessment is complete.

Teachers and tutors 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 evidence learners submit for assessment must always be their own work. This means that, during teaching and learning phase, students should learn to:

- make the decisions and
- demonstrate personal skills in order to help them achieve the assessment criteria.

### Predicted grades and on-going progress reporting

Predicted grades are a useful indicator of expected achievement – but it's important learners understand that they are just an indicator rather than a confirmation of final achievement. They do not count as formal assessment, or 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

## During assessment: giving feedback to learners

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.

While learners are undertaking an assessment, teachers and tutors can continue to give general feedback and support, particularly around the development of knowledge, understanding and skills (see the Feedback Stages at the beginning of this section for examples of the type of feedback you can give).

However, your feedback should not include assessment of the specific assignment evidence as your learners are generating it, or confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria – this happens only when formal assessment takes place.

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 class.

### Feedback v “coaching”

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 in order to meet the assessment criteria or achieve a particular grade.

#### Preparing for assessment

Before starting an assessment, the tutor must ensure each learner understands the:

- ✓ assessment requirements
- ✓ nature of the evidence they need to produce
- ✓ importance of time management and meeting deadlines.

#### Working on an assessment

Once the learner begins work for the assessment, the tutor must not:

- ! provide specific assessment feedback on the evidence produced by the learner before it is submitted for assessment
- ! confirm achievement of specific assessment criteria until the assessment stage.

## Resources available to help learners generate evidence

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 content, assessment criteria** and **assessment guidance** in the qualification specification
- **the assignment brief**, detailing the scenario, specific tasks, evidence and information sources.

## Following assessment: giving feedback to learners

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 feedback to support learner progression:

The assessor should:

- ✓ **give feedback** on which criteria the learner has achieved – and not achieved – giving clear reasons why so the learner can learn and progress.
- ! **avoid giving direct, specific instructions** on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade.

During teaching and learning, you are using your best professional judgement about the nature, quantity or level of feedback.

The assessment rules for BTEC do not cover formative feedback – only feedback during and following assessment.

## Annotating learner work

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 themselves do not constitute confirmation of achievement of specific assessment criteria; they are merely indicators to where the evidence can be found.

## Marking spelling, punctuation and grammar

It is good practice for Assessors to "mark" spelling and grammar i.e. correct mistakes on learner work and expect the learner to correct them.

Mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless:

- the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of learner understanding, or
- specific assessment criteria requires good communication, spelling and
- grammar and/or 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 until the learner has resubmitted work considered to be up to standard. This should be within in a timeframe not considered to provide an unfair advantage to the learner.

## Learner appeals and malpractice

You should have in place a means 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 with Pearson relating to the external or internally awarded assessment outcomes

Procedures should be known and understood by learners and staff. Malpractice issues can be minimised by ensuring learners/staff are aware of the issues including: plagiarism, 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 could cover this. The learner handbook is also a useful way to ensure the key information about your assessment and appeals policies are communicated.

## Recognition of prior learning

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 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 found on the Policies section of the website: [www.edexcel.com/policies](http://www.edexcel.com/policies)

## Assessment tracking and recording

It is necessary to track and record learner achievement throughout your BTEC programme. All assessment should be recorded in a way that assures the following:

- assessment evidence is clearly measured against national standards
- learner progress can be accurately tracked
- the assessment process can be reliably verified
- there is clear evidence of the safety of certification

Tracking learner progress, recording what each learner has achieved and what still has to be done on a unit by unit basis, helps to ensure full coverage of the units and provide opportunities for grading. It also helps enable internal verification and provide samples for Standards Verifiers and other external audits as required.

Up to date, securely stored assessment records help to minimise the risk of assessment malpractice, or potential issues if an assessor leaves during a BTEC programme.

## Retention of learner evidence and assessment records

Original learner evidence should be kept current, safe and secure for up to 12 weeks after learners have been certificated. 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. Following learner certification, assessment records (feedback sheets) and the associated internal verification documentation need to be kept for a minimum of three years.

This will require:

- storing all assessment records securely and safely relating to both internally and externally set assessments. This may be electronic. It is essential records are securely kept for a Pearson audit if required and in case of learner appeals, certification issues, etc.
- 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 if you wish after 12 weeks of the certification date.*
- retaining records of assessment decisions at criterion level for centre and awarding body scrutiny for a minimum of three years following certification.

All assessment records 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 (i.e. to assessment criterion level). Data should only be accessible by relevant staff.

Current learner work needs to be made available to Pearson as required. On occasion, the regulator may also request portfolios of learner work and assessment records.

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

# Learners moving onto a larger qualification

## Top-up registration

Top-up registration reopens a learner's registration following the certification of a smaller size BTEC qualification. Top-up registration fees are proportionately lower than full registration for the larger qualification, to reflect the fact that a proportion of the larger qualification has already been achieved. 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.

There is no opportunity to retake the assessments in the internally assessed units via a top-up registration, so the imported grades are final. For BTEC (NQF) it is possible for a learner to retake externally assessed units.

## Re-registration

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, then an entirely new registration may be more appropriate than a top-up registration. In this case the learner is asked to produce entirely new evidence for assessment generated by the centre's assignment briefs.

**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 groups are equally engaged and challenged, for example by ensuring all team members in group activities have an opportunity to perform the leadership roles.

# Other essential guidance

This guide has been developed with other guides, also available on the BTEC website: [www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments)

- BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification
- BTEC Centre Guide to Managing Quality
- BTEC Centre Guide to Assessment: Level 4-7
- BTEC Centre Guide to Standards Verification.

## 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 in the qualification. All BTEC specifications are freely available on the BTEC website: [www.btec.co.uk](http://www.btec.co.uk)

## Guide to BTEC Quality Assurance

Pearson use quality assurance to check that all centres are working to national standards. It gives us the opportunity to identify and provide support where it is needed in order to safeguard certification. It also allows us to recognise and support good practice. Every year we publish an updated UK Vocational Quality Assurance Handbook to explain our quality assurance processes for the coming academic year: [www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments)

## Forms and templates

We publish a range of useful forms and templates for you to use in your centre: [www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments). These forms are not mandatory, but we would recommend that you use them to assist and support you throughout the programme.

They include:

- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assignment briefs
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Assessment Record
- Record of Activity
- Learner declaration
- Lead Internal Verifier declaration.

You should also consider our policies on assessment, which can be found here: [www.edexcel.com/policies](http://www.edexcel.com/policies)



If you do have a question please contact:

**BTEC Assessment** at: [btecdelivery@pearson.com](mailto:btecdelivery@pearson.com)

**Vocational Quality Advisors** at: [qualitynominees@pearson.com](mailto:qualitynominees@pearson.com)