

## Vocational Assessment/Appeals Procedures (including Apprenticeships) Policy

Policy Code:	VO3
Policy Start Date:	December 2016
Policy Review Date:	March 2020

Please read this policy in conjunction with the policies listed below:

- VO4 Learner Malpractice Procedure (Vocational)
- VO9 Staff Malpractice Procedure (Vocational)
- HR12 Staff Discipline Policy (Vocational)
- SW 5 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- HS4 Health and Safety Policy
- VO8 Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy - (Vocational)



## **1. Aims and Objectives of the Policy**

### Aims

The Priory Federation of Academies Trust (The Trust) is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding bodies and that of the apprenticeship standards. The way learners' work is assessed and must serve the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement and wider development of our learners.

### Objectives

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

## **2. Range and Scope of the Policy.**

The policy covers all vocationally related course (including BTEC, Cache, Gateway City and Guilds and Apprenticeship) courses offered within the Trust but may well apply to other assignment-based courses should they become a part of the curriculum in future.

## **3. Assessment**

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff make judgements on evidence produced by learners against required criteria for the vocational qualification. Where applicable, all Federation devised assessment materials must be internally verified prior to being issued to learners.



Where there have been any alterations to specification content or assignment design, the assignment brief must be internally verified again prior to distribution to the learners. The assignment checking service provided by Pearson is a good vehicle in which to provide assurances that the assignment brief in question is fit for purpose. Additionally, Pearson provides a set of authorised assignment briefs for a range of qualifications and units. It is acceptable to use these where appropriate. However, the briefs must be internally verified prior to distribution to the learners.

- a) Completed learner assignments will be assessed internally, be subject to internal verification and standards verification by the awarding body unless the unit is externally set and assessed by the awarding body.
- b) Learners must be left in no doubt that any grade awarded will be subject to internal and/or external scrutiny, (moderation) and that ultimately the final decision rests with the awarding body.
- c) The Assessor and Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) are responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and that judgement of evidence is valid and reliable.
- d) Learners will be given an interim deadline for formative feedback for each learning aim. (New learners from academic year 2014/15 will only be given a final deadline for summative feedback only).
- e) Following formative feedback, learners will be reminded of the summative assessment deadline after which, the work is assessed and the outcome entered on the subject tracker on SharePoint and the summative assessment sheet within the unit folder. The assessment decisions are then internally verified according to the procedure outlined below.
- f) All coursework must be handed in on the stated date.
- g) Where learners are following the apprenticeship framework, appropriate assessment records must be kept for verification and moderation purposes by the Work Based Learning team at the awarding body, should the need arise.

### 3.1 Resubmission of Learner work (VRQ, BTEC, NVQ)

Students should submit work for assessment no later than the date specified on the assignment front sheet. Should a resubmission be required this has to be sanctioned by the Lead Internal Verifier for that Programme Area Title (PAT). Only one re-submission is allowed per learning aim.

- a) 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 tutor 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.
- b) If a learner **has not** met the conditions listed above, the Lead Internal Verifier **must not** authorise a resubmission.
- c) In order to avoid giving any learner an unfair advantage, the whole cohort should be given the same resubmission opportunities as long as the applicable criteria outlined in 3.1 a) have been met.
- d) Authorised re-submissions should take place within 14 days of the original summative assessment date.

### 3.2 Retakes (BTEC QCF Only)

If a learner has met all of the submission conditions, 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. Please see the BTEC Centre Guide to Assessment for further information on writing assignments for retakes ([www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments))
- The assessor **cannot** award a merit or distinction grade for a retake
- 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 learner **will not** be allowed any further resubmissions or retakes
- Standards Verifiers **will** require you to include evidence of any retakes in sampling.

### 3.3 Providing Feedback (VRQ, BTEC, NVQ)



The teacher must decide when the learner is fully prepared to undertake the assessment. Once learners are working on assignments which will be submitted for assessment, they must work independently to produce and prepare evidence for assessment.

- a) Before commencing an assessment, the teacher must ensure each learner understands the:
  - Assessment requirements
  - Nature of the evidence they need to produce
  - Importance of time management and meeting deadlines.
- b) Once the learner begins work for the assessment, the teacher 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 summative assessment stage.

### 3.4 Annotating Learner Work (VRQ, BTEC, NVQ)

It is recognised that it is good practice to make annotations on learner work during feedback. This helps the learner, Assessors, Internal Verifiers EQA's and Standards Verifiers identify where evidence towards specific assessment criteria can be found. However, the annotations themselves must not constitute confirmation of achievement of specific assessment criteria; they are merely indicators to where the evidence can be found. Confirmation of achievement is recorded at the assessment stage, on the relevant Assessment Record only. This should be clearly understood by Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Standards Verifiers.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

### 4.1 Role of the Assessor – (BTEC, VRQ, NVQ)

The role of the Assessor is to:

- a) Set tasks which allow learners to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do so that they have opportunities to achieve the highest possible grades on their BTEC courses.
- b) Ensure that learners are clear about the criteria they are expected to meet in their assignments and that they are fully briefed on the skills



- which need to be demonstrated in the coursework / portfolio components of a subject.
- c) Adhere to the Awarding Body's specification in the assessment of learner assignments.
  - d) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation (refer to appendix 1). Outcomes will be held securely for three years, measured from the point of certification. Associated internal verification records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort.
  - e) Ensure each candidate signs to confirm that the work is their own and that it is endorsed by the teacher after marking the work. A completed original document must be securely attached to the work of each candidate and to that of each sample request.
  - f) Provide accurate records of internally assessed coursework marks to the learner, Exams Officer, BTEC Coordinator and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) via the tracker system on SharePoint in order for timely submission to the awarding body.

#### 4.1.1 The Responsibility of the Assessor – Apprenticeships

It is the responsibility of assessors to:

- a) Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of learners and of the qualification
- b) Provide learners with a schedule of assessment. This will usually involve visiting the learner every 6 weeks to assess the learners' portfolio of evidence
- c) Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform learners of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve their work.
- d) Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically, using agreed documentation.
- e) Familiarise themselves and learners with the Academy Assessment Appeal procedure(s).
- f) Be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment standardisation, moderation and verification.
- g) Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the Academy and Awarding Body.
- h) Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation.



- i) Provide special arrangements for learners with additional learning needs

#### 4.1.2 The Responsibility of the Assessor

It is the responsibility of assessors to:

- j) Provide assessment processes that are fair and meet the requirements of learners and of the qualification
- k) Provide learners with a schedule of assessment.
- l) Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform learners of their individual progress and tell them what they need to do to improve.
- m) Record assessment decisions regularly, accurately and systematically, using agreed documentation.
- n) Comply with the Academy and Awarding Body guidelines regarding work that is submitted after the submission date and work that is re-submitted following a referral decision.
- o) Familiarise themselves and learners with the Academy Assessment Appeal procedure(s).
- p) Be aware of and keep up-to-date with Awarding Body guidance in respect of assessment standardisation, moderation and verification.
- q) Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by carrying out internal standardisation, moderation or verification as required by the Academy and Awarding Body.
- r) Record internal standardisation, moderation and verification decisions accurately and systematically using agreed documentation.
- s) Provide special arrangements for learners with additional learning needs.
- t) Ensure that all completed learner work be kept for a minimum of 12 weeks measured from the date of certification.

#### 4.2 Internal Verification and Role of the Internal verifier – (BTEC, NVQ, VRQ)

- a) The Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance on BTEC programmes. The role is to ensure that internally assessed work consistently meets national standards but can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.
- b) Each course will have an identified team of Internal Verifiers (IV) made up of staff within the curriculum area in question, allowing accuracy and validity of assessment decisions to be determined.



- c) Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and qualifications relevant to the qualification(s) and other competence-based award(s) for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria.
- d) Provision will be made for communication between curriculum areas to share 'best practice' and areas of concern. Typically, this will be achieved through regular meetings of Internal Verifiers/programme managers at which standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses.
- e)
- f) The internal verifier should:
- Not verify their own work or assignments.
  - Ensure that all assignment briefs are verified as fit for purpose prior to their being circulated to learners. They should enable learners to meet the unit grading criteria.
  - Complete the appropriate internal verification documentation and make recommendations to the assessor on how to improve the quality of the brief if necessary.
  - Ensure Internal Verification takes place within one month of the learners completion of the assignment(s) in question
  - Make all Internal Verification evidence available to the Standards Verifier
  - Plan with the course team an Internal Verification schedule linked to the outline course plans. It should be noted that, the Internal Verification schedule should incorporate all learners across the extent of the programme where practical. E.g. each learner should have at least one unit verified across the extent of the programme. All assessors must be Internally Verified across the programme area.
  - Consider the assessment decisions of all units and all assessors to judge whether the assessor has assessed accurately against the unit grading criteria
  - Verify 100% of the sample for Standards Verification.
  - Consider alternative methods of moderation/verification as required for non-written (ephemeral) assessments (e.g. assessments of performance, oral presentations, and work placements). In most cases, the documentary record of the assessor(s) will provide the basis for verification.
  - Maintain secure records of all work sampled as part of their verification process using a standard template.
  - If a concern is raised the Internal Verifier should discuss this with the assessor prior to the final confirmation of the marks



for all the learners taking the assignment. As a result of the Internal Verification process it may be necessary for the assessor(s) to reconsider the marks awarded for the entire cohort of learners and, as a consequence, to make changes either to all marks or to some marks.

- Where re-sampling is necessary the work should be verified again before being sent to the standards verifier and records kept.
- Further advice and guidance should be sought from [http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-brand/BTEC\\_Centre\\_Guide\\_to\\_Internal\\_Verification.pdf](http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-brand/BTEC_Centre_Guide_to_Internal_Verification.pdf) where necessary.

#### 4.2.1 The Responsibility of the Internal Verifier (BTEC, VRQ, NVQ)

Internal verifiers are responsible for :

- a) Verifying assignment briefs prior to distribution to learners.
- b) Verifying a sample of assessment decisions.
- c) Developing the skills of assessors, especially those new to assessment.
- d) Maintaining the consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meetings of assessors.

#### 4.3 The Role of the Lead Internal Verifier

- a) A Lead Internal Verifier is the person designated by a centre to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area (for example, Edexcel BTEC Firsts and Nationals in Business, or Edexcel BTEC Firsts and Level 1 in Hospitality).
- b) The Lead Internal Verifier has access to accreditation and should register through the online standardisation system, OSCA.

The Lead Internal Verifier should be:

- Someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes. Ideally this would be the programme leader, as this would normally be a key part of their role.
- Directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, so that they understand the units.
- Able to coordinate across assessors and other internal verifiers for a Principal Subject Area.



#### 4.3.1 The Responsibilities of the Lead Internal Verifier:

- Read and understand the BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook each year, and make sure assessors and verifiers have access to it.
- Register with Edexcel via OSCA and confirm registration every year.
- Undertake online induction as and when required.
- Complete the accreditation process: practice exercise and assessment exercise (normally only once every three years) (QCF Only).
- Make other assessors and verifiers aware of the practice exercise, for example through a team development event (QCF Only).
- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes in the sector which is fit for purpose and meets Edexcel's requirements.
- Sign off the plan and check that it is being followed at suitable points.
- Undertake a process of checking that learner work has been Internally Verified to the required standard as directed by the exam board. This should involve the Lead Internal Verifier 'spot checking' and internally verifying no more than 50% and no less than 25% of already internally verified work.
- Ensure that records of assessment and samples of learner work are being retained for use with Standards Verification if necessary.
- Liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, if and when sampling is required.
- Ensure the annual standardisation exercise has been carried out in the September of the academic year to ensure consistency of approach to assessment. This should be done using the pre-released standardisation materials available from the OSCA website – for further information please see section 5 of this document.
- Ensure that, following completion of the standardisation exercise, it is appropriately recorded via the OSCA website.
- Make arrangements for handover to a deputy or replacement if unable to carry out the role.

#### 4.4 The Responsibility of the Quality Nominee

- a) To act as Quality Nominee for the Academy, to act as a conduit for information from awarding bodies to course teams, and to ensure standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes.
- b) To ensure all BTEC Processes are carried out in line with the Awarding body's specifications and requirements.



- c) To ensure all course marks are submitted to the awarding body by July 5<sup>th</sup> of each academic year

#### 4.5 The Responsibility of the Exams Officer

- a) To meet the deadlines for registering learners with the awarding body
- b) To ensure that awarding body data is kept up to date with timely withdrawal or transfer of learners
- c) To claim learners' certificates as soon as appropriate.
- d) To claim unit certification when a learner has not been able to complete the full programme of study.
- e) To facilitate the administration of the external externally assessed unit requirements
- f) To ensure that registration and certification of learners is carried out accurately and therefore claims for certification are valid, reliable and robust.

### 5. Standardisation

Standardisation of assessment to ensure accuracy will take place once per year for NQF programmes and through the OSCA (Online standardisation) process for QCF programmes.

#### 5.1 NQF Standardisation

- a) Any Lead Internal Verifier under QCF will need to access OSCA and update profile to include NQF.
- b) There is no test, but the course leader and all other teachers are required to download and read through NQF document and tick box as confirmation this has been read and a standardisation exercise has been carried out with the programme delivery team.
- c) Every year, a nominated external Standard Verifier (SV) will request a sample.

#### 5.2 QCF Standardisation

- a) Nominated Lead Internal Verifier's will need to undergo an OSCA online standardisation test. Where successful completion of the test is achieved accreditation is valid for three years. Confirmation sampling may take place within the three year period but is not automatic.
- b) Where nominated Lead Internal Verifier's have not undertaken the online OSCA accreditation or where the test has been unsuccessful, standardisation sampling will be automatic for that year.



- c) Where decisions of the standardisation sampling have been agreed by the Standards Verifier, the Lead Internal Verifier will then be accredited for a further 3 years which will be subject to confirmation sampling as and when required.

## **6. Authentication of Candidate's Work**

- a) On each assignment learners must sign that the work submitted is their own and teachers / assessors should confirm that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under required conditions.
- b) Learners and assessors must complete the "Learner Submission Certificate of Authenticity" available on the Federation's VLE prior to submitting completed work for assessment
- c) If the learner hands in an assignment and teachers suspect it is not the learner's own work, the matter should be reported to the Quality Nominee and appropriate action taken.

## **7. Appeals Procedures**

### **7.1 Assessment Decisions**

- a) It is the responsibility of each individual Academy as an assessment centre, to make all learners aware of the appeals procedure and give them access to a copy of the procedure.
  - b) The Quality Nominee is responsible for managing the formal appeals process. If deemed necessary, a formal appeals panel should be set up comprising at least three people, where at least one member is independent of the assessment process.
  - c) Written records of all appeals should be maintained by the Academy. These should include a description of the appeal, the outcome of the appeal and the reason for that outcome. A tracking document will be used to follow the course of an appeal, allowing it to be time tracked and verified at each stage.

### **7.2 Grounds for Appeal**

A learner/candidate would have grounds for appeal against an assessment decision in the following situations. This list is selective and not exhaustive.

- a) The work is not assessed according to the set criteria or the criteria are ambiguous.



- b) The final grade of the work does not match the criteria set for grade boundaries or the grade boundaries are not sufficiently defined.
- c) The internal verification procedure contradicts the assessment grades awarded.
- d) There is evidence of preferential treatment towards other learners/candidates.
- e) The conduct of the assessment did not conform to the published requirements of the Awarding Body
- f) Valid, agreed, extenuating circumstances were not taken into account at the time of assessment, which the Academy was aware of prior to the submission deadline.
- g) Agreed deadlines were not observed by staff.
- h) The current Assessment Plan was not adhered to.
- i) The decision to reject coursework was made on the grounds of malpractice.

### 7.3 Formal appeal procedures

- a) If, after informal discussion with the Internal Verifier, the candidate wishes to make a formal appeal, the candidate must ask the Internal Verifier, in writing, for a re-assessment. This must be done within 10 working days of receiving the original assessment result.
- b) The Quality Nominee with the Lead Internal Verifier and/or Internal Verifier, on receipt of the formal appeal from the learner, will try to seek a solution negotiated between the relevant assessor and the candidate. If it is not possible to reach an agreement, the Quality Nominee and the Internal Verifier will set a date for the Internal Verification Appeals Panel to meet.
- c) The Internal Verification Appeals Panel will be convened and will meet within 2 weeks of the receipt of the appeal by the Internal Verifier, with re-assessment, if deemed necessary by the panel, taking place within 15 working days of the appeals panel meeting.
- d) The outcome of the appeal may be:
  - Confirmation of original decision;
  - A re-assessment by an independent assessor;
  - An opportunity to resubmit for assessment within a revised agreed timescale.

## 8. Access to Policy

- a) Copies of the policy will be available via SharePoint.



**Policy Document**

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- b) Programme Managers are to ensure a hard copy of this policy is kept within the Programme Management file
- c) Learner induction programmes and course handbooks will highlight key aspects of this policy.
- d) Training for assessors will be given as part of staff induction if necessary.

**9. Further support**

Further support should be sought from the documents area of the BTEC website

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/about-us/qualification-brands/btec/delivering-btec/key-documents.html>



## 10. Glossary

**Assessment criteria** – those topics/aspects of a subject area that a marker would expect to be included in the piece of work being assessed including any apportionment of marks to the various elements of an assessment;

**Moderation** – the checking of a sample of learners' assessed work in order to confirm that the assessment and marking criteria have been applied so that relative grading is appropriate. Note that moderation is a normative rather than a criterion-referenced process and, as such, does not apply to vocational programmes such as BTEC and NVQ.

**Assessment** - Assessment is where Academy staff make judgements on the assessment evidence produced by learners against the required standards for the qualification

**Verification** -is the process by which the Academy and the awarding body ensure that national standards are consistently applied to the assessment of learners.

**Internal Verification** – ensures that assessment decisions are made against specific criteria, are accurate and to the national standard.

**Standards Verifier** - A person appointed by awarding bodies to monitor the work of approved centres and ensure the consistency and quality of local assessments

**Moderator** – one whose role is to ensure that the marker(s) has applied assessment and marking criteria equitably and appropriately;

## 11. Policy changes

This policy may only be amended or withdrawn by The Priory Federation of Academies Trust.



**The Priory Federation of Academies Trust**

**Vocational Assessment/Appeals Procedures (including Apprenticeships) Policy**

This Policy has been approved by the Priory Federation of Academies Education and Standards Committee:

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Trustee

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Chief Executive Officer

Signed..... Name..... Date:

Designated Member of Staff

Please note that a signed copy of this agreement is available via Human Resources.



**Appendix 1**

	<b>New learners</b>	<b>New learners</b>	<b>Continuing learners</b>
Assignment Briefs	Use authorised briefs or send briefs off to the checking service.  <a href="http://www.edexcel.com/btec/delivering-BTEC/Pages/assignment-brief-next2.aspx">http://www.edexcel.com/btec/delivering-BTEC/Pages/assignment-brief-next2.aspx</a>	The briefs used last year should be fit for purpose – where possible send them to the checking service. Ensure assessment dates are revised and the context of the brief is appropriate to the new cohort of learners	The briefs used last year should be fit for purpose – where possible send them to the checking service. Ensure assessment dates are revised and the context of the brief is still appropriate to the existing cohort of learners
Paper Work / Documents – Including IV documents etc.	NQF - from September 2014 forms  <a href="#"><b>BTEC (NQF) Assessment &amp; Internal Verification forms</b></a> (from September 2014) The Read Me documents explains succinctly the purpose of each.	QCF – from September 2014 forms <a href="#"><b>BTEC (QCF) Assessment &amp; Internal Verification forms</b></a> (from September 2014)  The Read Me documents explains succinctly the purpose of each.	QCF - up to September 2014 forms  <a href="#"><b>BTEC (QCF) Assessment &amp; Internal Verification forms</b></a> (up to September 2014)  The Read Me documents explains succinctly the purpose of each
VLE BTEC Page showing all documents required	<a href="https://sharepoint.prioryacademies.co.uk/sites/staff/witham/SitePages/BTEC.aspx">https://sharepoint.prioryacademies.co.uk/sites/staff/witham/SitePages/BTEC.aspx</a>		



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Paper work needed	Assessment Plan. Learner Assessment Submission Declaration. Observation Record – not essential. NQF BTEC IV Assignment Brief NQF BTEC IV. Assessment Decisions. Assessment Record	Assessment Plan. Learner Assessment Submission Declaration. Observation Record – not essential. QCF BTEC IV Assignment Brief QCF BTEC IV. Assessment Decisions. Assessment Record	Assessment Plan. Learner Assessment Submission Declaration. Observation Record – not essential. QCF BTEC IV Assignment Brief QCF BTEC IV. Assessment Decisions. Formative Feedback Sheet Summative Assessment Record sheet
Assessment Plan needed	Yes	Yes	Yes
Summative Assessment Sate	Yes	Yes	Yes
Formative Assessment Date	No	No	Yes