

Church Lawton School

BTEC Assessment and Internal Verification Policy

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Assessment Policy/Procedure (applicable to all registration QCF)

What is BTEC assessment?

All BTEC programmes are made up of units. Each unit is assessed and counts towards an overall qualification.

All BTEC programmes are assessed by reference to the assessment and grading criteria published in the programme specifications. The specifications can be downloaded from each BTEC qualification subject page.

BTEC units are graded in Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Why is it important?

Assessment is a crucial part of BTEC delivery because most BTEC assessments (in the form of assignment briefs) are written and developed by staff in the centre. It is essential that the assessment and verification of learner work is accurate, rigorous and in line with national standards promoted by the exam board.

Our Aim:

We want to make sure that the way we assess is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group of learners or individuals. Our assessment procedures are open, fair and free from bias and to national standards. We will also maintain accurate and detailed recording of all assessment decisions.

The Assessment Plan

The assessment plan should be produced at the beginning of the academic year and shared with the other members of programme. The Internal Verifiers for each subject will complete the assessment plan. It will be held on the teachers shared drive for relevant members of staff to access.

The assessment plan should include:

- a) Your assessment and internal verification team for your programme.
- b) Coverage of all the criteria against which you will be assessing your learners.
- c) Assignment hand-out and hand-in dates.
- d) Dates for submission.
- e) Dates for internal verification.
- f) Dates for opportunities for resubmission

Assessment plans may change and will need to be flexible to meet the evolving needs of the teachers and learner.

The Assignment Briefs

All assignment briefs should be prepared before the start of the academic year and internally verified before they are given out to the students. They will be prepared by the Lead Internal Verifier for each programme. They should be achievable and provide the students with all the information required to succeed.

All assignment briefs will be stored on the teachers shared drive, along with their IV.

To reduce the chance of plagiarism and malpractice, all assignment briefs should be changed each year. All assignment briefs will be designed using Pearson specific templates.

See Appendix B for the procedure for assignments.

Submission, resubmission and feedback

Submission

For each assignment task the student must submit the following:

- An assignment which consists of evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria.

- A signed and dated declaration of authenticity which confirms the evidence has been produced independently.
- Appropriate referencing.

Feedback

During teaching sessions teachers use their professional judgement about the quality and nature of feedback. Feedback can include:

- Identifying area for progression, including Stretch and Challenge.
- Explain what learners need to do to achieve a pass, merit or distinction.
- Give feedback on how to improve their knowledge and skills.
- Predicted grades can be given to learners.

Once the learner begins work for the assessment, the teacher can:

- Give guidance on how to approach the requirements.
- Give confirmation of what the assignment brief requires.
- Give guidance on appropriate behaviour.

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 assessment stage.

The feedback from the assessor must be completed on the Pearson approved assessment feedback form and within the specified time allocated within the assessment plan, against each assessment criteria. This is the 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 the learner can learn and progress.

Avoid giving direct, specific instructions on how the learner can improve the evidence to achieve a higher grade (should the Lead Internal Verifier authorise a resubmission).

The assessor should not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late. All relevant documentation is provided in the teacher's handbook.

Resubmission

The IV may authorise one opportunity for the student to resubmit evidence to meet assessment criteria targeted by an assignment. This can only be authorised if the following conditions are met:

1. The student has met the initial deadline set in the assignment, or has met an agreed deadline extension.
2. The assessor judges that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance.
3. The original work has been authenticated by both the student and the teacher.
4. If any of the above three conditions are not met the Lead IV must not authorise a resubmission.

If the Lead IV authorises a resubmission it must be:

1. Recorded on the assessment feedback form.
2. Completed within 10 working days of the student receiving the results of the assessment.
3. Undertaken by the student without any further guidance.
4. The student and the assessor must complete the appropriate forms to confirm the authenticity of the re submitted work.

A full paper trail of all student work from submissions and re-takes must be kept by the assessor, as this needs to be made available for standards verification.

All learners are made aware of this during their induction.

Assessment Evidence

Before starting an assessment, the assessor must ensure that each student understands the assessment requirements – this includes having access to the content of what is required for the assessment and also the importance of time management and submission deadlines.

The students must also be aware of the restrictions in how the assessor can provide support once the assessment has been started.

Assessment:

- Can take many forms: written-formal essays, evaluations, notebooks; records; studio logs; timesheets; plans; tutor observation and witness statements; photographic/digital.
- Can be practical work within the specialist area of qualification.
- Should be timed carefully to reduce overload.

Course leaders and teachers should use a range of assessment strategies as this can enhance learning; improve knowledge of the grading criteria and of how to progress to higher-grade achievement.

You can use different assessment methods with different learners – they do not all have to provide evidence in the same way. You could set them a task and give them a choice for example, of either presenting a written report or delivering a presentation or just have a one-to-one discussion etc. It is important that every learner is aware of the assessment process.

If group work is used, teachers must be aware of the requirement that assessment is done at individual learner level. The use of Witness Statements, Tutor Observation sheets (see below) or other paperwork that records achievement at criterion level against the activity that is being observed is strongly recommended. Checklists prepared against unit grading criteria are one way of doing this.

All learners evidence should be assessed using only the published assessment and grading criteria.

Assessment Decisions

The learners work should be assessed against the published assessment and grading criteria. The assessment decision should be impartial, valid and reliable. If a student feels it is not, they should discuss this with the Quality Nominee or Examinations Officer. They are then also able to make a complaint by following our complaints and appeals procedure.

Observation records and Witness Statements Observation record

An observation record is used to provide a formal record of an assessor's observation of learner performance (e.g. during presentations, practical activities) against the targeted assessment criteria. Please note: observation record is a source of evidence and does not confer an assessment decision. The record will:

1. Relate directly to the evidence requirements in the unit specification.
2. Provide primary evidence of performance to support subsequent assessment decisions.
3. Is sufficiently detailed to enable others to make a judgement about the quality and sufficiency of the performance.

Observation records should:

- Be accompanied by supporting/additional evidence. This may take the form of visual aids, video/audio tapes, CD's, photographs, handouts, preparation notes, cue cards, diary record or log book and/or peer assessments records, etc.
- Be completed by the assessor who must have direct knowledge of the specification.
- Record the assessor's comments.
- Also include the learner's comments.
- Be signed and dated by the assessor and the learner.
- Be included in the learner's portfolio, along with relevant supporting evidence, when submitted for assessment.

Witness statement

A witness statement is used to provide a written record of learner performance against targeted assessment criteria. Someone other than the assessor of the qualification/unit may complete it. This may be an assessor of a different qualification or unit, a work placement supervisor, a technician, learning resources manager or anyone else who has witnessed the performance of the learner against given assessment criteria. It can be someone who does not have direct knowledge of the qualification, unit or evidence requirements as a whole, but who is able to make a professional judgement about the performance of the learner in the given situation. The quality of witness statement is greatly improved, and

enables the assessor to judge the standard and validity of performance against the assessment criteria, if:

- The witness is provided with clear guidance on the desirable characteristics required for successful performance.
- The evidence requirements are present on the witness testimony (this may need further clarification for a non-assessor).
- The learner or witness also provides a statement of the context within which the evidence is set.

Please note: A witness statement is a source of evidence and does not confer an assessment decision. The assessor must:

1. Consider all the information in the witness statement.
2. Note the relevant professional skills of the witness to make a judgement of performance.
3. Review supporting evidence when making an assessment decision.
4. Review the statement with the learner to enable a greater degree of confidence in the evidence.
5. Be convinced that the evidence presented by the witness statement is valid, sufficient, and authentic.

When a number of witnesses are providing testimonies:

1. It may be helpful to collect specimen signatures.
2. All witness testimonies should be signed and dated by the witness.
3. Information of their job role/relationship with the learner should also be recorded.

These details add to the validity and authenticity of the testimony and the statements made in it. Centres should note that witness testimonies can form a vital part of the evidence for a unit, but they should not form the main or majority assessment of the unit.

Deadlines

Deadlines for assessment are an important part of these vocational qualifications. Learners must be encouraged to develop good habits that will stand them in good stead in the future.

However, once evidence is accepted for assessment, learners cannot be penalised for work submitted after the deadline. Criterion referenced qualifications demand that only the grading criteria for the use can be used for assessment decisions. The Lead IV can only authorise a resubmission if the agreed deadline date has been met by the student.

Recording & Tracking

- Teachers must keep records of learners and their assessed work. All records of student's grades are kept on SIMS assessment. This allows all relevant teachers to access it.
- The tracking sheet on SIMS should be filled for grades awarded by the teacher. The work which has been internally verified should be coloured in green.
- Teacher records must be monitored and sampled by the Lead IV and Programme Manager. Due to the small cohort size in 2018-2019, all work assessed by the new teachers in Applied Science will be internally verified
- Learner assessments and verification records must be stored securely by the Programme Manager until all the final grades have been submitted (on the teachers shared drive);
- certification has been received by the school and handed out to the learners. In the event of an appeal against a grade then the evidence of assessments should be kept until the appeal has been concluded.
- Learner grades must be kept in a secure location for three years after certification.
- All work should be kept for 12 weeks after certification.

Weaknesses in assessment

Where there is an identified weakness in the assessment process the following will happen:

- Programme Manager's/Lead Internal Verifier's will initially offer support and guidance.

- This will include setting actions as per Edexcel/school documentation and making sure the actions are followed up.
- If necessary, the Quality Nominee and senior staff will become part of the support and guidance process.

Extensions and extenuating circumstances

Extensions

Extensions for individual items for coursework may be requested before the submission date on the grounds that illness or an accident or a personal crisis or factors outside the student's control have adversely affected or will adversely affect the time available for completion of the assignment.

- Extension requests must be completed on the appropriate pro-forma.
- Extension requests can only be agreed and signed by your tutor/programme leader.
- Extensions are granted for a maximum of 1 week.
- When submitting an assignment for which an extension has been agreed, it is essential that the completed pro-forma is attached.

Extenuating Circumstances

Acceptable evidence of extenuating circumstances would include originals of:

- Medical Certificate (Medical certificates are not always accepted. To be accepted, the medical certificate must be specific about the nature of the illness and the dates affected and confirm that this is the doctor's own diagnosis. It is not sufficient for the doctor to write a letter stating that the student saw him/her and "said" that they were or had been suffering from stress etc. Self-certifications are not acceptable).
- Letter from solicitor, summons to attend court, eviction notice.
- Death certificate (i.e., of a close relative)
- Letter from a transport official confirming serious unforeseen disruption to transport.

Authentication of Assessed Work

The learner must complete a signed and dated declaration of authenticity for each assignment, which confirms they have produced the evidence themselves. This is compulsory.

INTERNAL VERIFICATION

Internal verification is a requirement of BTEC delivery. It is carried out on two levels in subject areas:

1. Internal verification of assignment briefs.
2. Internal verification of assessment decisions.

It is the responsibility of the Lead IV, for each programme, to ensure all of this has been completed within the agreed timeframe on the assessment plan.

What is Internal Verification?

Internal Verification (IV) is a system of quality checks made by someone in the centre to ensure that assignments have been written correctly and that assessment decisions are accurate.

It is a recorded discussion between two professionals to ensure accuracy, fairness, consistency, and quality of assessment. It does not involve the learner.

Internal Verification Schedule

The Lead IV will produce an IV schedule as part of the annual assessment plan and will keep a record of which learner work has been sampled, and in which units. The amount of work to be IV'd will be determined by the Lead IV – but this should be a minimum of 4 pieces of work for each assignment. This should be made up wherever possible of a piece of work at all three levels of achievement (P, M & D) and one of the most common grades. It is recommended this number is increased for either new assessors to BTEC (> to 50% for the first assessed piece of work) or for programmes with large cohorts of students (>20).

Different learners should be targeted for IV of assessment decisions across the units.

Each assessment is an opportunity for the internal verifier to check the assessment of different students. Internal verification should be within a maximum of 10 working days of the assessor's decision. The date for this must also be identified with the assessment plan. If the internal verifier questions the award of grades the process must be completed by the assessor before the work is given back to the student. (See Appendix C)

All assessors' assignment briefs must be verified prior to release to learners. (See Appendix A)

Assessors cannot IV their own assignment briefs or assessed learner work. If an assignment brief is used again in a different year without alteration there is no need to IV the brief again, however if assignment briefs are amended/adapted then they must be IV'd prior to use by learners (assessment activities are only going to be effective if they are reviewed and renewed on a regular basis to check they meet the requirements of different learners).

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Assessment is an important part of BTEC delivery because most BTEC assessment are written and developed by staff in the centre. It is essential that the assessment and verification of learner work is accurate, rigorous and in line with national standards promoted by the exam board.

Assessment decisions of internally assessed units are totally in the hands of centre staff.

Internal verification checks that the standards set by the awarding body are being maintained.

The Lead Internal Verifier & Registration

A Lead Internal Verifier (Lead IV) is the person designated by a centre to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes.

The Lead IV should be:

1. Someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes.
2. Directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, so that they understand the units.
3. Able to coordinate across assessors and other internal verifiers. The Lead IV should:
4. Register with Edexcel and confirm registration every year.
5. Complete the accreditation process: practice exercise and assessment exercise (every three years);
6. Ensure there is an assessment and verification plan for the programme which is fit for purpose and meets Pearson requirements.
7. Sign off the plan and check that it is being followed at suitable points.
8. Undertake some internal verification and/or assessment for individual units.
9. Ensure that records of assessment and samples of learner work are being retained for use with standards verification if necessary.

The Lead IVs are: Paul Scales, Lorraine Clegg, Craig Shaw

Standardisation Activities

The Lead Internal Verifiers are accredited, for Media, Music, PE, and Applied Science. All other assessors, for undertake standardisation activities to ensure they are fully aware of how to mark learners work according to Pearson guidelines.

New assessors will carry out standardisation exercises before they start the academic year in September.

Internal Verification System

A good IV system will:

- Take place across all BTEC units and will ensure consistency of assessment across all assessors, sampling size will vary according to the circumstances e.g., assessments done by an inexperienced tutor may need to be sampled more.
- Be supported by regular meetings and reliable records of all activities.

- Have a sampling strategy, which is sufficient to assure the quality of assessment and have an annual timetable outlining who and what units are to be assessed.
- Have regular standardisation process days where tutors can get together and review each other's assessment decisions against the standards as a check for accuracy and consistency across courses. Course leaders MUST record these in course file;
- Meet the requirements of SV by providing accurate records of the IV process. (if applicable).

Staff Induction & Briefing

Any new member of staff (not just NQT's) will need an induction programme to make sure they fully understand all the BTEC requirements of their role they must also review the School BTEC policies, extra support will be offered by the senior staff if necessary.

The induction programme will include:

- Recommended 50% of assessed work sampled during the induction period (Programme Leader to oversee and decide how long the induction period needs to be – this will vary with the experience of staff).
- The pairing of new staff with experienced BTEC staff
- Programme Leader's / Lead Internal Verifier's will identify any areas to improve and offer the necessary support.
- All staff will take part in an annual briefing to discuss their respective programmes.

Standards Verification (if applicable)

When a principal subject area is going through standards verification the following will apply:

- The Quality Nominee will initially take the lead in liaising with Edexcel re SV.
- After the initial contact either the Quality Nominee or Subject Teacher will liaise with the allocated SV re sample requested.

- If there is an unsuccessful outcome from the 1st sample, there will be a 2nd sample.
- It is essential at this stage that the Programme Leader consults with the Quality Nominee to ensure that the second sample is checked thoroughly, and that the advice given by the Standards Verifier is applied to this sample.
- If the second sample has an unsuccessful outcome the Regional Quality Manager will set up a remedial action plan.

Before the agreed sample date, the standards verifier will need the following:

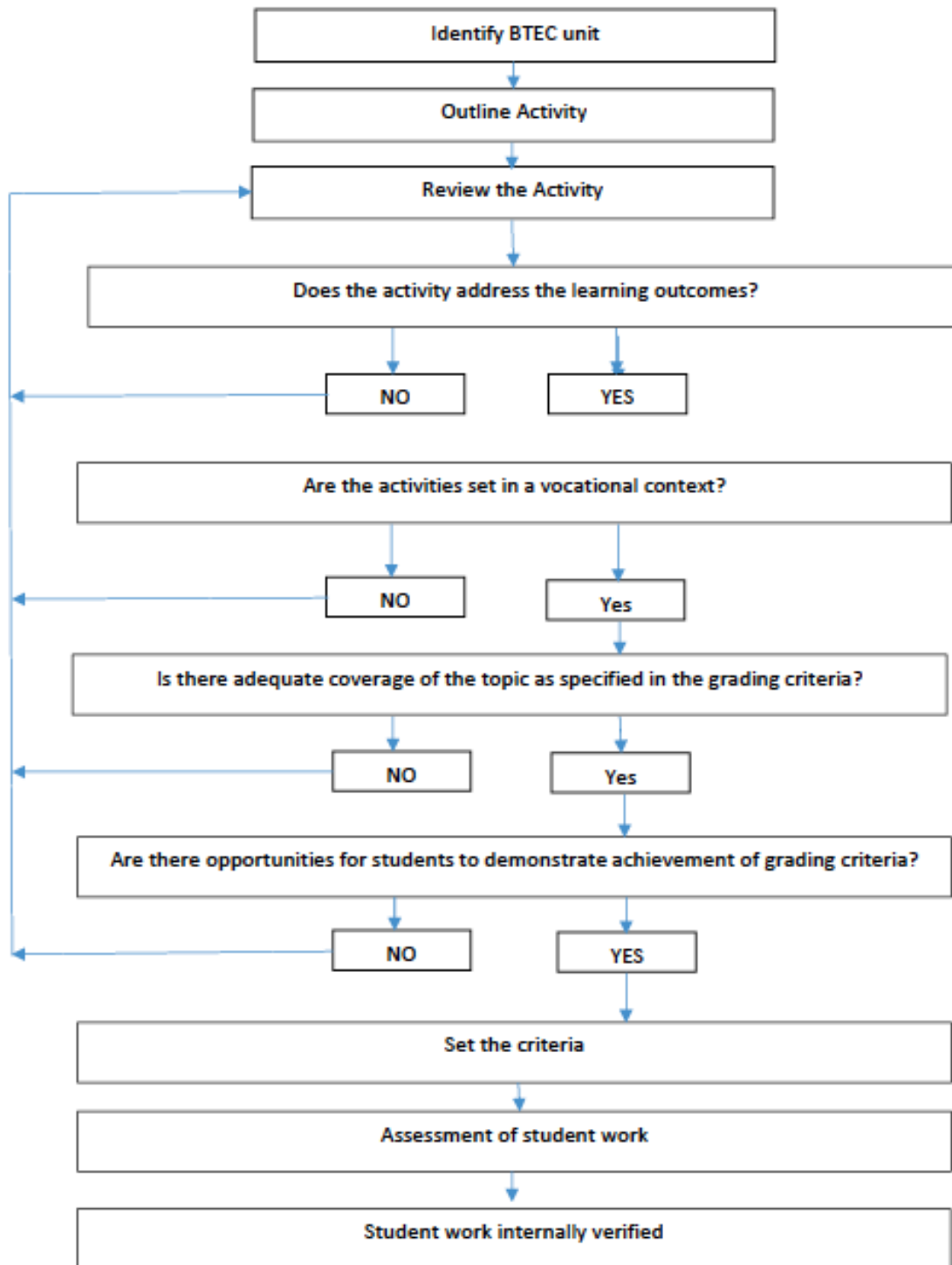
- A list of all completed mandatory units
- A list of anticipated learner grades
- A list of which learner work has been Internally verified

The Standards Verifier will then select a sample from the list and for the sample they will require:

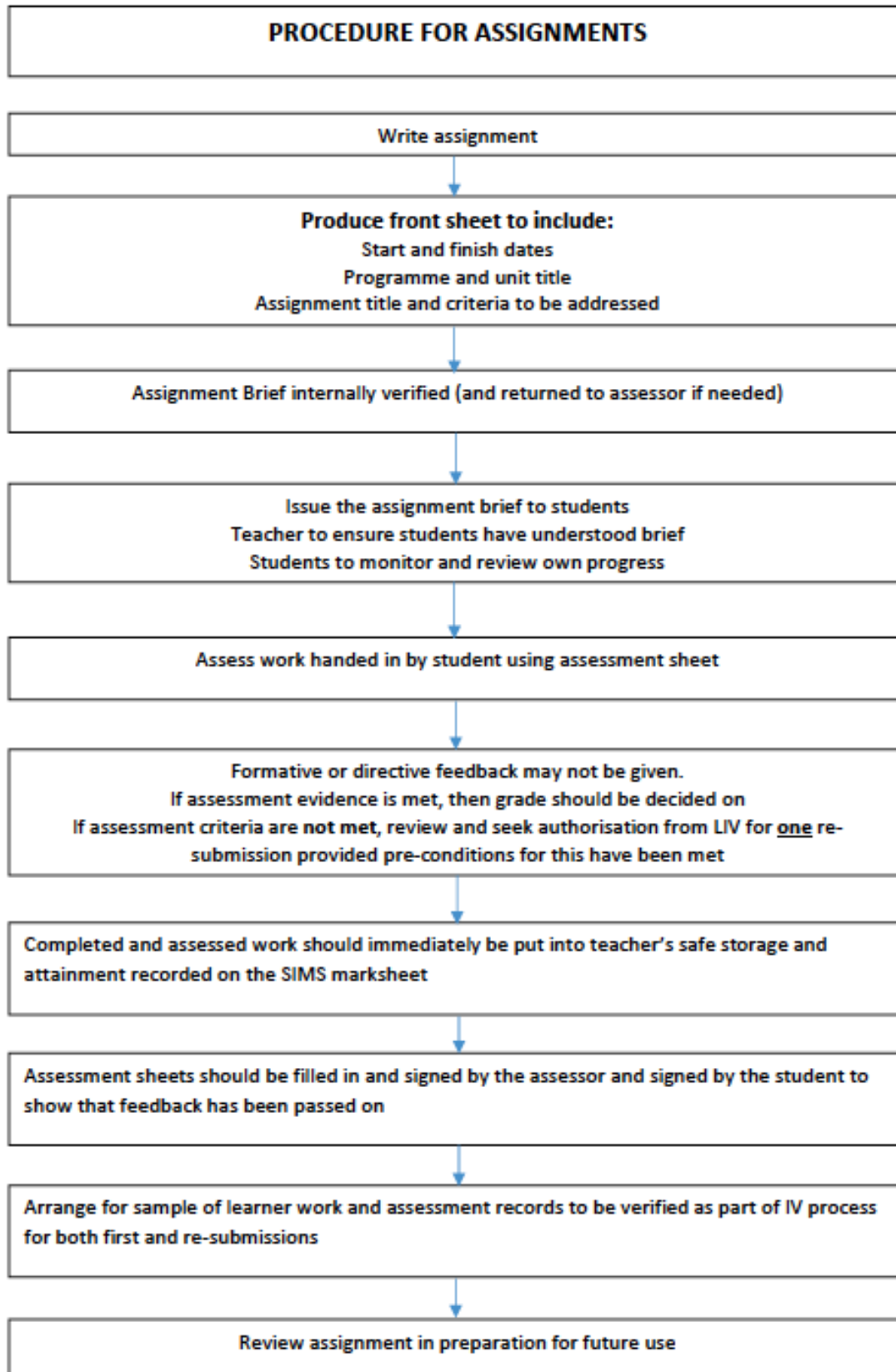
- The assignment brief(s) for the whole unit with evidence of internal verification
- For each learner sampled, a portfolio of work for the complete unit with, evidence of assessment and internal verification
- For graded qualifications, learner work at all grades.

Appendix A:

DEVELOPING AN APPROPRIATE ACTIVITY FOR INTERNAL ASSESSMENT IN BTEC



Appendix B



Appendix C

