

The Telford Langley School

The Telford Langley School
ENSURING EXCELLENCE

Vocational Qualification Policy – Academic Year 2025-26

Approved: Autumn 2025

Vocational Qualification Policy (Academic Year 2025-26)

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1.Responsibilities

Exams Officer
Responsible for timely, accurate and valid registration, transfer, withdrawal, and certificate claims for learners.

Programme Leader
Responsible for ensuring learner details held by Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM are accurate and that an audit trail of learner assessment and achievement is accessible.
Responsible for managing programme delivery and assessment of the learners, to ensure coverage of all units and grading criteria.

Quality Nominee
Responsible for coordinating and monitoring the learner details held with Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM. The Quality Nominee ensures that centre internal verification and standardisation processes operate, acts as the centre coordinator and main point of contact for the vocational programmes. The Quality Nominee ensures Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM quality assurance reports are monitored and any remedial action is carried out. Required to inform the relevant awarding bodies of any acts of malpractice.

Senior Management
Responsible for overseeing the registration, transfer, withdrawal, and certificate claims for learners to ensure that awarding body deadlines are met. Responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.

Assessor
Responsible for carrying out assessment to national standards. The assessor provides feedback to learners; assures the authenticity of learner work; records and tracks achievement. Responsible for providing clear achievement feedback to learners.
If assessment decisions are questioned, the Assessor is responsible for processing the learner's appeal within the agreed time. Responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of the learner's work.

Internal verifier
A member of staff able to verify assessor decisions and validate assignments. The Internal Verifier records findings, gives assessor feedback, and oversees remedial action.
Responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.
Responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work.

Lead Internal Verifier
By registering with Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM has access to standardisation materials which may be used with assessors to ensure that national standards are understood. The Lead Internal Verifier must agree and sign off assessment and internal verification plans.
A member of the programme team who oversees the implementation of an effective internal verification centre system in their subject area. The Lead Internal Verifier is required to register annually and undergoes the necessary standardisation processes.
Responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.
Responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work.

Learner
Responsible for initiating the appeals procedure, in the required format, within a defined time frame, when they have a reason to question an assessment decision.

Head of Centre
Responsible for submitting an appeal in writing, to Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM if the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the centre's internal appeals procedures. Should seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages learners to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others.
Responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice.

2. Registration and Certification Policy

Aim:

- To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Register each learner within the awarding body requirements
- Provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- Make each learner aware of their registration status
- Inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details
- Ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- Audit certificate claims made to the awarding body
- Audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness
- Keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

3. Assessment Policy

Aim:

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

In order to do this, the centre will:

- ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- produce a clear and accurate assessment plan at the start of the programme/academic year
- provide clear, published dates for handout of assignments and deadlines for summative assessment
- assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria
- ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable
- not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late
- develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice

- maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions
- maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure
- provide samples for standards verification as required by the awarding organisation
- monitor standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required
- share good assessment practice between all BTEC, NCFE, Cambridge OCR or Cambridge National and AIM programme teams
- the tutor will decide when the learner is fully prepared to undertake the assessment. Once learners are working on assignments which will be submitted for assessment, they will work independently to produce and prepare evidence for assessment.
- before starting an assessment, the tutor will ensure that each learner understands the:
    - assessment requirements
    - nature of the evidence they need to produce
    - importance of time management and meeting deadlines.
- once the learner begins work for the assessment, the tutor will 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.
- only one submission will be allowed for each assignment. The assessor will formally record the assessment result and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria.
- each learner must submit:
    - an assignment for assessment which consists of evidence towards the targeted assessment criteria
    - a signed-and-dated declaration of authenticity with each assignment which confirms they have produced the evidence themselves.
    - 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
- the assessor will not:
    - provide feedback or guidance on how to improve the evidence to achieve higher grades.
- it may be appropriate for the Lead Internal Verifier to authorise one opportunity for a learner to resubmit evidence to meet assessment criteria targeted by an assignment.
- the Lead Internal Verifier will 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.
- if a learner has not met the conditions listed above, the Lead Internal Verifier will not authorise a resubmission.
- if the Lead Internal Verifier does authorise a resubmission, it must be:
    - recorded on the assessment form
    - given a deadline for resubmission within 10 working days* of the learner receiving the results of the assessment (* the 10 working days will be within term time, in the same academic year as the original submission).
    - undertaken by the learner without further guidance.
- ensure that Pearson/BTEC, NCFE, Cambridge OCR/Cambridge National, AQA, WJEC and AIM assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all exam board staff
- provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

- refer to the JCQ document *AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications* (http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice) as well as the awarding body's specification and/or associated documentation published by the awarding bodies and the regulator
    - By referencing this document and the centre's malpractice policy, makes candidates aware of the appropriate and inappropriate use of AI, the risks of using AI, and the possible consequences of using AI inappropriately in a qualification assessment

4. Internal Verification Policy

Aim:

- to ensure there is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in each principal subject area
- to ensure that Internal Verification is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and programme activity.
- to ensure that the Internal Verification procedure is open, fair and free from bias
- to ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

In order to do this, the centre will ensure that:

- where required by the qualification, a Lead Internal Verifier is appropriately appointed for each subject area, is registered with Pearson, NCFE, Cambridge OCR, AQA, WJEC and AIM and has undergone the necessary standardisation processes
- each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective Internal Verification systems in their subject area
- staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures
- effective Internal Verification roles are defined, maintained and supported
- Internal Verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff
- standardised Internal Verification documentation is provided and used
- all centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose
- an annual Internal Verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place
- an appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and Assessors is Internally Verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards
- secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained
- the outcome of Internal Verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.
- the sample verified internally will be dependent on the group size, the experience of the assessor and any previous outcomes of internal verification.

5. Appeals Policy

Aim:

- to enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision
- to attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the Assessor at the earliest opportunity
- to standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness
- to facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the Awarding Body, where appropriate
- to protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure

- inform the learner that they must submit a written request for an appeal to the Deputy Head for Curriculum and Progress and the Head of Centre.
- record, track and validate any appeal
- forward the appeal to the Awarding Body when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted
- keep appeals records for inspection by the Awarding Body for a minimum of 36 months
- have a staged appeals procedure
- will take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results
- monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.

6. Assessment Malpractice Policy

Aim:

- to identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners
- to respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
- to standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
- to impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where Incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
- to protect the integrity of this centre and Pearson, BTEC, NCFE, Cambridge National, AQA, WJEC and AIM vocational qualifications.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- ask learners to declare that their work is their own
- ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:
    - make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven
    - give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made
    - inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made
    - document all stages of any investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre may apply the following penalties / sanctions:

- withdrawal from all examinations
- withdrawal from the Named Pearson, BTEC, NCFE, Cambridge National, AQA, WJEC and AIM Examination
- cancellation of the Unit
- cancellation of the Assignment
- repeat of the assignment

Definition of Malpractice by Learners
This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- plagiarism of any nature
- collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- deliberate destruction of another's work
- fabrication of results or evidence
- false declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff
This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- improper assistance to candidates
- inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- fraudulent claims for certificates
- inappropriate retention of certificates
- assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework
- facilitating and allowing impersonation
- misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment
- falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

7. Links to other School Policies and References

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- The Telford Langley School and Exam Contingency Plan
- Spoken Language Endorsement for GCSE English Language specifications
- The Telford Langley School Internal appeals policy
- The Telford Langley School Exams Malpractice Policy

JCQ publications

- Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments
- Information for candidates - non-examination assessments
- Information for candidates - Social Media
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures
- AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the Integrity of Qualifications
- Notice to Centres - Sharing NEA material and candidates' work
- Post-Results Services
- Post Results Services (Information and guidance to centres)
- Teachers sharing assessment material and candidates' work
- A guide to the special consideration process

The JCQ guidance on referencing can be found in the following:

• Plagiarism in Assessments (https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/plagiarism-in-assessments---guidance-for-teachersassessors/)

• Instructions for conducting coursework (Coursework_ICC_25-26_FINAL (2).pdf

• The Information for Candidates documents (https://www.jcq.org.uk/examsoffice/information-for-candidates-documents)