

# **BTEC POLICIES FOR THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL**



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<b>ATTACHED COMMITTEE:</b>	<b>CURRICULUM</b>
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## **1. Assessment, Internal Verification & Moderation Policy**

### **1.1 Aim**

To provide access to assessment and accreditation services ensuring equality of opportunity for all the learners within a framework of moderation or internal verification as appropriate.

### **1.2. Context**

- a. The assessment process must be fair both in intent and outcome and therefore must address the basic principles of consistency, transparency, validity and reliability for assessment, internal verification and moderation.
- b. The Buckingham School will negotiate any special arrangements with the Awarding Body for learners with specific needs in securing appropriate arrangements for access to and support in the assessment process as laid down in their procedures.
- c. The roles and responsibilities of the assessors and internal verifiers are recognised to be essential to the delivery and quality assurance of the programme. Sufficient time will be allocated to ensure that the internal verification team can carry out their duties effectively.
- d. Senior management supports the quality assurance process and will ensure that the Awarding Body procedures are followed.

### **1.3. Objectives**

- a. To ensure consistency, transparency, validity and reliability of assessment processes, ensuring that standards and specifications are implemented/achieved.
- b. To give quality assurance in assessment processes by establishing quality control mechanisms for assessment through a system of sampling, moderation and internal verification as appropriate to the programme.
- c. To provide learner-centred approaches to assessment that provides appropriate opportunities for learners to record evidence of achievement.
- d. To identify the staff development issues concerned with the assessment process through performance management interviews and team improvement plans.

#### **1.4. Assessment**

a. Assessment processes will aim to promote learning and achievement of learners throughout the course.

b. The Assessor is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient, authentic and that judgement of the evidence is valid and reliable.

c. The role of the Teacher/Assessor is to:

- 1) Ensure that the learners are fully briefed on assessment methods and procedures including Student Appeals Procedures
- 2) Involve learners in the assessment planning process and agreement of assessment occasions
- 3) Provide constructive written feedback to learners on assessment (conveying levels of achievement if appropriate), discuss targets and areas for development on an individual basis
- 4) Adhere to the Awarding Body's assessment specification in the judgement of evidence towards an award
- 5) Record outcomes of assessment using appropriate documentation

#### **1.5. Internal Verification**

a. The Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance in the programme. The main role in terms of managing assessment is that it consistently meets national standards.

b. Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and qualification relevant to the vocational qualification and other competence based awards for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgements to be made regarding candidate performance in relation to competence criteria.

c. Internal Verifiers will be qualified to OSCA level.

d. Internal verification will be carried out using the revised national standards with entails:

- 1) Carrying out and evaluating internal assessment and quality assurance systems Supporting assessors
- 2) Monitoring the quality of assessors' performance
- 3) Meeting external quality assurance requirements

#### **1.6. Implementing**

a. Provision will be made for communication between the team to share 'best practice' and areas of concern. Typically, this will be achieved meetings of Internal Verifiers, standardisation meetings and team meetings.

b. Internal Verifiers will meet with assessor on a regular basis (at least termly) basis. These meetings will concern themselves with resolving issues of interpretation, validity, sufficiency and reliability of evidence. Information from these meetings will be documented and will provide a forum for revision and refinement of assessor practice.

c. External Verifiers will collate reports on assessment, accreditation and use of the Students' Appeals Procedures, as well as passing copies of External Verification/ Quality Assurance reports on a regular basis to the appropriate assessors.

## 1.7. Implementing Moderation

a. Assessment, verification and moderation procedures will follow the regulatory requirements. The moderation of vocational qualifications is a comprehensive check on achievement to ensure that the learner is given the best opportunity to their best quality of work and therefore their best overall result (grade) before submission to an External Moderator.

## 2. 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 BTEC qualifications.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the student 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 / Principal / CEO and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:

The Quality Nominee and BTEC Assessors should seek to avoid all potential malpractice through the implementation of this policy. Definition of malpractice is illustrated within the policy along with procedures to be followed where malpractice is uncovered.

The Quality Nominee and/or BTEC assessors should:

Procedures to be followed in the event of malpractice

- 1) Details of any malpractice should be documented & dated and immediately referred to the Exams Officer and Quality Nominee.
- 2) The individual involved should be made aware of the alleged malpractice and the possible consequences should malpractice be proven. The individual should be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations made and should be informed of the procedures used to appeal against any judgement made.
- 3) Inform learners of the malpractice policy and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice.
- 4) Teach learners the appropriate formats of how to record cited texts and other materials or information sources & provide evidence that they have acknowledged any sources used.

- 5) Ensure learners are able to declare that their work is their own.
  - 6) Conduct an investigation following the policy procedure if required to do so after seeking advice from the Leadership Team and the Exams Officer. All stages must be recorded and kept.
  - 7) 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.
  - 8) Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made and inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.
- 9) Ensure that any sanction awarded will be in accordance to the policy and the awarding body.

### **2.1 Definition of malpractice by learners**

- Plagiarism of any nature.
  - o Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work.
  - o Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying).
  - o Deliberate destruction of another's work.
  - o Fabrication of results or evidence.
  - o False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework.
  - o 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.

### **2.2 Definition of malpractice by centre staff**

- Improper assistance to candidates.
  - o 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.
  - o Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure.
  - o Fraudulent claims for certificates or claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment
  - o Inappropriate retention of certificates.
  - o 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 center staff producing work for the learner.
  - o Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated.
  - o Allowing evidence which does not belong to the learner to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
  - o Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
  - o 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.
  - o Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.

### **3. Internal Appeals Policy - Internally Assessed Units**

#### **Statement of commitment**

The Buckingham School will, in line with the GCSE, BTEC and GCE Code of Practice produced by the Joint Council for the General Qualifications and agreed by the awarding bodies follow the Internal Appeals Policy stated below.

a. At the same time as subject leaders are introducing coursework all candidates will be informed that there is an appeals procedure relating to internal assessment and that copies of the procedures are available from all Subject Leaders and the Examinations Office.

b. The Quality Nominee will manage internal appeals.

c. Students that wish to appeal against the mark of their internally assessed module should initially raise any concerns with their subject teacher. If there is no resolution, then the matter should be passed to the Subject Leader. Where this does not satisfactorily address the concern the matter should be drawn to the attention of the Examinations Officer who will consult with the Headteacher. If the concern is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the candidate, then a request should detail the reason for the appeal.

d. Students that wish to appeal against a mark for any externally assessed work either examination result or coursework should raise any concerns with the Examinations Officer or the Subject Leader. If the Subject Leader agrees that an appeal should be lodged the Examinations Officer will complete the necessary paperwork and the school will fund the appeal. If the Subject Leader thinks that the correct mark has been awarded and there is no reason to support an appeal, then any candidate still wishing to lodge an appeal would do so with the assistance of the Examinations Officer but it would be at their own expense.

e. The appeal panel will consist of two members of staff who have not been involved in the internal assessment decision. The member of staff who has assessed the work will be present at the appeal panel. The panel will be convened by the Examinations Officer but it would be at their own expense.

f. Should the student be required to put their case to the panel they can be supported during the presentation by a parent/guardian/responsible adult.

g. There will be a written record of the appeal, including the decision reached and the reasons for this decision. A copy of this will be sent to the student.

h. Students will be able to gain access to the following information regarding internal assessment by approaching either their subject teacher or the relevant Subject Leader:

- 1) The marks awarded for the internal assessment
- 2) All comments recorded by the centre that relate to their internally assessed work
- 3) Any correspondence between the centre and the awarding body relating to their internally assessed work
- 4) Information available at the time of the appeal, as to whether their work was sampled by the awarding body
- 5) The moderation mark given by the awarding body if known
- 6) The relevant awarding body procedures for the conduct of internal assessments

- i. Any formal appeal should include a review of the internal procedures used by the centre to award the marks for internal assessments and should consider whether those procedures conformed to the awarding body's Code of Practice.
- j. All internal appeals should have been considered and resolved by the date of the last externally assessed paper of the series or the end of the assessment period. If there are difficulties meeting this deadline, then the Examinations Officer should raise concerns with the awarding body.
- k. The centre must inform the awarding body of the outcomes of any appeals if their outcome will affect the issuing of results at the centre.
- l. The student may be asked to contribute towards administrative costs of an appeal.
- m. Full details of an appeal must be made available to the awarding body on request.

#### **4. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy**

As part of our commitment to quality assurance, The Buckingham School seeks to provide learners with guidance and support to help them achieve their learning and development goals while meeting any regulatory requirements. Our policies are reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. This policy is about prior learning and recommends ways a learner can meet any requirements while avoiding repetition of learning and assessment.

##### **Qualifications in Scope**

This policy applies to all our BTEC qualifications. General qualifications such as GCSEs or GCE are not within the scope of this policy.

##### **Policy Statement**

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) 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 not need to develop through a course of learning. RPL enables recognition of achievement from a range of activities using any appropriate assessment methodology. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of RPL is acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be:

- valid
- reliable

The Buckingham School encourages the use of RPL where it is of value to centres and learners in facilitating assessment. BTEC subject areas which use RPL must follow these principles and keep appropriate records.

##### **Terminology**

RPL policies and procedures have been developed over time, which has led to the use of a number of terms to describe the process. Among the most common are:

- Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)
- Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL)
- Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA)
- Accreditation of Prior Learning and Achievement (APLA)

##### **Principles of RPL**

## **Principle 1**

RPL is a valid method of enabling individuals to claim credit for units, irrespective of how their learning took place. There is no difference between the achievement of the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit through prior learning or through a formal programme of study.

## **Principle 2**

RPL policies, processes, procedures, practices and decisions should be transparent, rigorous, reliable, fair and accessible to individuals and stakeholders to ensure that users can be confident of the decisions and outcomes of RPL.

## **Principle 3**

RPL is a learner-centred, voluntary process. The individual should be offered advice on the nature and range of evidence considered appropriate, to support a claim for credit through RPL, and be given guidance and support to make a claim.

## **Principle 4**

The process of assessment for RPL is subject to the same quality assurance and monitoring standards as any other form of assessment. The award of credit through RPL will not be distinguished from any other credits awarded.

## **Principle 5**

Assessment methods for RPL must be of equal rigour to other assessment methods, be fit for purpose and relate to the evidence of learning. Credit may be claimed for any unit through RPL unless the assessment requirements of the unit do not allow this, based on a rationale consistent with the aims and regulations of the framework.

RPL is also of value to learners transferring across various learning programmes who have relevant learning but do not hold relevant credits or certificates. This may include learners transferring from NQF to QCF to NG specifications.

## **Amplification**

RPL can be used where a learner has not had their prior learning formally recognised. If a learner has certificated learning, then they should apply for exemption, not RPL. RPL focuses on assessment and awarding of credit for prior learning which may count as evidence towards:

- a unit accumulated towards a full Edexcel qualification
- unit or units recognised by an Edexcel Certificate of Achievement
- a full Edexcel qualification

Where units are assessed against assessment criteria or grading criteria, then all evidence must be evaluated using the stipulated criteria. In assessing a unit using RPL the assessor must be satisfied that the evidence produced by the learner meets the assessment standard established by the learning outcome and its related assessment criteria. Subject areas must have personnel with appropriate expertise and knowledge to facilitate this and IV the process.

Most often RPL will be used for units. It is acceptable to claim for an entire qualification through RPL although this is not the norm. However, it would be unusual for a learner to be able to offer prior achievement that completely matches every aspect of a qualification's assessment requirements.



The prior achievement that would provide evidence of current knowledge, understanding and skills will vary from sector to sector. It will depend on the extent of the experience, technological changes and the nature of the outcome claimed. If the currency of any evidence is in doubt, the assessor may use questions to check understanding, and for competence. Note also that the assessment strategy for each qualification must be adhered to.

The RPL process is not concerned with allowing for exceptional entry to, or exemption from, a programme of study. The RPL process does not allow the recognition of any unit assessed by external assessment only because such units are subject to specific evidence requirements.

Subjects wishing to carry out RPL must ensure that:

- Learners are registered as soon as they formally start to gather evidence
- Records of assessment are maintained, as for any other unit/qualification
- Certification and claims are made according to normal procedures
- All relevant evidence is assessed before assessment decisions are confirmed
- There are designated personnel with the appropriate expertise to support and assure the RPL process

## **5. Registration and Certification Policy**

### **Registration & Certification Policy**

Aim:

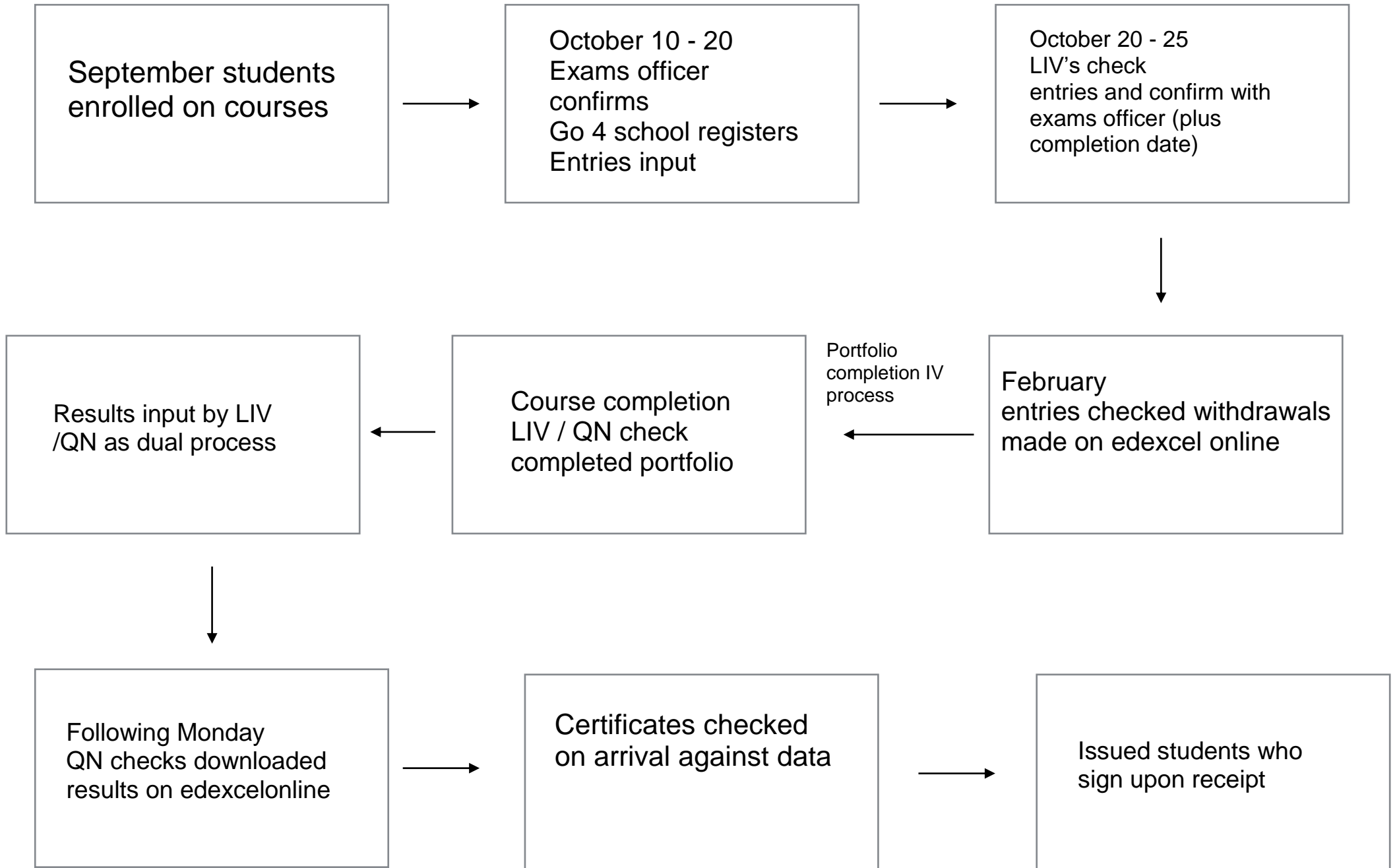
- 1) To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- 2) To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- 3) To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked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

In order to do this, the centre will:

- 1) register each learner within the awarding body requirements
- 2) provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- 3) make each learner aware of their registration status
- 4) inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details
- 5) ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- 6) audit certificate claims made to the awarding body
- 7) audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness
- 8) keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

**The Procedure for the above is evidenced through the attached flow chart**

## 6. Registration and Certification Flowchart



## 7 Special consideration and Reasonable Adjustment Policy

### Aim

The Buckingham School aims to facilitate open access to BTEC qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in assessments, without compromising the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured.

This will be achieved through

- **Reasonable adjustment** – This is an agreed action at the pre-assessment planning stage that helps reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments however will not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes nor will they give the learner an assessment advantage over other learners taking the same or similar assessments.
- **Special consideration** – This is a post assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury, bereavement or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. Any special consideration granted cannot remove the difficulty the learner faced at the time of assessment and can only be a relatively small adjustment to ensure that the integrity of the assessment is not compromised.

### Reasonable adjustment

The Buckingham School recognises disabilities are of a diverse nature and the school does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of disability. The Buckingham School complies with the disability Discrimination act 1995 and the amendments to the act.

The Buckingham School expects all departments to apply reasonable adjustment in a transparent and unbiased manner. All reasonable adjustments made must be recorded using the relevant form from the examinations officer., and are subject to meeting the appropriate assessment strategy for the BTEC qualification specification and assessment criteria. Once completed, these will be held in by the centre in the learners' file.

### Special Educational Needs

The Buckingham School notes that a statement of SEN does not automatically qualify the learner for reasonable adjustment to assessment. Students who are school action or school action plus do not qualify for reasonable adjustment to assessment. Students who are considered disabled under the act may qualify for reasonable adjustment to assessment

## **8. Blended Learning Policy**

### **AIMS:**

- 1)** To ensure that blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by Pearson's
- 2)** To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learner

### **In order to do this The Buckingham School will:**

- Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetable to support blended learning when learners are working remotely by ensuring that all such lessons are made available to remote learners via google meet.
- Ensure there is a process in place to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered and feedback is provided in a timely manner. This process at The Buckingham School involves setting assignments on handout dates via google classroom and that all students have a face to face session via google meet on hand out dates. Deadlines are also issued via google classroom where the work can be handed in at the due date and the assessment procedure as laid out in the assessment plan.
- Ensure that when learners submit work via google classroom an assessment record is forwarded to students via email containing all titles and criteria addresses by the assignment for electronic signature by student and return by school email as authentication for the work.
- All records (both assessment and verification) will then be stored in locked cupboards for the period required by Pearson's

