



Curriculum Policies and Procedures

Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy (BTEC)

Aim: To uphold the value of academic and vocational qualifications by ensuring that all work produced by students is their own and that assessment malpractice by staff or students is prevented or identified and minimised in order that no student has an unfair advantage over others in gaining their qualifications

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| Policy Type: | Curriculum |
| Policy Authorisation: | Senior Leadership Team |
| Date of Policy Introduction: | September 2015 |
| Date of Policy Review: | Every 2 years: September 2019 |
| Policy Author | Assistant Principal - Vocational |

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1. Introduction

Assessment malpractice and academic misconduct including plagiarism is fundamentally dishonest.

Assessment malpractice includes any action by staff or students that has the potential to undermine the integrity and validity of the qualification and the assessment of students' work.

Malpractice by students includes but is not limited to plagiarism, collusion, fabrication of results or evidence and false declaration of authenticity.

Students who commit plagiarism are seeking an unfair advantage over other students and devalue the qualification they study towards. The Blackpool Sixth Form College recognises plagiarism as being either:

'Attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own.'

Pearson Plagiarism Factsheet

and / or

"The failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the student's own".

Joint Council for Qualifications.

Malpractice by staff includes, but is not limited to: improper assistance of students, changing marks without sufficient evidence or justification, failure to keep student coursework secure, fraudulent claims for certificates and allowing evidence to be included in coursework which is known not to be the student's work.

2. Scope of the policy

This policy is applicable to all BTEC students enrolled at the college.

Assessment malpractice and plagiarism is deemed to be equally serious on the A level programme and this is dealt with under the examinations policy and controlled assessment policies.

3. General principles (purpose) of the policy

The Blackpool Sixth Form College is committed to ensuring that any incidents of assessment malpractice are minimised, identified and dealt with in an open, fair and effective manner. The college is also committed to ensuring that work presented by students is their own, and that due reference and acknowledgement is given to other information sources used. Students found to be plagiarising work, or committing any form of assessment malpractice, potentially face disqualification from their current examination series. They also risk being

denied the opportunity to be re-entered for an examination for a period of time following the malpractice. Therefore, the purpose of the policy is to ensure that students understand the importance of producing their own work, together with the procedures in place to prevent, monitor and detect the possibility of assessment malpractice including plagiarism.

4. Preventing, monitoring and detecting assessment malpractice and plagiarism

BTEC assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers will receive annual training and guidance to support the prevention and identification of assessment malpractice and plagiarism and how to deal with any incidents identified.

The assessment malpractice and plagiarism policy will be disseminated to all pastoral mentors to ensure they are able to provide suitable guidance. as part of the lower sixth and Level 2 induction. This is to be overseen by the Head of Student Services.

The college will ensure appropriate study skills training, information and support is available for all students to prevent incidents of assessment malpractice and plagiarism.

Subject teachers will seek to design assignment briefs and processes that help to reduce assessment malpractice and plagiarism. Subject teachers are to reinforce this policy when inducting students into college and at regular points thereafter as appropriate.

Students are required to provide a signed and dated authenticity statement with every BTEC assignment brief to acknowledge that the work produced is their own and that they understand the penalties that will be imposed on students who do submit plagiarised work.

Academic staff will take reasonable steps to monitor student work carefully for assessment malpractice and plagiarism. Detection methods could include, but are not limited to, standardisation of marked work, comparing student work, checking work for unfamiliar words and grammar, a change in the quality of work produced, identification of unreferenced familiar text.

Staff teaching on BTEC courses will also follow robust quality assurance processes including Internal Verification, audited record keeping, tracking and certification claims in order to minimise and identify any malpractice.

5. Procedures for dealing with assessment malpractice and plagiarism

The college takes instances of assessment malpractice and plagiarism extremely seriously. In the event of acts of malpractice and plagiarism being suspected :

The subject teacher and / or Head of Department will undertake a thorough investigation; speaking first to the student(s) involved in order to seek clarification on how they sourced the material, assessment material, etc.

In cases where plagiarism has been proved (and depending upon the seriousness of the offence) for a first time offender, the student will be interviewed by a Pastoral Lead / Head of

Department, given a verbal warning and reminded of the Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy. Details of the meeting will be recorded on the college's disciplinary system.

The student's work will be withdrawn scoring no marks and the student will be given an opportunity to amend the work and resubmit the piece of work within an agreed time-frame. BTEC rules will be applied and students will not be given the opportunity of a further resubmission or retake. The college reserves the right to withhold payment of the Student Bursary for an appropriate period of time if work remains outstanding.

In cases where there is a further breach of the policy, or where a first time breach is of serious magnitude the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) will be informed and invited to attend a hearing with the Pastoral Mentor and/or Pastoral Lead and/or Head of Department.

Once again, the student's work will then be withdrawn scoring no marks and the student will be given an opportunity to amend the work and resubmit the piece of work within an agreed time-frame. BTEC rules will be applied and students will not be given the opportunity of a further resubmission or retake.

The student will progress upwards through the college disciplinary system and will have their Student Bursary temporarily withdrawn. The case will be reviewed after 2 weeks, whereby the Student Bursary can be reinstated, assuming that the student is fully up to date with work set. The Student Bursary may be withheld for as long as the period in which the student has not re-submitted the piece of work.

In cases whereby either there is a second or further offence, or the first time breach is of serious magnitude, the college may contact the appropriate examination board. Examination boards have at their disposal a range of sanctions that they may wish to invoke:

- the student being withdrawn from one or all of their current examination series
- the piece of work being awarded zero marks
- student being barred from being entered for the qualification for a specified period

In cases where an irregularity is discovered after a candidate has signed the declaration of authentication, or there is a suspicion of malpractice by a candidate during an examination, the college will submit full details of the case to the awarding body at the earliest opportunity using the JCQ Form M1 with supporting documentation.

In cases where there is a suspicion that a member of staff has committed malpractice or that maladministration of the qualification may have occurred, the college will let the awarding body know by emailing a completed JCQ M2a Form.

In cases where staff malpractice is identified they will be subject to the staff disciplinary policy.

6. Student Appeals

In cases where the college has identified malpractice or plagiarism as having taken place, with subsequent disciplinary action having been taken, the student can apply in writing to the

Assistant Principal - Vocational) within 10 working days of being notified of the disciplinary action to lodge an appeal.

The Assistant Principal - Vocational will undertake a review of the case and will make a final binding judgment within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal. This may involve seeking evidence from all relevant students, teachers, Pastoral Mentors and Heads of Department/Assistant Heads of Department concerned.

7. Responsibility for the communication of this policy

The Assessment Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy will be disseminated to all pastoral mentors as part of the lower sixth and level 2 induction. This is to be overseen by the Head of Student Services. Subject teachers are to reinforce this policy when inducting students into college and at regular points thereafter as appropriate.

8. Review

The content and operation of this policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the Assistant Principal – Vocational, together with the Senior Leadership Team.

Date of review: October 2017

Policy for review: September 2019

9. Other Related Policies

- Teaching, learning and assessment policy
- Managing students policy
- Bursary policy and procedure
- Examinations Policy
- Controlled assessment policy