

ASSESSMENT & COURSEWORK POLICY

Reviewed 9 April 2023

Our focus

Bilborough Sixth Form College caters for students aged 16 to 19 years old, wanting to study A-levels and Applied General Qualifications in an academic, supportive and sociable environment. Ours is also an environment fully equipped for learning. The College believes that it is important for students to understand the progress they are making in their learning and assessment. In addition, we need students to understand the coursework feedback rules set out by exam boards and JCQ which vary with the type of qualification.

BTEC/ CTEC/ A Level / Level 3 Diploma / GCSE / Level 3 Maths Studies

Opportunities for assessment that both gauge progress and provide meaningful feedback for improvement are an essential part of classroom practice. Assessment opportunities help subject teachers and tutors to track and monitor students' progress. Feedback from subject teachers will inform 1-1s with tutors and teachers and enable students to build up a picture of how they are progressing, helping them to set targets for improvement.

The goal is for students to be able to **evaluate** and **manage** their own progress and plan effective actions for improvement with their teachers. All students need regular feedback on their performance in order to achieve this goal, regardless of the type of course they follow.

Teachers should set and provide DIRT (Dedicated Improvement and Reflection Time) for at least 1 formal assessment (or Common Assessment Points - CAPs) each half term. It is also standard practice for students to have **weekly** homework tasks set as Microsoft TEAMS assignments which should provide an additional 4-5 hours of study for students on each course, which will be checked and monitored for completion.

Where more than one teacher teaches a subject then they should meet to standardise the marking of CAPs and other formally marked pieces of work (e.g. coursework assignments and a record of such meetings should be kept. Where a teacher is the sole teacher of a subject then they should find other ways of ensuring marks are accurate, working with the relevant exam board and looking at previous year's marking compared to final outcomes as required.

Meeting Student Needs

In order to support staff in meeting the needs of students the College has the following expectations:

- All subjects identify at least 1 opportunity for feedback and reflection every half-term e.g. assessment of key knowledge and skills followed by peer marking and feedback provided in the lesson. In subjects where coursework and project-work dominate, it is anticipated that tasks are tailored to the individual student's development rather than detailed criteria-based feedback.
- Assessment for linear courses includes opportunities to re-visit prior topics to assess knowledge and skills over time, and the length and challenge of assessments is increased over time to build towards the expectations of final exams/external assessments.
- It is important that students are provided with regular, detailed and specific advice and guidance on how to improve their progress grade by meeting their targets (subject 1-1s)
- Feedback from formal assessments (CAPs) should be given to students within 2 working weeks.
- Students should discuss their course assessment feedback with their tutor.

College Approaches

Although we recognise that not all examination boards offer coursework opportunities, Bilborough College adopts the belief that the benefits of coursework afforded to students, as part of their studies, allow:

1. The development of independent learning skills
2. Students to have autonomy in selecting their subject matter and methods of investigation
3. Students to develop confidence when they are setting the agenda
4. Clear opportunities for students to raise their levels of achievement.

Because coursework/assignments form an important and integral component of all types of level 3 courses, there is a need to standardise college practice.

The requirement by the examination boards to standardise means that non-negotiable internal deadlines have to be set prior to standardisation.

Guidance

In view of the importance of coursework, as stated above, it is essential for the guidance of all concerned to have a clear policy on the administration of coursework. There is specific guidance for BTEC courses within a separate BTEC quality policy and in Pearson's guidance documentation.

Students and parents need to be informed at an early stage that these internal deadlines are non-negotiable. This requires Course Leaders and Lead IVs to publish submission dates within subject overview documentation and accessible calendar dates online (MS Teams). These dates should be submitted to the Exams Officer, published on the college Virtual Learning Environment (MS Teams/SharePoint) and potentially on display in classrooms.

Extension of time for Learning Support Students

The college recognises that for timed examinations some students receive an additional time allowance. Coursework, because of its nature as an extended piece of work requiring time management skills, is not considered to justify automatic time extensions as sufficient support and assistance is available to students to enable them to complete the work within the set timescales. However, BTEC students and those studying courses such as Level 3 Criminology may be able to request adjustments to be made for an assignment or negotiate support over a period of time with their teacher and with the advice of Learning Support. Teachers, Course Leaders and Lead IVs are expected to make reasonable adjustments to deadlines or methods of assessment to accommodate the specific learning needs of their students.

Central Collection of A Level Coursework

To relieve Course Leaders of making subjective decisions and to make the process more open and objective, the college policy is to provide a central collection point for all A Level coursework. Students will be informed of a collection point for coursework when the handing-in dates are published on the SharePoint resources and MS Teams calendars.

The collection point administrator will ask students to sign to confirm that work has been handed in (electronic time stamp and signature if collected online). The Course Leader will collect student coursework from the designated collection point, within 72 hours, and will sign to confirm the receipt of the students' coursework.

Students are expected to hand in any work they have undertaken by the submission date, even if the work has not been fully completed, in whatever state it has reached by the deadline. If work is not submitted, the student will be charged the examination entry fee as if they had failed to attend the examination. There are specific guidelines from Pearson relating to completion of paperwork and authenticity.

Central Collection of A Level Computer Science Coursework

Students will be informed of the electronic collection of the coursework by their teacher and the handing in dates are published on the Subject Overviews and through MS Teams. At the time of electronic collection students will be asked to sign to confirm that the work has been submitted electronically.

Late Submission for a Final Coursework Deadline

When there is a legitimate need for extensions to internal final deadlines, for example hospitalisation, family emergencies, serious illness, family bereavement, or other issues that can be shown to have delayed the submission of work, requests must be made to the Coursework Panel for a formal extension.

Applications should be made as soon as the student is aware that the issue will have an impact. Ideally, this will be at least two weeks before the final deadline, but we recognise that sometimes problems occur in the final two weeks and therefore coursework extension forms can be submitted right up to the day of deadline. Even if incomplete, a copy of the work in progress should be handed in on deadline day (where possible) in case an extension is not ultimately granted.

If a student requests an extension, the course leader should issue an extension form and state on the form whether or not they support the extension and the recommended timeframe of the extension (default one-week extension).

Extension forms will be completed electronically and will be available through the VLE and MS Teams Course pages. Completed forms will be completed electronically and submitted to the course leader by the student. The course leader will save and securely share with the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality.

The form will then be considered by the coursework panel. Individual teachers do not have the authority to grant or to deny coursework extensions, only to give their reasons for supporting or not supporting an application. Teachers, tutors and other managers should avoid giving students an indication of the likely outcome of the decision before one has been made. Students should be advised to continue working on their coursework so that they have not wasted any of the time available to complete the coursework. Students should not assume that the extension will be granted, or that it will be the length of time they might request. Students will be required to submit work on the deadline to show current progress.

The panel is currently made up of the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality and Heads of Faculty (they must not be a current teacher of the student requesting the extension), who will consider each application and the circumstances surrounding the request, including comments from the subject staff, to ensure that each request is treated in a fair way.

The panel will aim to meet within 5 working days of a fully completed request for an extension. When appropriate, students may be interviewed by the panel or asked for further information (this may be done remotely through Teams). The Coursework Panel will adjudicate on the request and a SLT member should be involved in any decisions made.

Student Form to complete (Coursework extension form) STU1: <https://forms.office.com/r/uvFbaw6LTn>

Course Leaders to complete (Coursework extension form) TEAC1: <https://forms.office.com/r/6SsVzpYwCM>

Appeals against decisions regarding extensions for late submission

Any appeals against the decision of the Coursework Panel regarding late submissions will be heard and resolved by the Principal.

Release of A Level Coursework Marks and appeals

Bilborough College is committed to following the latest guidelines from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regarding centre assessed work. As such the college will ensure that the following procedures are in place for any centre-assessed marks.

- i. Candidates will be informed of the marks awarded for coursework at least 3 weeks in advance of the date by which the college is required to send the marks to the appropriate exam board. Only final internally moderated marks will be released.
- ii. Candidates will be made aware that these marks are subject to external moderation by the exam board and may still change.
- iii. In instances where an anticipated mark has been given to a student which is later amended by the examination board it will be the responsibility of the Course Leader to provide an explanation for any discrepancy if requested by either the student or those with legal responsibility for the student.
- iv. On receiving their internally moderated marks, candidates will be advised that they may request materials (a copy of their work, mark schemes, exam board guidance) to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking. Should these be requested they will be made available promptly.
- v. If a candidate wishes to appeal a mark, it will be carried out by an assessor who has no previous involvement in the assessment of the candidate and who has no personal interest in the outcome of the review (We will use the Midlands consortium of colleges to find suitable assessors). The reviewer will judge whether the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
- vi. The candidate will be informed in writing of the review of the centre's marking.

BTEC feedback

During teaching- Feedback can be given using teachers own professional judgement in relation to the learners including how to improve their work

During assessment – Teachers can provide encouragement and general support such as confirmation of deadlines and clarification of the assignment brief. Teachers must not comment on specific achievement or criteria since learners are expected to work independently

Following assessment – Teachers can comment on what has been achieved and why and provide general feedback on how well the learner has performed. Teachers can comment on what has not been achieved and why but cannot include feedback on how to improve this.

The College has an expectation that staff will recognise this policy as a supportive document and will abide by its contents.

One-off workload requests 2022-23

Context:

Within the Core Expectations document there is a renewed emphasis on the 'opportunity cost' of individual written feedback and clear guidance on how best to integrate a manageable amount of written marking into a wider package of high-quality feedback.

Nevertheless, we know there are occasional times when a member of staff is required to complete an extremely large amount of marking to a deadline. This is usually due to the way that the course has been

structured by the awarding organisation (coursework / NEA / teacher-marked controlled-conditions assessments, etc.). On these occasions, we can offer support to courses if they apply for it according to the guidance below but we need to follow a process – courses cannot cancel lessons unilaterally.

This document aims to define the following.

- a. Which types of workload fall into this policy and which do not
- b. How we propose to support staff with workload at these pinch-points
- c. How to request one-off marking support

Which types of workload fall into this policy and which do not:

Formal assessments: We would not expect a one-off request for a formal assessment. Staff are free to plan these as they see fit and they should be designed by the course teams to take workload into account.

BTEC assignments: We would not expect a one-off request for BTEC assignments. BTEC classes have reduced maximum numbers and other mitigations such as establishing word limits, completing in controlled conditions and ensuring high quality 1st submissions to avoid re-submissions are all recommended.

EPQ projects: We would not expect a one-off request for EPQ assignments. Although these projects are very lengthy to mark, they are completed well before the submission deadline and time is available at the end of the course to mark these.

NEA tasks / coursework / controlled conditions assignments: This will depend on the nature of the NEA task and the amount of time required to mark each one. Where NEAs / controlled assignments are long (and in some cases we know they represent days rather than hours of work and can be many thousands of words in length) this is not a standard marking task. In these cases, we should look at how long the marking task takes, whether the work can be spread over a long time period (like the EPQ marking) and whether it involves detailed feedback or just grading. We also need to look whether, in cases where a draft is submitted, time on the final mark can be saved if key processes are followed during the draft stage. In a number of these cases, a one-off workload request would be justified.

Large-scale marking and moderation tasks: At the end of the 2-year course, 100% coursework subjects like Art and Photography need to mark and moderate large portfolios of work which again looks at many hours of individual student work in one go. In cases like these, a one-off workload request would be justified.

Other: There may well be other tasks which would qualify for some mitigation which are similar to the above. If that is the case, please inform SLT and the request will be considered.

How we propose to support staff with workload at these pinch-points.

What we want to avoid and why: We want to avoid courses cancelling lessons completely without prior knowledge of those who oversee cross-college student experience. Cancelled lessons often have a knock-on effect for attendance in other subjects and lead to parental complaints when poorly communicated. They can also lead to feelings of unfairness between staff teams too.

What we recommend: What is required at these pinch-points is to free up time for staff to complete the relevant marking. This can be done with a one-off request to set remote working tasks and / or projects for students to do when lessons for the class(es) whose work needs to be marked would otherwise be taking place. These should be active tasks which might involve a mixture of pre-learning and reading for upcoming topics and associated activities. These should be designed so as not to generate further marking workload. We will keep a record of all coursework deadlines centrally and this will be communicated with all staff

How to request one-off marking support.

If you feel that you have a time in the year when you require some one-off marking support, please make a request to using the timetable adjustment form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/QfnwFFVVVp>

Your request will need to state simply:

- a. Some details about the marking task that requires support. (Word count, time taken to mark, deadline for completing the task)
- b. The number of hours of time that you would like to be freed up.
- c. The work which is planned for the students at this time
- d. The dates requested for the one-off marking period and the lessons which would no longer be face to face.

What if things don't go to plan?

Even with the best plans in the world, sometimes things can go wrong. If any staff member becomes aware that they are experiencing stress as a result of workload (or for any other reason) they should consult their line manager who will take reports seriously and provide support.

Malpractice

Malpractice can be defined as improper behaviour. *(This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered)*

Plagiarism of any nature	Collusion by working collaboratively with others to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work	Cheating to gain an unfair advantage
Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)	Deliberate destruction of another's work	Fabrication of results or evidence
Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging to take another's place in an assessment. Using AI (e.g Chat GTP) to submit work that is not your own	Alteration of any results document, including certificates	False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework

If an individual is suspected of malpractice, the following system will be used in conjunction with the exams officer (who will review the Exam board requirements)

(1) The teacher/ assessor of the course will advise the course leader of the situation who in turn will contact the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality (APCQ). They will discuss the nature of the complaint with the Principal.	(2) The APCQ will take statements from all involved and collate the work of suspected parties for examination.	(3) The APCQ will then inform the individual(s) concerned at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences if the malpractice be proven.	(4) The individual(s) concerned will have opportunity to respond to the allegations made. This will happen at a formal hearing consisting of a panel of the Deputy Principal, APCQ and teacher/ assessor of the course under investigation. The individual has the option of having a parent or a tutor present. At that meeting there will be an examination of the evidence.
(5) A decision is reached and those involved informed of the decision in writing.	(6) Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made.	(7) The APCQ will document all stages of any investigation.	(8) Principal informs the examining body if formal action is deemed necessary.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own

This could include:

- **Copying from another learner, books or the internet**
- **Paraphrasing without referencing**
- **Paying someone else to do the work or subcontracting the work without payment**
- **Submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes**
- **Use of artificial intelligence to generate responses e.g., chat GTP**

PROCEDURE

This procedure will be followed whenever plagiarism is suspected:

Whoever suspects that a learner has committed an act of plagiarism should contact the relevant course leader straight away. The course leader will agree the severity of incident with the teacher/assessor and instruct them on a course of action based on categories detailed below.

This may result in the learner being interviewed by the course leader for a low stakes incident such as a draft or homework task. If the learner maintains that they have not engaged in an act of plagiarism, then the learner may be asked to participate in:

- Oral questioning on the work where plagiarism is suspected.
 - Other procedures as deemed necessary by the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality
- If as a result of investigation the teacher /assessor, in conjunction with the course leader are satisfied that on the balance of probabilities the learner has committed an act of plagiarism then it will be categorised as one of the following: a minor, intermediate or major act of plagiarism and the appropriate Disciplinary Sanction will be applied

Minor Act	Intermediate Act	Major Act
Course Leader informed Teacher/ assessor to deal with issue For example Inadequate referencing Changing a few words from a copied passage of work and passing it off as original work.	Course Leader informed Head of Faculty informed Course leader to deal with issue For example Two learners copying from each other A learner copying from a past learner on the same course Verbatim copying from a source(s) without acknowledgement i.e. cutting and pasting from internet	Course Leader informed Head of Faculty informed Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Quality informed HOF and AP to deal with issue For example Recycling of internet essays (paid for or not) Purchasing "custom made" answers from an internet site or getting others to write the work Stealing work from another learner (without permission)

Disciplinary Sanctions for Plagiarised Work: The following sanctions could be used depending on the severity of the incident: Stages 1-6

1) Discussion with course leader and student. Student corrects plagiarised work with a record being kept.	3) Resubmission of new work	5) Failure of the academic programme for that academic year.
2) Re-marking of the original plagiarised work with the plagiarised section removed and the marks reflecting the remaining work.	4) Failure of the whole NEA (where applicable).	6) Permanent removal from the academic programme and/or college in line with the College Disciplinary Procedure

Further disciplinary sanctions may need to be used for final NEA in line with the exam board requirements.

Appendix A:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) use and misuse

AI use refers to the use of AI tools to obtain information and content which might be used in work produced for assessments which lead towards qualifications. AI chatbots can help to fill in knowledge gaps, present information as images or help improve understanding. However, **AI misuse** is against the rules of the colleges assessment and coursework policy.

AI misuse simply means a student submitting work for qualification assessments which is not their own, and it can be considered a form of plagiarism. Do not submit AI generated content for any work you are presenting as your own.

Please be aware: Some AI chatbots have been identified as providing dangerous and harmful answers to questions and some can also produce fake references to books/ articles by real or fake people.