



Thomas Tallis School

BTEC Learner Handbook

2022 – 23



Qualification Details

Vocational (career based) BTEC qualifications are designed to give students the skills and knowledge needed to move into employment or progress to higher education. The content of your qualification is therefore created and developed with the support and input of employers, industries, and Higher Education establishments. These qualifications are written to meet the regulatory expectations of Government and national organisations. The delivery and assessment of your qualification is carefully planned and monitored through clearly identified quality assurance measures to ensure that every BTEC learner's achievement is judged fairly and equally.

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Registration & Certification Information

BTEC students are required to be registered with Pearson as soon as they are enrolled onto their BTEC programme with a deadline of November 1st of the year they start their studies (or within six weeks for roll-on, roll-off programme).

If you are on a programme of study being delivered from September to July it is vitally important that deadlines for assessed work are met to prevent any delays in your certification.

If your programme includes examination fees the cost of your first attempt is included in your registration fee paid by the school, if you are eligible and require a resit for any exams you may be required to pay this additional charge.

The school exams officer is responsible for registering you on the course. They will also 'claim' any internally assessed units (coursework). To be able to claim units, the exams officer needs to have information from your teacher in enough time to do this. If we do not claim in time then you may not receive your qualification when other students do.

Induction

An induction period will take place at the start of your course. The purpose of this is to ensure you are clear about the systems and structure of your course and have information that will ensure your success on the qualification.

The induction to your studies will include information on:

- Specific details about your BTEC qualification
- Centre policies
- The teaching team and timetables
- Where to seek support (pastoral / academic)
- What assignments/assessments you will need to complete and when
- A plan of the year
- The importance of deadlines

Teaching, Learning and Pastoral Support

Your BTEC qualification will be achieved through the delivery of structured lessons, informal and formal assessments, and external assessments depending on the type and level of qualification. Active participation in all aspects of your studies will be required to successfully achieve the qualification.

Within BTEC qualifications there is an expectation that students will undertake independent study to support learning.

At the commencement of your studies your assessors (teachers) will work with you to set a target grade for your overall achievement. This will be monitored throughout your course and targets will be set to help you achieve your goal; use this to focus the effort and time you invest in your assessments.

Assessment and Verification

All BTEC qualifications are regulated by rules regarding the management of the quality of assessment of learning and the awarding of grades. You will not be expected to complete a formal assessment to demonstrate your understanding of a topic, or part of a topic, until all relevant teaching has been completed.

Internal Assessment

The content of the assessment will be outlined on an Assignment Brief; the design of these will be explained during induction. For every assessment there will be a clear deadline by which the work must be submitted to your assessor (teacher). There is a **ONE** submission policy in place for BTEC assignments. However, it is also understood that under certain conditions it might be appropriate to allow a learner an additional opportunity to achieve more; this is called a 'resubmission'.

You must understand that for the Lead Internal Verifier of your course to be able to authorise a resubmission these conditions must be met:

- A learner has handed in their initial submission by the published deadline (or applied for an extension in line with published procedures)
- A learner has confirmed that their submission was their own work and/or appropriately acknowledged another's work
- The assessor has authenticated the learner's submission and believes that the learner can improve their submission independently with no further teaching

Your work will be marked within 3 weeks, following that a sample of the assessments will be checked by another member of the teaching team to ensure the grading is fair and accurate. Once this has been completed you will be given your grade for that assignment and feedback which will help you to improve and develop your skills.

You can use the submission flowchart at Appendix A to check the process for resubmissions and meeting deadlines.

External Assessment (where applicable)

To meet the needs and feedback of employers and Higher Education there has been an increase in the rigour and robustness to the way BTECs are assessed. This comes through the introduction of external assessment i.e. Pearson formally mark and grade external units. The aim of external assessment is to help prepare students to fulfil their potential in either the world of work or progress to further study.

The external units on your qualification will be assessed through either; online tests, paper-based exams, or pre-set tasks. The type of external assessment and dates of examination windows for your qualification will be confirmed to you by the teacher(s).

Synoptic Assessments (if applicable)

If you are studying RQF Nationals, Firsts, Technicals and / or BTEC Tech Awards your programme of study will include synoptic assessments, these draw together your understanding and skills from the other internally assessed components in a task-based or written assessment. These components / units will be externally assessed (marked). These will be confirmed to you by your teacher(s).

Who will be involved with course?

Subject Teachers (Assessors)

They are responsible for planning lessons, preparing resources, assessing work and making sure that the units are completed on time.

Lead Internal Verifier / Internal Verifier

They will check IV (Internally Verify), the assessment of all teachers on the course; they will sample the work of all students on the course and provide written feedback. The LIV (Lead Internal Verifier) works with the Standards Verifier.

The LIVs for 2022 – 23 are

Programme	Curriculum Area	LIV	Deputy LIV
Health & Social Care	Social Science	Ms Goodrum	Mr Smith
Art & Design	VMA	Ms Phillips	Ms Gibson
Business	Business & ICT	Mr Henderson	Mr Young
ICT	Business & ICT	Ms Russell	Mr Henderson
Sport	PE	Mr Springall	Ms Leslie
Media	VMA	Ms McGrath	Mr Field
Enterprise	Business & ICT	Ms Russell	Mr Henderson

Quality Nominee

This person (Mr Henderson) oversees all of the vocational courses to make sure that standards are being met. This will be done by: checking assessment records and course paperwork; looking at students' work and assessment decisions; collecting information on student achievement; and surveying teacher/student views.

Standards Verifier /Lead Standards Verifier

SV (Standards Verifier). This person will be employed by the exam board. They will have knowledge of the subject and the course and will request samples of the work from one unit.

LSV (Lead Standards Verifier). This person will be employed by the exam board. They will visit the school and will work with the school to facilitate the improvement of systems if required.

Exams Officer

The examinations officer (Ms Noakes) is responsible for registering students for the course and for claiming qualifications.

How will your work be assessed?

All students will have to produce a portfolio of evidence. For each unit of work required you will be given an Assignment Brief, each with a series of tasks to complete and an assessment grid that will identify what you must do to achieve a particular grade.

Your teacher will assess your work against the grid and make comments about the effort you have made and the quality of your work.

You will be expected to meet regular deadlines. Your work may not be assessed if you have failed to make reasonable efforts to meet the deadlines as given on the assignment brief.

At least one unit of all BTEC First and Tech Award qualifications is externally assessed. This will usually take the form of an examination, but the exact style of testing will vary, depending upon the nature of the course.

How will standards of work be maintained?

Internal Verification

This is a quality control check to ensure that all students' work is being fairly marked and standards are being maintained. When a unit of work has been assessed and graded it will be passed to another teacher in the department who will check that all of the tasks have been completed to the appropriate standard. It may be necessary at this stage, for you to amend your work if it does not meet the required standards.

Storage of work

You will be provided with a ring binder/ folder in which to keep your ongoing class work and homework. You will be responsible for this folder and must bring it to all lessons. All completed, graded work will be put into presentation folders and stored safely in school until the final marks have been submitted, and retained by the school for a minimum of three months.

Standards Verification

A Standards Verifier from Pearson (the BTEC exam board) will contact the school to ask to look at samples of work from each BTEC subject. The samples will be chosen to show the different grades awarded. The Standards Verifier is checking the quality of the assignments and the standard of assessment. She/he may recommend that changes be made to the assignment and to the work you have done, although this may cause you some extra work, it will make sure that you are achieving the required standard to get a good grade for the course and is therefore very worthwhile.

Plagiarism and Malpractice

Plagiarism and Malpractice are cheating. The work you produce must be your own. The following information is very important.

Malpractice consists of acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage the authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment and certification. **The school does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by students or staff in connection with BTEC qualifications.**

Examples of malpractice by students are given below. Pearson has a clear policy on how to deal with students who cheat. If you copy the work of another student, you will risk having your work cancelled and may achieve nothing. If you lend your work to others, you will also risk having your work cancelled. If you steal another student's work and copy it, the exam board may block all of your courses.

In order to achieve a BTEC qualification, you must produce your own work. You will not be allowed to:

- Copy word for word from textbooks, the Internet or from other students (past or present).
- If you wish to reference the ideas of others, you should not do so without appropriately acknowledging the source.
- Work collaboratively with other students to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work. You are not being discouraged from teamwork, as this is an essential key skill for many sectors and subject areas, but group work must be clearly labelled as such.
- Impersonate by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another student or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.
- Introduce and/or use unauthorised material outside of the requirements of supervised assessment/examination/test conditions, for example: notes, study guides, personal organisers, calculators, dictionaries (when prohibited), personal stereos, mobile phones or other similar electronic devices.
- Behave in such a way as to undermine the integrity of an assessment/examination/test.
- Alter any results document, including assessment feedback sheets, Internal Verification forms or certificates.
- Cheat to gain an unfair advantage.

Pearson requires assessors in centres to ask students to declare that their work is their own. You will be asked to sign to declare this on each assignment you submit.

It is the duty of members of staff to report assessment malpractice to the Quality Nominee if they become aware of it. If a member of staff believes that work has been copied, then parents must be informed, and the student must re-write the work as their own and resubmit. If the pupil continually submits work that is plagiarised, then they risk being removed from the course at the discretion of the Headteacher.

If a member of staff suspects that there has been malpractice, then the member of staff should discuss the issue with their Head of Department. If the matter is still unresolved, then evidence and the issue should be discussed with the Quality Nominee. The QN will then decide on the appropriate actions to be taken. These will certainly involve discussions with pupils and parents. If malpractice is proven outcomes will be a representation of the assessed work or removal from the course.

How will my progress be monitored?

You will be closely monitored throughout the course and your subject teachers will keep detailed records of your progress. This information will be used for reports and parents evenings and regular updates will be sent to your tutor, mentor, and Head of Year leader to follow up where necessary.

Assessment Procedures

Handing in Assignments

- You will be given a deadline for each assignment
- You will be given written feedback on your work.
- In certain extenuating circumstances, your teacher *may* then give you another opportunity to independently resubmit your work so that you can achieve. Your work will then be re-submitted to your teacher within an agreed time. This is subject to the individual teacher's discretion and the structure of each individual assignment. A resubmission needs to follow the flowchart in Appendix A.

Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

- All work produced for a BTEC is subject to Internal Verification.
- This process exists so as to ensure the high quality and reliability of assessment across BTEC courses.
- As a minimum, every individual student will have at least one assessment decision internally verified over the duration of their course.
- There is no maximum limit to the number of assessments that will be internally verified per student.

Failure to meet deadlines

- If you cannot hand in work by the agreed deadline you will need to provide evidence of extenuating circumstance e.g. a doctor's certificate. If agreed, the teacher will then offer an extension. However, it will not be acceptable to say to your teacher that you did not have time to complete the assignment. Your work may not be assessed if you have not made all reasonable efforts to meet the deadlines as given on the assignment brief. If work is submitted late, you cannot be given resubmission opportunities.

Can you appeal against a grade?

- Internally assessed coursework will have been standardised and moderated by subject staff.

- Parents and students may discuss this process with appropriate subject leader, but the actual marks awarded are at the professional judgement of the teacher and not usually subject to change by parent or student.
- Please note that internally assessed work is internally verified and externally verified and is open to change through this process. Marks awarded may be raised or lowered prior to the submission to the board in July of the year of course completion.

Appeals

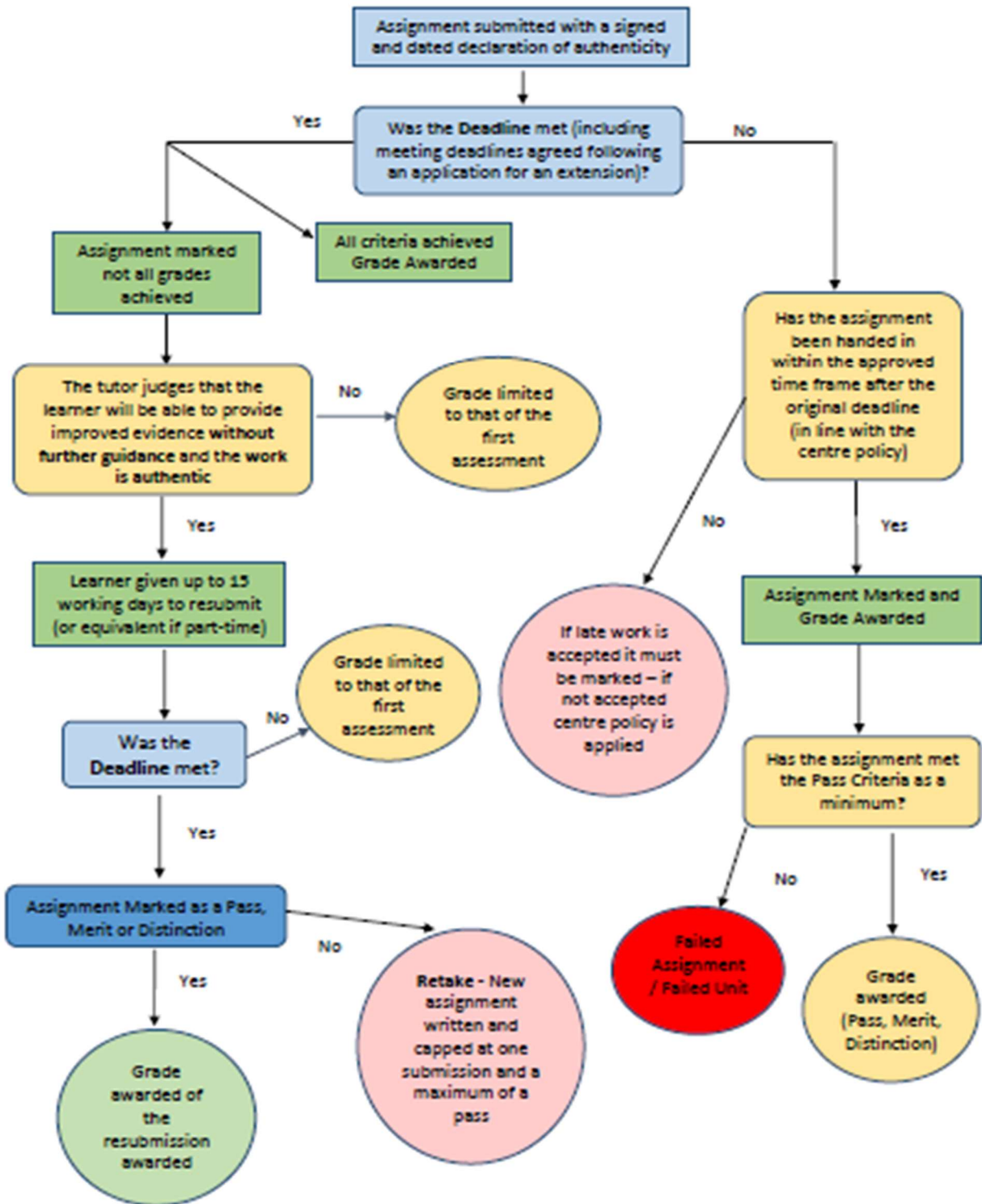
Different procedures apply for internally and externally assessed components/units – see links below

Appeals Process for Internally Assessed BTEC Components:

Appeals Process for Externally Assessed BTEC Components

Appendix A – BTEC Assessment Process Flowchart

BTEC Assessment Submission Process (Level 1 – 3 excluding NQF Level 1/2 Firsts)



Appendix B – letter sent to Y12/13 BTEC students each year



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f: 020 8331 3004
www.thomastallischool.com

Head: Carolyn Roberts
e: headteacher@thomastallis.org.uk

14 October 2022

Dear Parent/Carer

Information you must know about your Sixth Form child's BTEC course

Your child is studying BTEC courses at Thomas Tallis. BTEC courses are terrific and our students do superbly at them but BTEC assessment requirements can trip students up. We are writing to you to explain what the risks are so that you can support your son or daughter in avoiding them.

Risk 1: Failing the BTEC Exam

Almost every BTEC subject now has at least one formal exam every year. Few retake opportunities are available for each exam **and for some unit a retake is not possible**. For Year 13 students, the retake opportunity may well be in the summer the year after they have left Tallis, preventing them from going on to university for a year. If a student fails an exam component they will usually fail the whole BTEC qualification, regardless of how well they have done in the other coursework components. As far as passing grades go, students can obtain a Pass (P), Merit (M) or Distinction (D) in the exam component, but it is now also possible to obtain a Near Pass (N) grade in the exam, which can mean that the BTEC qualification is awarded, but at a greatly reduced grade, even if the other coursework components are at Merit or Distinction level.

We do not want our students to be in this position! We will therefore teach them effectively towards the exam each year, show them how to revise for examinations, and arrange suitable revision sessions. However, we **cannot revise for your child**: each BTEC student must be sure to put the right amount of time into exam preparation before each formal exam. Your support with this is vital.

Risk 2: Plagiarism and copying work

BTEC courses are partially assessed through the submission of coursework. When writing coursework some students can be tempted to copy or plagiarise the words, ideas and work of others without acknowledgement. However it occurs, in whole or in part, deliberately or inadvertently, academic plagiarism is not acceptable at Tallis.

We are very clear with students from the beginning that they **must not copy work**. In addition, BTEC students sign a declaration as each piece of coursework is submitted that all the work submitted for the assignment is their own, so they are reminded each time.

Tallis has a 'two strikes and you're out' policy about single instances of plagiarism and we will consider the permanent exclusion of students who persistently copy and submit work that is not their own. We may in some instances not pick up that work has been plagiarised until after a final deadline for examination work has passed by. If this happens, we will in addition treat the plagiarised work as if it had not been submitted, and this may mean that a student fails the unit or is downgraded for it. Students who fail units or achieve lower unit grades run a number of risks about their final grade and these are explained below.

We have explained our policy about plagiarism to your child. Please reinforce our policy to your child so that there can be no confusion about it.

Risk 3: Failing to meet BTEC Deadlines

Each of your child's BTEC units is made up of a number of pieces of coursework and we are required by the exam board, Pearson, to write a calendar of deadlines for this coursework to be submitted. We also provide and discuss a checklist for each assessment before students start the assessment that clearly specifies each piece of work that must be submitted for a student to pass it.

BTEC deadlines have two stages. An initial deadline is set by staff prior to a final deadline three weeks later. Students who meet the initial deadline can receive feedback from staff and use it to improve their work to passing standard if their work does not pass first time. They must then resubmit it by the final deadline. Nearly all students at Tallis produce work to the right standard first time round.

Students who do not meet the first deadline must submit work for the second deadline. By missing the first deadline, they give up their chance to improve their work and they must accept the grade it receives. They are not allowed to improve it and resubmit it a third time. If the work fails, they fail the BTEC unit. If they submit some work but not all the work that is specified on the assessment checklist, then they fail the BTEC unit. Finally, students who choose not to submit no work by the second and final deadline fail the unit. It is not possible to retake units.

Failing a unit dramatically limits a student's final grade. Some units are 'Core Units' and failing a Core Unit means that a student fails the entire BTEC qualification. We have no alternative qualifications we can offer mid-year. Hence, if a Core Unit is failed, there will be no reason to continue in the sixth form at Tallis because no qualification can be awarded at the end of the year.

In the past this has happened at Tallis. Please help us to prevent this from happening. It is important that your child meets all deadlines for their BTEC work, and that you contact us immediately should a problem arise.

Further details of BTEC assessment arrangements are below:

- We will explicitly teach your child how to do the assessment. Your child may be given a mock assessment so they are better prepared for the 'live' assignments that follow. We can give detailed feedback on this preparatory work.
- Before each 'live' assignment students will be issued with a checklist to ensure that they have a very good understanding of the requirements for a Pass, Merit, Distinction grade.
- The initial deadline for the 'live' assignment will be clarified with students when each assignment is issued, usually by posting them to Bromcom, our school information system. Parents can look at tasks set for students using their My Child At School/MCAS login.
- During the 'live' assessment tasks the teacher **can only give general guidance about the task**. They are not permitted to give detailed guidance to students or to confirm if tasks have been 'passed' or not. This means that students need to ask questions or clarify before the 'live' assessment starts.
- After the assignment is completed, the teacher can indicate which criteria have been achieved and which have not, with reasons for the decision. The teacher cannot provide other guidance as to how to achieve a higher grade e.g. a Merit or Distinction grade.
- Only ONE attempt is allowed per assignment. Exceptionally, the Course Leader for that course may permit a second attempt. This second attempt can only be made if the deadline for the first attempt has been kept to.
- As explained above, deadlines must be met. If they are not met, then the student is immediately at risk of failing the entire qualification.
- If there is a specific reason why a deadline cannot be met then the students must discuss this with the Course Leader for that subject before the deadline is reached. The Course Leader can authorise an extension, but this needs to be recorded formally and must be for a good reason which can be supported with evidence e.g. serious illness, family bereavement.
- If a student repeatedly fails to meet initial deadlines for the submission of work, without sufficient explanation of why this is so, we will regard this as persistent defiance of our behavioural expectations.
- Our Disciplinary Flowcharts are available for you to look at on the tallispost16.com website.

Course Leaders for each BTEC programme

Please contact the course leaders if you have more specific questions you want to ask.

Art & Design: Ms. Phillips – sphillips@thomastallis.org.uk

Media: Ms. McGrath – smcgrath@thomastallis.org.uk

Business: Mr Henderson – shenderson@thomastallis.org.uk

ICT: Ms Russell - srussell@thomastallis.org.uk

Health & Social Care: Ms. Goodrum – kgoodrum@thomastallis.org.uk

Sport: Mr Springall – jspringall@thomastallis.org.uk

Yours faithfully,

Mr. S. Henderson

BTEC Quality Nominee

Mr. J. Bradshaw

Assistant Headteacher: Head of Sixth Form