



VOCATIONAL COURSE POLICY 2024

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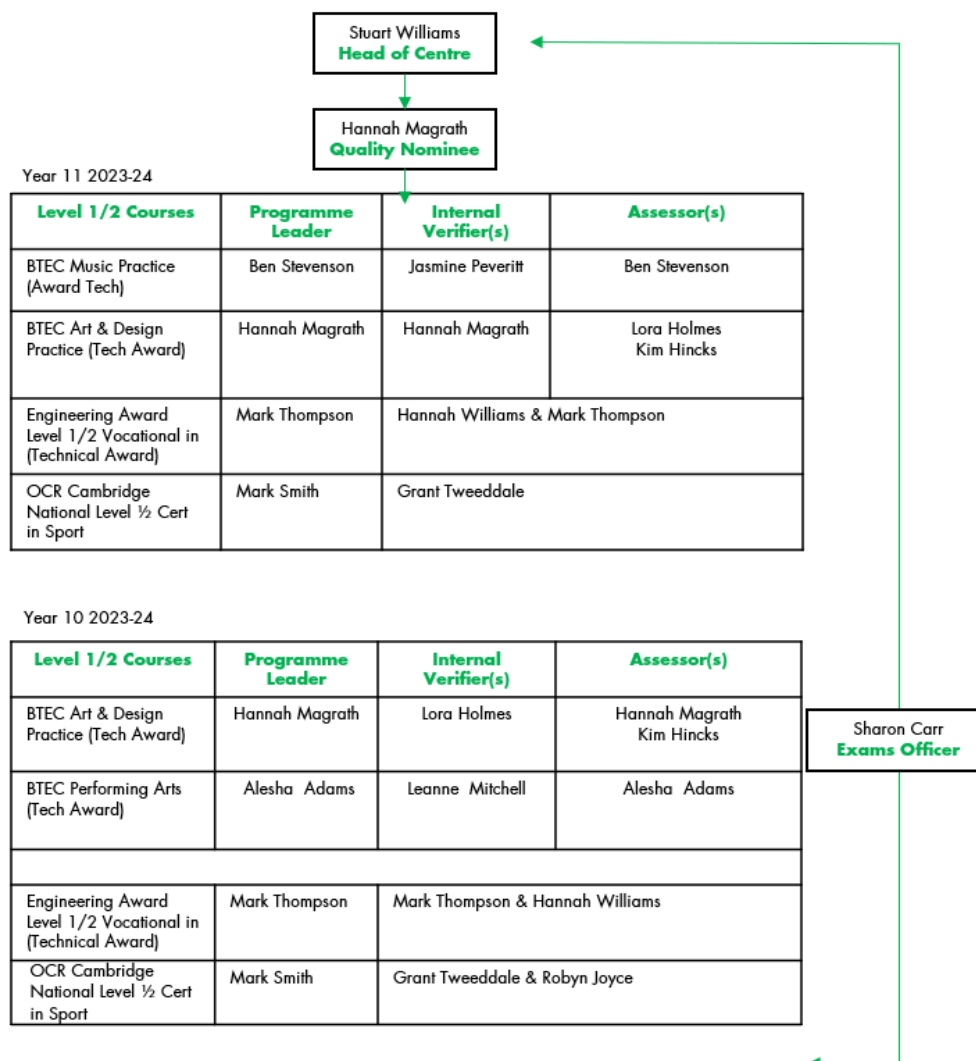
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1. RATIONALE

- 1.1 Within this policy, 'we' and 'us' means Catmose College.
- 1.2 BTEC and OCR Cambridge Nationals are vocational qualifications which offer an alternative route to GCSE. Courses are assessed through a combination of externally marked assessment and a number of teacher-marked assignments. BTECs and OCR Cambridge National are respected and understood by employers, and Further and Higher Education providers.
- 1.3 This policy relates to all vocational courses offered at Catmose College during 2023/2024.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Roles and responsibilities chart for the 2023/2024 academic year:



2.2 Head of Centre is Stuart Williams (Executive Principal) – roles and responsibilities include:

- Formally responsible for the management and delivery of the vocational curriculum at Catmose College.
- To ensure that the College acts in accordance with the conditions of approval, regulations and any other terms and conditions or policies from Pearson and OCR.
- Completing the Centre Annual Declaration in collaboration with the QN.

2.3 BTEC Quality Nominee/Programme Contact: Hannah Magrath (Senior Assistant Principal) – roles and responsibilities include:

- Being the first point of contact for all communication with Pearson/OCR and being responsible for arranging the annual quality assurance checks by the Centre Quality Reviewer/Lead Standards Verifier.
- Along with the Programme Coordinators, working with other centre staff to ensure that Standards Verification/Internal Quality Assurance for each programme takes place.
- Being required to inform Pearson of any acts of malpractice.
- Being responsible for ensuring students are registered on time and correctly.
- Handling any course transfers, withdrawals and certification claims for students.
- Ensuring effective management of the vocational programmes offered and actively promoting good practice at the centre e.g. ensuring that centre internal verification and standardisation processes operate effectively.
- Actively monitoring and supporting the programme teams.
- Controlling access to the administration system, Edexcel Online and corresponding with the awarding bodies.

2.4 The programme team consists of the staff responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of the vocational programmes on offer. Roles include: Programme Leader, Lead Internal Verifier, Internal Verifiers and Assessors. Given the small number of staff and students involved with the programmes, it is highly likely that staff will perform more than one of these roles.

2.5 Role of Programme Leaders: responsible for maintaining the course file. This should contain the following documentation:

- Approval letter showing accreditation period and programme number.
- Induction details and material
- Course materials
- Registration details of students
- Student support details
- Student action planning/student agreements
- Programme timetable/sample plan
- Course details, including training and CPD records
- Assessment schedule
- Schemes of work
- Assignment briefs/sample tasks
- Internal moderation
- Standardisation records
- Previous standards verification reports and follow-up documentation if appropriate
- Subject team meetings
- Planning and reviewing
- Tracking and achievement documentation
- Results of student satisfaction surveys to formulate key actions for the next academic year
- Retention and achievement records

- Transformation Plan/team strands
 - Any appeal forms received and action taken.
- 2.6 The programme leader must also ensure that assessment records and students' work are retained for sampling by the Standards Verifier and they will work with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place.
- 2.7 A sample of students' work (examples of Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction* L1/2) and all assessment decision sheets should be retained for 3 years following certification. It is the programme leader's responsibility to ensure that the sample is retained.
- 2.8 The programme leader should also make sure that all final assessment decisions or final outcomes are given in writing to the Examinations Officer no later than 1 July each academic year. For further guidance on this, see information below on registration and certification.
- 2.9 BTEC Lead is responsible for managing the assessment of units and qualifications as well as signing off assessment and internal verification decisions. They also need to:
- Register through the online standardisation system, OSCA, each year and ensure that national standards are understood (BTEC only).
 - Assist the Programme Leader in maintaining the subject file.
 - Check all decisions reached by the Internal Verifier and Assessor.
 - Authorise resubmissions of students' work in a fair and consistent manner.
- 2.10 BTEC Lead is responsible for ensuring that assessment decisions are consistent, valid, fair and unbiased across the programme. They must check that all assignment briefs are fit for purpose and that the decisions reached by different assessors are accurate. The BTEC Lead should record their findings, give the assessor feedback and oversee any remedial action. Also responsible for designing the Assessment Schedule and malpractice checks when internally verifying students' work.
- 2.11 Assessor: responsible for delivering the induction programme at the start of the BTEC course and for producing /distributing the induction booklet. Assessors will teach and assess students against the assessment criteria and national standards. They should work closely with the IV to draw up the assessment and internal verification schedule and ensure that all deadlines are adhered to.
- 2.12 Assessors should provide feedback to students, assure the authenticity of students' work, record and track achievements. If assessment decisions are questioned, the Assessor is responsible for starting the appeals process. This should be carried out in line with the guidance set out in our BTEC/Vocational Appeals Policy.
- 2.13 OCR Internal Quality Assurer (IQA): responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring assessment to ensure all are in line with required standards. They provide support and advice for all centre assessors. Organise regular standardisation meetings to sample assessments, monitor practice and to ensure all assessment decisions are fair, valid and

reliable. Work will be coordinated by the IQA to ensure submission deadlines are adhered to and standard of work is appropriate. The IQA will also liaise with the EQA and act as arbitrator for any disagreements in outcomes of assessments including appeals.

2.14 All these staff will be required to meet termly to discuss the BTEC/vocational programmes on offer, raise any concerns and share good practice.

3. REGISTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

3.1 The Examinations Officer will ensure the following actions take place:

- Register all students for the correct course and that their details are accurate. This action should be completed within the first term (or within 6 weeks) of students starting the course.
- Inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to student details.
- Ensure that certificates are claimed on time (for Year 11 results day) and that certification decisions are based solely on internally verified assessment records. To make this possible the programme leader must submit all final assessment decisions /final outcomes to the Examinations Officer, no later than 1 July. This declaration of students' grades will need to be checked, signed and dated by the Assessor, IV, Lead IV and Programme Leader before grades are entered onto the system by the Examinations Officer.
- Check that the request for certificates from the awarding body is correct.
- Check with the Programme Leader that the certificates received from the awarding body are accurate.

4. ASSESSMENT AND INTERNAL VERIFICATION

4.1 The following assessment and internal moderation protocol will be followed:

- The Assessor and Lead will follow all guidance set out in the standardisation material. This material will be reviewed annually.
- All assignment briefs should be fit for purpose, to enable learners to produce appropriate evidence for the assessment.
- All assignment briefs should be checked by Lead.
- The assessment schedule must specify the following dates: when the assignment will be set, submission dates, formative feedback dates, final submission dates, final assessment dates and moderation dates. The assessment schedule should be completed on the correct Pearson pro forma prior to the programme commencing.
- Given the small number of students on the courses we currently offer, all students' work will be internally moderated.
- The Lead will ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable.
- The Lead will maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions.
- The Lead will maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure.
- The Lead will communicate effectively with the Standards Verifier and provide all samples when required.
- The Lead will carefully read the standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required.

- The Lead will share good assessment practice between all BTEC programme teams at the termly meetings.

5. APPEALS

- All of our students have the right to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision on a vocational qualification.
- We will attempt to resolve any disagreement about an assessment decision at the earliest opportunity and will follow a range of steps in order to achieve this.
- We will record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness. This will be done on the pupil tracking document and on the appeals form. (Please keep a copy of all completed appeals forms in the subject folder).
- Where appropriate, we will facilitate a student's appeal to the awarding body. (Parents'/guardians' consent will be required as the students are under 18 years).
- At all times we will seek to uphold the integrity of the BTEC/Vocational qualifications.
- The appeals process will be communicated by the assessor to students at the start of the course as part of the introduction lesson. The appeals process is also stated clearly in the course handbook.
- Following the induction lesson, all students must sign and date a declaration stating that they have received induction training which made specific reference to appeals. This completed declaration form will be kept in the Programme Leader's folder and must be available when requested. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to ensure that this action is completed.
- The Quality Nominee will record, track and validate any appeal.
- Any appeals will be forwarded to the awarding body when a student (with parents'/guardians' consent as the student is under 18) considers that a decision continues to disadvantage him/her after the internal appeals process has been exhausted.
- We will keep any appeals records for 3 years for inspection by the awarding body.
- We, in line with awarding body guidelines, have a 3 stage internal appeals process.

6. INTERNAL APPEALS

6.1 Stage 1 – Informal:

- 6.1.1 The student consults with the allocated subject assessor within two weeks of receiving the internally verified assessment decision. If the student remains unhappy with the assessment decision it will be moved to Stage 2.

6.2 Stage 2 – Review:

- 6.2.1 The original assessment decision should be reviewed by the IV or Team Leader. The student will be notified of the outcome in writing with the findings and will have the opportunity to agree/disagree. If the student/parents disagree and the outcome remains unresolved, the appeal will move to Stage 3.

6.3 Stage 3 – Appeal Hearing:

- 6.3.1 The Quality Nominee/Senior Leadership Team member will hear the appeal in line with our appeals protocol (as students are under 18 years of age they must provide a letter from a parent/guardian). If at this stage the appeal remains

unresolved, the quality nominee will contact the awarding body and request an external appeal.

7. EXTERNAL APPEALS

7.1 The Quality Nominee will contact the awarding body. All grounds for appeal by the student and all supporting documentation must be submitted by us to the awarding body within 14 days of the completion of Stage 3. Edexcel will only consider an appeal if the following conditions have been met:

- The appeal is submitted to Edexcel/OCR in writing by the Principal and includes the grounds for appeal and any supporting documents.
- An appeal is submitted to Edexcel/OCR once the centre's own internal appeals procedures have been exhausted.
- During the appeal we will retain all evidence relating to the appeal case. If the appeal involves the work of all student(s), the completed work of the cohort will be retained.
- The Quality Nominee will monitor/log any appeals/outcomes and inform the staff of any improvements that may be required or recommended by the awarding body.

7.2 The Quality Nominee needs to take appropriate action to protect the interests of other students and the integrity of the qualification if at any stage the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other students' results.

8. MALPRACTICE INCLUDING THE MISUSE OF AI

8.1 Malpractice procedures will be communicated by assessors to students at the start of the course as part of the induction lesson. Malpractice procedures will also be stated clearly in the course handbook.

9. ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

9.1 Assessment malpractice including the use of AI, consists of those acts which undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or damage of authority of those responsible for conducting the assessment certification. This protocol relates to malpractice in any assessment and certification context, and sets out the rights and responsibilities with regard to malpractice of students and staff.

10. PROTOCOL DOCUMENT

10.1 We do not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by students, staff or other stakeholders in connection with any assessments and certification. We will impose disciplinary proceedings where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven. Where assessment malpractice is proven, awarding bodies may also impose penalties or sanctions.

11. REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

11.1 As stated above, students will be informed of our protocol on assessment malpractice and plagiarism during course induction. Students will be shown the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information including websites. We will use assessment procedures which reduce the opportunity for malpractice including, for example:

- Periods of controlled sessions during which evidence for assessments is produced by the student.
- Altering assessment assignments/task/tools on a regular basis.
- Establishing that members of staff (Assessor, IV and Lead IV) are responsible for checking the validity of the student's work.
- Building in oral sessions to check student's understanding, skills and knowledge of their presented material.
- Ensuring access controls are installed to prevent students from accessing and using other people's work when using networked computers.
- Students should make a written declaration that their work is their own when submitting assessments – see student declaration sheets.

11.2 Incidents of student assessment malpractice should be reported to the Quality Nominee by the subject team.

11.3 If the malpractice is discovered after the awarding body declaration sheet has been signed, the incident should also be reported to the awarding body.

11.4 Incidents of staff assessment malpractice should be reported to the Principal or his/her nominated representative.

11.5 When a case of alleged assessment malpractice has been reported, the incident should be investigated using the appropriate disciplinary procedure for staff or student. The alleged incident should be reported to the awarding body as appropriate at the earliest opportunity by the Quality Nominee.

12. ASSESSMENT MALPRACTICE

12.1 The following are examples of malpractice by students. This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by us at our discretion.

- Plagiarism by copying and passing off, as the student's own, the whole or part(s) of another person's work, including artwork, images, words, computer generated work (including internet sources), thoughts, inventions and/or discoveries, whether published or not, with or without the originator's permission and without appropriately acknowledging the source.
- Using an AI tool.
- Collusion by working collaboratively with others to produce work that is submitted as individual student work.
- Impersonation by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another.
- Fabrication of results or evidence.
- Failing to abide by instructions.
- Misuse of assessment and/or examination material.
- Introduction of unauthorised material.
- Alteration of any results document.
- Cheating to gain an unfair advantage.

12.2 Following the induction lesson all students must sign and date a declaration stating that they have received induction training which made specific reference to malpractice. This completed declaration form will be kept in the team's BTEC folder and must be available

when requested. It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader to ensure that this action is completed.

12.3 The following are examples of malpractice by staff. This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by us at our discretion.

- Failing to keep confidential assessment mark schemes secure.
- Alteration of assessment mark scheme.
- Alteration of awarding bodies' assessment and grading criteria.
- Assisting students 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 staff producing work for the student.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff not to be the student's own, to be included in the student's assignment/task/portfolio/coursework.
- Misusing the conditions of special access arrangements.
- Failing to keep student files secure – electronic or otherwise.
- Falsifying records/certificates or obtaining unauthorised access to assessment/examination/test material prior to an assessment/examination/test.

13. INVESTIGATING ALLEGED MALPRACTICE

13.1 When dealing with alleged malpractice, the Principal or the nominated representative will:

- Deal with the alleged malpractice in an open and fair manner.
- Involve the student and others in the investigation process. This may occur, for example, when a student's account of events is inconsistent with that of the centre.
- During the investigation period the release of results/certificates may be withheld, with the permission of the awarding body, pending the outcome of the investigation.

13.2 The Principal or the nominated representative will carry out an investigation into allegations of malpractice. Investigations into any alleged malpractice against the Principal will normally be conducted by the Chair of the Governing Body or an appointed nominee.

13.3 If we discover or suspect anyone of malpractice, we will make the accused fully aware, in writing, at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven. If this relates to a student, his/her parent/guardian must also be informed.

- The accused will be given the opportunity to respond, in writing, to the allegations made.
- The accused will also be informed of the avenues for appealing should a judgment be made against them.

- A record of the investigation and outcome of the alleged practice will be retained, in line with staff and student disciplinary policies.

14. BLENDED LEARNING

14.1 Staff responsible for the implementation of vocational programmes will:

- Ensure classwork is placed on the Show My Homework (SMHW) platform for students requiring to work remotely.
- Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetabled to support blended learning when students are working remotely.
- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner.
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear.
- Ensure that when students submit work, measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the student.
- Maintain and securely store all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson/OCR Centre Agreement.