



St Matthew Academy

RSL QUALIFICATIONS

Policies

Our motto is 'Let your light shine'. It is taken from St Matthew's Gospel and captures our belief in the uniqueness of each individual. Our aim is to ensure that the talents and strengths of each pupil are encouraged, developed and celebrated

Successful, confident learners

High expectations, outstanding achievements

Inclusive, caring, Catholic community

Nurturing talent, cultivating ambition

Excellence for all

Date of Approval	Autumn 2020
Review Date	Autumn 2021

Key staff involved in these policies

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Ms M Baldwin
Exams officer line manager (Senior Leader with oversight of exams administration)	Ms S Wickliffe
Exams officer	Ms F Walker
SENCo	Mr H Vyas
Assessor & Quality Representative	Mr J Charlery
Internal Verifier	Ms E Thurston

The policies contained in this document are specific to RSL qualifications.

Policies included are:

- Conflict of interest Policy
- Quality Assurance Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Vocational Assessment Policy

This document should be read in conjunction with the St Matthew Academy:

- Access Arrangements (Exams) Policy
- Complaints & Appeals (Exam) Procedures
- Data Protection (Exams) Policy
- Emergency Evacuation (Exams) Policy
- Equalities (Exams) Policy
- Exam Contingency Plan
- Exams Archiving Policy
- Exams Policy
- Internal Appeals (Exams) Policy
- Non-examination Assessments Policy
- Special Considerations (Exams) Policy
- Word Processor (Exams) Policy

Issue and Review

The date of issue of these policies is September 2020. These policies will be reviewed annually by RSL.

Where amendments are made to RSL's conflict of interest policy which directly impact centres, centres will be notified.

Contents

Key staff involved in these policies	2
Issue and Review.....	2
Conflict of Interest Policy.....	4
The Scope of this Policy	4
Managing and Declaring Conflict of Interest	4
Possible Examples of Conflict of Interest in relation to the delivery of RSL Vocational Qualifications	4
Template for Declaration of Conflict of Interest	5
Quality Assurance Policy.....	6
The Scope of this Policy	6
Objectives.....	6
Responsibilities	6
Improving Provision through Feedback.....	6
Internal Verification Policy.....	7
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy.....	9
The Scope of this Policy	9
The RPL Process	9
Prior to Registration.....	9
Process for the Assessment of RPL.....	9
Other types of evidence.....	10
Cross Referencing	10
RPL Assessment.....	11
Quality Assurance	11
Complaints and Appeals	11
Vocational Assessment Policy.....	13
The Scope of this Policy	13
Assessment Policy.....	13
Internal Assessment.....	13
External Assessment	15

Conflict of Interest Policy

The Scope of this Policy

A Conflict of Interest exists in relation to an awarding organisation where:

- Its interests in any activity undertaken by it, on its behalf or by a member of its Group have the potential to lead it to act contrary to its interests of the development, delivery and award of qualifications in accordance with its Conditions of Recognition (of the awarding organisation.)
- A person who is connected to the development, delivery or award of qualifications by the awarding organisation has interests in any other activity which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to his or her interests in that development, delivery or award in accordance with the awarding organisation's Conditions of Recognition.
- An informed and reasonable observer would conclude that either of these situations was the case.

This policy is designed to be used in conjunction with RSL guidance which is made available on the website at www.rslawards.com. RSL requires centres approved to deliver Vocational Qualifications to declare any and all conflicts of interest pertaining to the assessment of Vocational Qualifications.

Managing and Declaring Conflict of Interest

It is the responsibility of all staff in St Matthew Academy to declare all conflict of interest. Any undeclared conflict of interest and instances where assessment has taken place where conflict of interest exists may be investigated in line with RSL's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Any and all conflict of interest pertaining to the assessment of Vocational Qualifications will be declared to RSL.

Each individual involved in the assessment process is responsible for declaring conflict of interest. St Matthew Academy are able to mitigate against a declared conflict of interest, the mitigation will be included in the declaration.

In instances where St Matthew Academy cannot mitigate against a Conflict of interest (for example, where the only qualified assessor and internal verifier available at a centre are related) the unresolved conflict will be declared to RSL to enable RSL to make arrangements to mitigate through the external quality assurance processes.

St Matthew Academy will be directly responsible for ensuring for submitting the Declaration of conflict of interest to RSL.

Possible Examples of Conflict of Interest in relation to the delivery of RSL Vocational Qualifications

- Where an assessor and the internal verifier have a personal relationship.
- Where a child of the assessor or internal verifier is taking part in the assessment.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Template for Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Name of RSL Approved Centre: St Matthew Academy

Quality Representative: Mr J Charlery

Date	Nature of conflict of interest	Mitigation	RSL response including further mitigation, where necessary
EXAMPLE	IV A normally internally verifies unit XYZ. However, IV A's daughter is in the class.	Internal verification will be conducted by IV B for this unit.	
	IV A normally internally verifies unit XYZ. However, IV A's daughter is in the class. The centre has no other internal verifier.	This is an unavoidable conflict of interest. IV A will IV the unit but will not include the work of their daughter in the IV sample.	RSL EQA will ensure that the work of the candidate involved in this declared conflict of interest is sampled.

Quality Assurance Policy

The Scope of this Policy

The Quality Assurance Policy outlines the practices, resources and sequence of activities relevant to the maintaining quality provision.

The Quality Assurance Policy provides a commitment to measure the consistent standards of provision and customer satisfaction.

Objectives

The Quality Assurance Policy sets out to ensure that St Matthew Academy:

- Provides consistency on the organisation's response to customer needs and gives customers confidence that quality provision is being delivered;
- Improves communication about setting standards and the practices and methods of achieving the required standard;
- Clarifies tasks so that staff know the level of performance to be attained;
- Sets targets which measure learner satisfaction;
- Monitors and evaluates results and feedback in order to act to maintain a Quality System of continuous improvement.

Responsibilities

The Quality Assurance Policy details a commitment from senior management to establish, document and communicate the drive for continuous improvement for the benefit of all stakeholders.

The assessor will be directly responsible for ensuring that provision of teaching and assessment meets the needs of learners and awarding organisations and that there is a mechanism for acquiring feedback from all relevant parties. This feedback will be instrumental in measuring stakeholder satisfaction.

St Matthew Academy is aware that the service provided is only as professional as the people supplying the service. The recruitment process includes the requirement for customer care and the standards of service to be attained. The aforementioned is monitored through the Staff Appraisal System, quality provision and customer satisfaction.

The following mechanisms will be instrumental in measuring internal and external stakeholder (e.g. pupil, parent, funder, local community etc) satisfaction:

- Assessor/Monitoring Review Sheets;
- Internal verification sampling activities;
- End of Programme Evaluation;
- Evaluation of service provision by employers (if applicable);
- External Verification visits and client feedback interviews.

Improving Provision through Feedback

Where performance does not meet the required standard, discussion regarding improvement and development of provision to meet requirements will be subject to the following procedures:

- All feedback documentation must be examined by the internal verifier and in the event of a shortfall occurring it will be the responsibility of the internal verifier to submit a report detailing the outcomes of the findings and include recommendations for improvement;

- The report will be submitted to the head of centre, who is ultimately responsible for quality provision
- Nominated personnel will be responsible for the development and implementation of the agreed recommendations within a reasonable and achievable timescale.
- The improved level of provision will be monitored and assessed in order to ensure improvements meet customer satisfaction.

The Quality Assurance Policy detailed above will provide the foundation upon which St Matthew Academy will continue to operate a continuous improvement programme, on behalf of all its stakeholders.

Internal Verification Policy

This is designed to be used in conjunction with Awarding Organisation guidance which the centre makes available on the Academy website.

Internal Verification has two parts within a centre:

- Internal verification of Assignment Briefs
- Internal verification of Assessment Decisions.

Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

All learners will undertake a series of assignments which will be marked by their assessor/tutor. All assignments will be submitted on or before the given deadline by upload to the RSL secure area.

100% of assignment briefs must be internally verified within the centre before being handed out to learners. Any actions must be amended and signed off prior to the brief being handed out to learners.

Internal verification decisions must be recorded on appropriate internal verification paperwork and signed by both the assessor and the internal verifier.

Assignments briefs must be reviewed by the assessor and internally verified annually.

Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

The internal verification of assessment decisions should consist of two parts:

- Standardisation
- Internal verification of assessment decisions.

Standardisation:

Standardisation is a way to ensure consistent assessment decisions are made by assessors at all levels for learners and are consistent across the organisation. It is also a way to support the development of assessors and teaching staff in the quality of delivery of qualifications.

Standardisation will take place one per half term. This will be in the form of a standardisation meeting where good practice is discussed, marking work outside a meeting and discussing feedback, delivery of information on best practice, observation of assessment activities and feedback.

Standardisation can also take place to discuss the qualification requirements, create teaching and planning materials, design assessment etc.

Standardisation will also take into consideration internal verification of assessment decisions and External Quality Assurance of assignment briefs.

Internal verification of assessment decisions:

Internal verification will take place for all units assessed. All internal verification staff will sample assessment practice at regular intervals to highlight at risk learners or issues with assessment practice.

The internal verification sampling strategy includes:

- Where there are 20 learners or fewer, a minimum of four learners across a range of grade boundaries (i.e. one pass, one merit, one distinction and one other.) Larger cohorts will have an increased sample size.

Internal verification staff will sample all assessors, grades and units across each qualification.

Internal verification of assessment decisions will be recorded on appropriate internal verification paperwork and signed by both the assessor and the internal verifier.

Internal verification must take place prior to learners receiving their grades and any actions must be amended and signed off prior to the work being handed back to learners.

Internal verification of assessment decisions should also include the internal verification of resubmissions.

Further verification activities such as observation of teaching and support and development of assessor/tutors will be done in line with Internal Verification Handbook.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

The Scope of this Policy

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is defined as an opportunity for learners to present performance or accredited knowledge evidence which comes from a period prior to their registration. This is evidence of earlier learning and achievement towards part of a qualification. For example, if a learner has started a vocational qualification elsewhere (i.e. an equivalent level qualification (i.e. BTEC) or the first year of RSL qualifications) and wishes to transfer the previous credits.

Recognition of Prior Learning can be applied to internally assessed parts of vocational qualifications.

It cannot be applied to:

- Graded Music examinations.
- GCSE examinations
- A Level Examinations
- Performing Arts Awards examinations.
- Parts of externally assessed units in vocational qualifications.

It can be applied to:

- Full units in vocational qualifications (including those externally assessed)
- Part of internally assessed elements of vocational qualifications

RPL does not apply to qualifications which identify the achievement of specific qualifications as a minimum entry requirement.

The RPL Process

Prior to Registration

All prospective learners will have access to information on how to apply for and claim RPL.

This will happen during an informal interview with parents when pupils first show an interest in the course during the Options evening. During the interview, any prior learning will be discussed with the pupil and later documented as part of the interview paperwork. For in year admissions, this will take place as part of the admission and options process.

During or just after the interview process, pupils and their parents will be given a handout which will outline RPL for learners.

During or just after the interview process, certificates which can be used as evidence of RPL will be collected and photocopies made, to be kept on file as part of the mapping process.

Process for the Assessment of RPL

The centre St Matthew Academy accepts the following evidence for RPL:

- Unit certificates
- Certificates for full qualifications

When presenting a certificate for RPL, the learner will need to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding to prevent the need to repeat the assessment or course.

Learners' prior certificated¹ learning can be used as evidence for assessment criteria. Copies are only acceptable as evidence where the original certificates have been seen and countersigned.

When using certificates for RPL, St Matthew Academy will cross reference the work between the two standards, (the qualification/unit certificated and the qualification registered on).

Evidence of previous learning or achievement, like other evidence, will be rigorously subjected to the assessment of its:

- Validity: does the evidence demonstrate that the demands of the assessment criteria/learning outcome has been met?
- Currency: does the evidence demonstrate that demands of the specification have been met and are up-to-date? See below for further guidance.
- Authenticity: can the evidence be unequivocally attributed to the learner?
- Sufficiency: is there enough evidence to fully meet the criteria/outcome

Other types of evidence

The evidence gathered needs to meet the standards of the specification that it will be used for. Evidence from a learner's past experience could include:

- Paid work
- Community or voluntary work
- Home life
- Education and training

Further evidence may include:

- Evidence of workplace practice, confirmed by workplace managers.
- Past portfolios of evidence created by the learner which remains current.
- Reports created by the learner and confirmed as authentic.
- Expert witness testimonies (i.e. workplace managers, specialists, lecturers/teachers)
- Professional discussions conducted with the learner to confirm their knowledge/skills
- New assignment briefs or tasks that have been created to fill any gaps in the evidence presented.

Whatever evidence is used it must be confirmed as valid, current, sufficient and authentic and subjected to the same rigour as any other type of evidence by the assessor and internal verifier prior to acceptance.

Cross Referencing

All RPL will be mapped to individual assessment criteria to the appropriate/corresponding assessment criteria in RSL qualifications. This will mean that some assessment criteria will be met and others only partially met, some not at all. It is unlikely that learners will have all the evidence they need to achieve a full unit unless they have previously achieved the unit itself. A full record of the mapping must be kept for quality assurance purposes.

RPL can only be used for those assessment criteria that are fully met.

With this type of mapping, the assessment criteria have to match, or sufficient evidence to show that the learner has achieved the criteria with the work that they have done and access to the work that has been submitted for the original qualification, if available, may help. When mapping, grading criteria cannot be used unless the learner has met all assessment criteria.

Evidence for how and why an individual learner has achieved through RPL needs to have a substantial audit trail and is not a shortcut.

¹ Certificated is defined as the learner having passed a test or assessment and met the standard.

RPL Assessment

Currency

The currency of knowledge and practice will be assessed. St Matthew Academy accept certificates not older than 2 years as it is deemed that the knowledge and skills of the learner will no longer be current after this time.

Certificates older than 5 years may require additional assessment of the learner's knowledge and skills against the current standard. Significant changes in practice or technology in under 2 years must also be considered to ensure that the assessment of the learner's practice is current. All Awarding Organisations require confirmation that currency and validity has been assessed RPL should be subject to the same assessment processes as other forms of evidence and be subject to formal review and feedback.

Quality Assurance

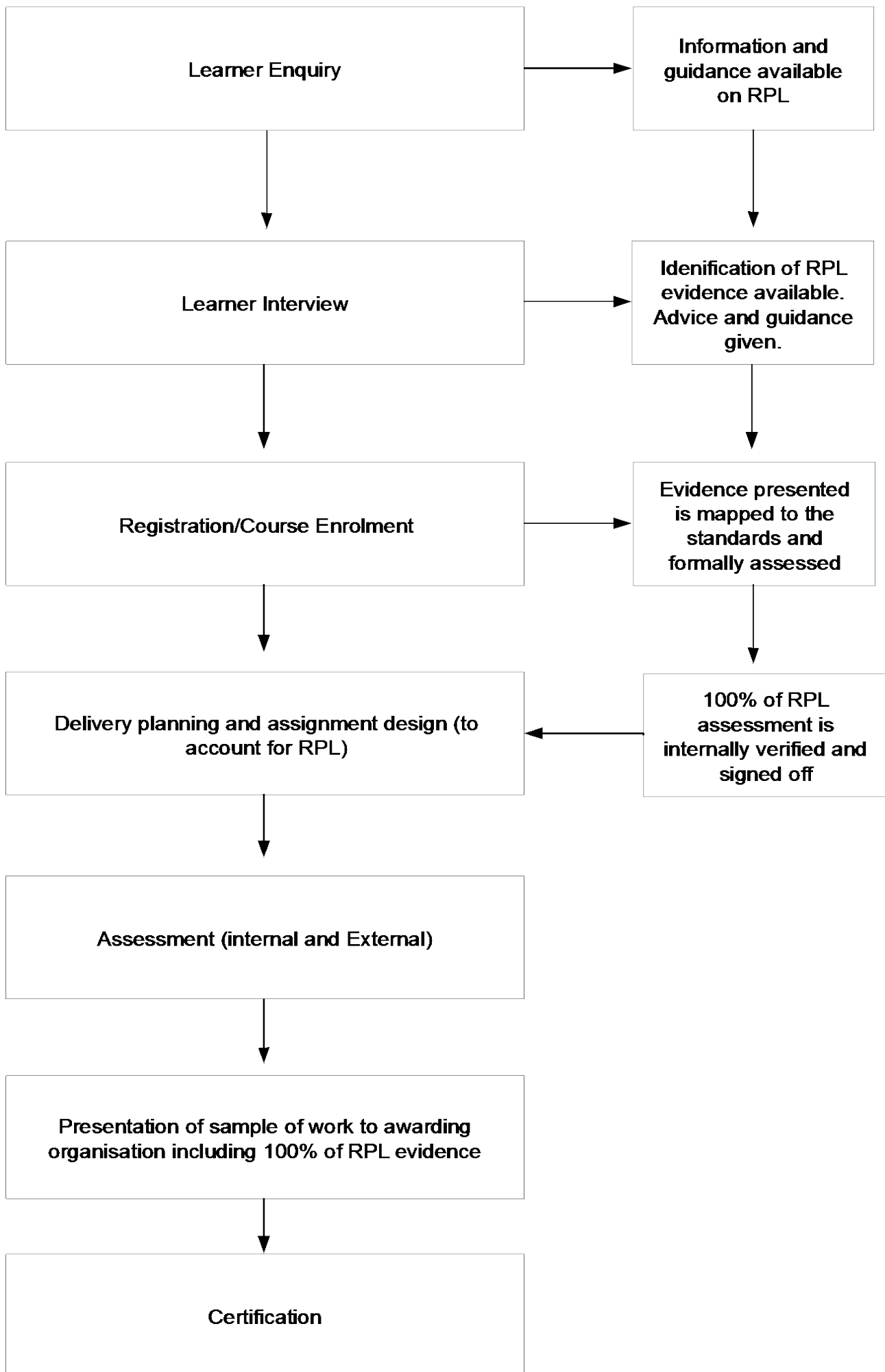
Presenting RPL to Awarding Organisations

St Matthew Academy will provide access to the audit trail for all units claimed through the individual Awarding Organisation (AO) quality processes. 100% of RPL evidence could be asked for by the External Quality Assurer so a rigorous audit trail must be in place.

Certificates can only be claimed when the appropriate quality assurance processes are completed successfully.

Complaints and Appeals

Learners are able to appeal the assessment decision for RPL in the same way they can any other assessment decision by use of the centres Appeals and Complaints policy which can be found on the Academy website.



Vocational Assessment Policy

The Scope of this Policy

This document lays out the assessment policy of St Matthew Academy for all RSL Vocational Qualifications. This document is designed to be used in conjunction with RSL guidance (specifications, syllabus documents, RSL How to Guides and Centre Handbook) which is available to all assessors.

Assessment Policy

Internal Assessment

Assignment Briefs

All learners will work on assignment briefs for internally assessed units and present their evidence using variety of methods including online cloud software e.g Google docs, the school network or where appropriate using paper documentation. Assessment will be carried out using video technology, sound recording equipment as appropriate.

All assignment briefs will be created by the assessor delivering the programme. 100% of these will be internally verified prior to issue.

All assessors will submit assignment briefs to the internal verifier by the agreed deadlines.

Assignment briefs will include:

- Qualification title, unit number and name
- The name of the centre and the tutor
- The date set and the deadline for submission
- The tasks – laid out in accessible way for learners
- The assessment criteria alongside each task
- Links to related resources (if appropriate)
- Grading criteria
- Submission checklist
- How work is to be submitted

Internal Assessment Practice

All internal assessment will be conducted as assessment not as part of teaching and learning:

- Learners complete their work within direct sight of the tutor(s) throughout the assessment.
- Learners may complete their work collaboratively but they have to indicate their own contribution and that contribution MUST meet ALL assessment criteria in the specification.
- All work submitted must be attributable to the learner.
- The centre must ensure that learners have access to materials and resources as required.
- Feedback can be provided to the learner during completion of internal assignments but must not constitute coaching or teaching in order to ensure that the work can be authenticated.
- The assessment must be undertaken in the allocated time on the assignment brief.

Resubmissions

St Matthew Academy has the following policy on resubmissions:

- Learners will be allowed one re-sit for internal assessments only.
- Learners can apply for special considerations should there be sufficient reason. In this instance the St Matthew Academy Special Consideration Policy will apply.
- Resubmissions are uncapped if submitted by the required deadline.
- Late resubmission is capped at a Pass.

Assessment of Learner Work

All learner work will be assessed for:

Authenticity

Learners will:

- Introduce themselves on video evidence presented.
- Every learner will be clearly seen and heard on all video evidence.
- All written work will be labelled with learner name, centre name, date of submission, task and unit title on EVERY page.

Plagiarism

St Matthew Academy will investigate all cases of plagiarism identified through assessment. Assessors are required to ensure that all learner work is authentic and they must reference any research that they have undertaken in their final submission using an acceptable referencing system (e.g. Harvard). When working in collaboration, all work must be directly attributable to the individual learner. Please see St Matthew Academy Non-examination assessment policy for more details.

Assessment Criteria

All learner work will be assessed initially against the assessment criteria. If the learner has met all of the assessment criteria, work will then be graded accordingly using the grading criteria. If they have not met the assessment criteria, a grade of unclassified will be given.

Grading Criteria

All learner work meeting all of the assessment criteria will be graded as Pass or above. All grading decisions will be clearly auditable and will justify the grading decision made.

The Audit Trail

All assessment, both formative and summative, as well as grading decisions of Unclassified/Pass/Merit/Distinction will have a sufficient audit trail which will include:

- Learner name and details set out in the relevant assignment brief
- Date of assessment
- Type of assessment (formative or summative)
- Written feedback on the evidence seen:
 - against the assessment criteria
 - using the grading descriptors
 - motivational and developmental
 - precise and easy to follow
- Grade given for the work
- Details of any resubmission required and the relevant deadline
- Evidence of internal verification and 'sign off'

All assessors will use RSL approved assessment methods for their feedback and assessment decisions.

Timing of Assessment

All evidence will be assessed within two weeks of receipt and feedback will be provided to the learners.

It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that all learner work is graded appropriately and that the audit trail is available upon request to:

- Quality assurance staff
- Internal verifiers
- The Awarding Organisation

External Assessment

For the purpose of running external assessment, a responsible, the exams officer will arrange invigilators who will supervise the controlled period of assessment and validate all the evidence submitted to RSL via rslawards.com.

Levels of Control for RSL External Assessment

During the preparation time:

This will be conducted under non-supervised conditions:

- There will be sufficient evidence to ensure that the work can ultimately be authenticated as the learner's own.
- Use of resources including the internet is permitted and should be referenced.
- Interaction with other learners is permitted but the work must be authenticated as the learner's own.
- Time is restricted to the allocated period stated in the Controlled Assignment.
- Teaching staff may provide direction and general advice as required.

During the controlled assessment:

This will be conducted under supervised conditions.

- Learners complete their work within direct sight of the supervisor(s) throughout the assessment.
- Learners have a limited amount of time as specified in the Controlled Assignment Brief.
- Learners complete their work independently. There is interaction with other learners only for the purposes indicated in the assignment. All work submitted must be attributable to the individual learner.
- No access to email, the internet or mobile phones unless expressly stated by the Controlled Assignment Brief.
- Learners will have access to materials and resources as defined in the Controlled Assignment Brief. Any other materials which may provide assistance are removed or covered.
- No feedback can be provided to the learner throughout the controlled assessment period.

All learner work will be uploaded by the deadline given by RSL by the assessor.