

Work with third parties on Project Qualifications

Technical mentors

Occasionally students need specialist support from a 'technical mentor' or specialist about their project.

Students might work with a technical mentor when they are undertaking a practical or experimental project which requires the use of specialist equipment.

A technical mentor is:

- an addition to a project supervisor
- someone who support students with technical aspects of their project
- an exception; technical mentors should only be used where necessary.

A technical mentor should:

- give technical support only
- avoid directing student's work, and certainly do no part of a student's work for them
- contribute to the taught skills element of the project where appropriate.

Students should:

- refer to their technical mentor in their production log
- justify why the nature of their project requires them to work with a technical mentor (typically because equipment cannot be used without support).

Technical mentors might be: lab technicians, university researchers, technical and vocational specialists such as mechanics, engineers, hairdressers, craftspeople, chefs etc.

Consulting specialists

Students might consult specialists when they need information or input directly related to the topic of their project.

A specialist is:

- in addition to a project supervisor
- knowledgeable about the topic of a project
- a legitimate source of information for a student.

A specialist should:

- respond to student questions, but not offer unsolicited advice
- avoid directing student's work, and certainly do no part of a student's work for them.

Students should:

- refer to communications with specialists in their production log under Part A: Candidate proposal
- treat a specialist like any other source of information by considering the reliability of the information they provide and their authority to provide it.

Specialists might be, teachers or lecturers in the relevant subject area, university researchers, established experts (some students may even contact leading world experts).

Over direction by a mentor or anyone else can undermine your students' ability to meet the assessment criteria and ultimately affect their marks. Please guide your students carefully about the use of specialists and technical mentors.