




THE  
**BEDFORD**  
COLLEGE  
GROUP

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<b>Department</b>	Quality
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<b>QR Code</b>	
<b>E &amp; D Policy Disclaimer</b>	<p>This strategy has been reviewed in line with the Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation and Disability. We will continue to monitor this policy and to ensure that it has equal access and does not discriminate against anyone, especially any person/s listed under any protected characteristic.</p>

# HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy

## Higher Education Assessment Policy

### 1 Introduction

1.1 This section of the policy applies to all study at levels 4 and above, however the College Group only has responsibility for setting the policy for Pearson BTEC Higher National Programmes (HN). University of Bedfordshire and University of Northamptonshire programmes are required to operate within the policies set out by these institutions. The policies can be found here:

UoB

UoN

Therefore, the rest of the information in this section applies to all Pearson BTEC Higher National programmes and it applies only where the Awarding Body devolves policy on these matters to the College, or is otherwise silent; in all other circumstances, the policy of the Awarding Body will apply (HYPERLINK).

### 2 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this HN Assessment Policy is to ensure that staff and learners on Higher National programmes are fully aware of the criteria and standards against which learner progress and success will be judged. This section is supplementary to the general guidelines outlined in this policy above.

2.2 The HN Assessment Policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- a. that all assessment will be carried out in fair and equitable ways, without prejudice or favour
- b. that any deviation from this policy in favour of one learner must be fair to all other learners
- c. that it is the responsibility of the learner to ensure understanding of the assessment criteria and standards before presenting work for assessment
- d. that the learner has the right of appeal against any outcome of assessment or against the process as long as any appeal falls within the College's **Academic**

**Appeals Procedure.** It is the duty of Teachers to ensure that learners are aware of this, to give appropriate guidance to the learner and co-operate in the appeals process

### **3 Responsibility**

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Programme Leader and their team to ensure that this policy is applied accurately, and that all appropriate information is made available to Examination Boards.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the Course Manager to share the content of this policy with students in an appropriate way.

3.2 Review and evaluation of the policy will be the responsibility of the Higher Education Quality and Standards Committee on an annual basis.

3.3 Teachers must also refer to Pearson guidelines for mandatory assessment requirements

### **4 Policy and Procedure**

4.1 As Pearson HN qualifications may be graded above a straightforward "Pass", the criteria for achieving higher levels must be clearly communicated to learners in writing at the start of the programme (e.g. in a Course Handbook).

4.2 All Course Managers/Teachers must set and publish formative and summative deadlines for the submission and return of internally assessed and externally moderated work as part of the assessment planning process.

4.3 Deadlines for formative and summative submission must be included in learner assessment planners and on assignment briefs, which should be available on HE Moodle. All deadlines must be set according to the needs of the course/programme of learning and the individual learners' needs. Deadlines will recognise the time required to ensure accurate assessment and moderation. Deadlines must not exceed the duration of the course/programme funding/tuition fee period.

4.4 Assessments must be balanced across a course or programme to provide a manageable workload for both learners and staff. This can be achieved through team planning of the entire course at the beginning of each academic year.

4.5 Any penalties for late submission or over-length coursework must be clearly explained to learners at the start of a programme and should be applied according to procedure in every case. Any penalties, appeals or requests for mitigating circumstances will be brought to the Examination Board for consideration.

4.6 All learners will be made aware of the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure [HYPERLINK](#) for HN programmes.

## **5 Assessment Tasks**

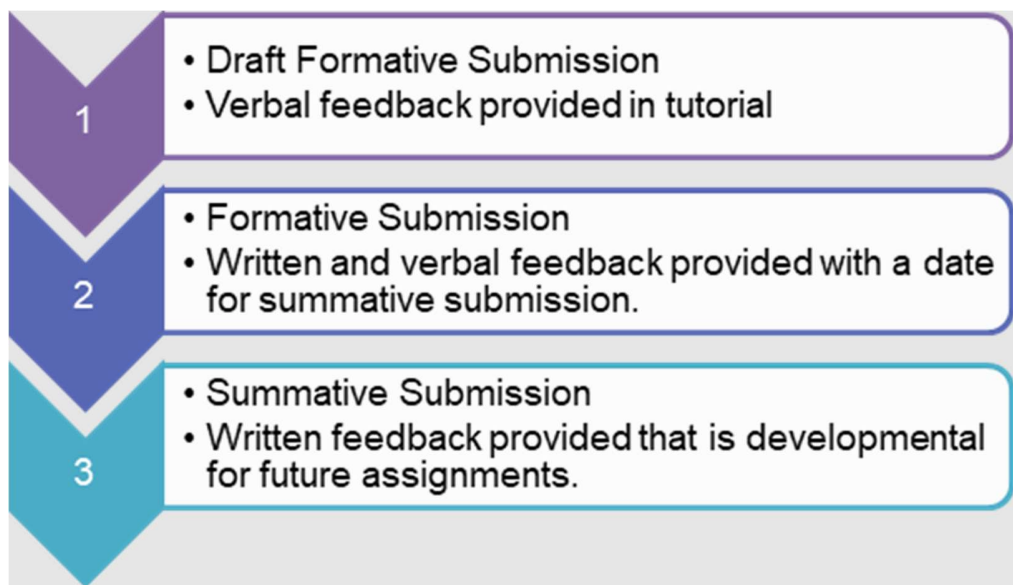
5.1 Assessment tasks for Pearson Higher Nationals should reflect not only what the learner knows, but also what they can do, in employment. Assessments for all HN programmes should:

- a. Focus on the holistic development of practical, interpersonal and higher-level thinking skills
- b. Provide a scenario relevant to the associated sector of industry
- c. Give clear task guidance using vocabulary that matches the requirements of the learning/grading outcomes
- d. Require learners to apply their knowledge to a variety of assignments and activities (e.g. work-based projects, case studies, performance observation, etc.) as outlined in the Course Specification document
- e. Allow for a variety of forms of assessment evidence, provided they are suited to the learning outcomes being assessed
- f. Ensure that Merit and Distinction grading criteria are contextualised within the assignment tasks and do not constitute additional work
- g. Include a requirement for accurate referencing/citation

## **6 Regulations and Procedures for Assessment Submission**

6.1 For all HN programmes, learners are entitled to one formative and one summative submission opportunity for each element of unit assessment:

- a. Draft formative submissions are permitted. Verbal feedback can be provided.
- b. A first submission will be marked and given detailed written formative feedback, designed to guide learners towards optimum achievement.
- c. After the final submission date, all assignments/tasks comprising the unit assessment overall will be marked and given written, summative feedback/feedforward designed to inform and explain to the learner the indicative grade for the unit and provide further guidance on how to improve on performance in future assessments.



6.2 To ensure accurate recording of submission, learners must submit work electronically through Turnitin on HE Moodle. Where this is not possible (for example, in the case of practical work) submissions should be handed into the teacher and the teacher and student should sign to say it has been received.

6.3 Course Managers must ensure that learners are fully informed about the use of sources of information and referencing and the penalties for plagiarism. Where Turnitin is used, departments must ensure that learners receive:

- a. appropriate guidance and support regarding good academic practice
- b. instructions for the use of TurnitinUK
- c. guidance on the interpretation of originality reports

6.4 Learners must sign a Plagiarism Declaration on submission of coursework (which is attached to the HN Assignment Front Sheet Template). When submitting work electronically learners must accept the student submission statement.

6.5 Learners must include a reference list with the unit assessment using Harvard referencing protocols

## **7Late Submission**

7.1 Any work handed in after the published deadline for formative or summative assessment, without mitigating circumstances or an extension to deadline, will be classified as a 'late submission'.

7.2 For late submissions the following policy **must** be applied:

- a. If a formative submission is late the learner will still have the opportunity to meet the (summative) deadline for final submission
- b. If the work is submitted after the agreed formative deadline, the work will not be marked. Penalties may be applied at the summative stage.
  - c. If the learner submits the work within one week of the deadline, the work will be marked and graded as normal
  - d. If the learner submits work over a week after the submission deadline the work will be treated as 'late' and capped at 'pass'.
  - e. All late or missed submissions should be recorded and communicated with the Course Manager and should be addressed at the next tutorial, which should be recorded on ProMonitor. In addition, the Academic Neglect policy [HYPERLINK](#) should be followed if two or more summative submissions are late.

7.3 In exceptional circumstances Examination Boards may modify decisions that have been implemented, even when they have been made in accordance with standard procedures, if they seem excessively harsh. For example, a learner who repeatedly submits late assessments for previously unknown reasons may need some specific form of assistance or supportive intervention; in such instances, it may only be at the Examination Board that the consistency of lateness across modules is identified.

## **8 Over/Under Length Assessment**

- 8.1 In most cases, HN assessments will not be subject to any maximum word count. Exceptions to this rule could include timed presentations that have a set number of slides or instances where standard industry practice is being followed.
- 8.2 Penalties **must not** be applied to over/underlength work (coursework, practical, presentations) unless specified in the assignment brief and included in the assessment and grading criteria, for example:
  - Meeting agreed timelines
  - Presenting and communicating appropriate findings
  - The ability to plan/organise time effectively

- The ability to work to industrial/commercial practices that include implicit timelines

This specific evidence requirement will usually be contained within the contextualised grading descriptors and will be clearly stated in the assignment brief.

## **9 Extensions to Deadline/Mitigating Circumstances**

9.1 Any requests for extension to deadline/mitigating circumstances by the learner **must** be submitted on the Mitigating Circumstances Form [HYPERLINK](#) to the Course Manager. This is available on HE Moodle or from the Course Manager.

9.2 Extensions to deadline/mitigating circumstances will be considered at College level by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. The Mitigating Circumstances Panel **must** meet in advance of the Examination Board and should make recommendations to the Examination Board, which makes the final decision in all cases. The meetings of the Panel should be minuted and a copy available for reference at the Examination Board.

9.3 Applications for mitigating circumstances must be submitted to the Course Manager before the assessment deadline. Applications submitted after the event will be considered by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel to determine whether there are good grounds for the delayed submission of the application form.

## **10 Standardisation of Learner's Work**

10.1 Course Managers must arrange for the standardisation of every unit being delivered at least once per semester, after formative assessment but before internal verification. This will help to maintain a high standard of assessment across the course. Evidence that standardisation has taken place will be checked as part of the quality audit process.

10.2 Course Managers must ensure that any assessors new to teaching or new to HN assessment have access to, and engage with, assessment support prior to undertaking any marking. This should include standardisation of assessment either with the course team or with assistance from the HE Team.

10.3 Where no standardisation has taken place, or the IV process indicates issues, all work for that unit will be required to be second marked.

## **11 Marking of Learners' Work**

11.1 Assessment and grading criteria should be fair and transparent. Formative written feedback should include guidance for learners on strengths and areas for improvement,

relevant to the specific criteria. In most cases, the feedback will be summarised in relation to the specific assessment criteria for Pass, Merit and Distinction as appropriate.

11.2 Learner progress following formative assessment must be recorded on ProMonitor. This will enable learners to keep track of their progress on individual units as well as at whole course level. Tutorials should also be recorded on ProMonitor.

11.3 Summative assessment decisions should in every instance be recorded using the standard College HN Assessment Feedback Template [HYPERLINK](#) depending whether the programme is QCF Higher Nationals approved prior to September 2016 on the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF) or RQF Higher Nationals developed and approved after September 2016 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF).

11.4 Feedforward should always be provided to learners and include guidance on strengths and areas for improvement in succeeding assessments. Learners should be made aware that grades awarded on the feedback sheet are provisional until ratified by the Examination Board and subject to change.

11.5 Course Mangers are responsible for ensuring that all Assessors apply College/Pearson assessment regulations.

11.6 If a student disagrees with an assessment decision, they should initially discuss with the tutor. If this does not resolve the query they should follow the College's Academic Appeals Policy (in some cases this may lead to the corresponding awarding organisation /university policy being followed).

## **11 Internal Verification of Learners' Work**

11.1 Before issuing assessment instructions to learners, assignment briefs must be internally verified within the department, using the IV of Assignment Brief Template [HYPERLINK](#), to ensure that they are in line with specification requirements, appropriate, relevant and clear.

11.2 Any assignment briefs used for resubmissions must be internally verified before being issued to students.

11.3 Amendments suggested by the Internal Verifier must be acted upon and signed off by the Internal Verifier before unit delivery begins.

11.4 At least 3 assignment briefs must be sent to the External Examiner for approval each year.

11.5 Summative assessments at Levels 4 and 5 should be internally verified according to an Annual IV Schedule that covers all units, all assessors, all students and all assignments.



It should include a representative sample spanning the full range of grades awarded. Any units assessed as 'fail' must also be added to the scheduled IV sample. It is accepted that some slight variation to the annual schedule may be necessary to ensure that the full range of grades are sampled.

11.6 Summative assessment which is performance-related (e.g. presentations, demonstration of practical skill etc.) must either be:

- a. Digitally recorded and internally verified as outlined above, or
- b. Simultaneously assessed by more than one teacher/IV. Templates for Witness Statements [HYPERLINK](#) and Observation Records [HYPERLINK](#) are also available for evidencing performance related assessments.

11.7 Any agreement or differences in marks awarded by the Assessor should be recorded by the Internal Verifier on the HN IV of Assessment Decisions Template [HYPERLINK](#), together with reasons for the adjustment of marks. If the Assessor and Internal Verifier do not reach agreement on a given mark then a third person (e.g. Course Manager) can be asked to discuss and help determine a mark.

11.8 Course Mangers must ensure that accurate records of marking and moderation are kept using the appropriate College templates (Internal IV Schedule [HYPERLINK](#) and IV of Assessment Decisions Form [HYPERLINK](#)).

### **13 Examination Boards**

13.1 Examination Boards are responsible for:

- Monitoring academic standards
- Making recommendations on the grades achieved by learners on individual units and confirming the marks to be awarded
- Making recommendations on the progression of learners onto the next stage of the programme
- Making recommendations about resubmission decisions, resits and intercalation
- Considering mitigating circumstances/extension to deadlines (on receipt of information from the Mitigating Circumstances Panel)
- Considering appeals (on receipt of information from the Appeals Panel)

### **14 Reassessments/Resubmissions**

14.1 The following policy will apply for RQF Higher Nationals developed and approved after September 2016 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (RQF)HN programmes:

## **Reassessment**

14.2 A reassessment opportunity may be granted if a learner fails to submit work (including coursework, presentation or practical) or has failed to achieve a Pass for a unit. They may be allowed one reassessment opportunity per unit, based on reworking the original task, and subject to Examination Board approval. For examinations, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task. A learner who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a Pass for that unit. A learner will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.

14.3 Learners may be permitted reassessment of up to 60 credits at Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma Level, subject to the approval of the Examination Board. Where programmes include units with credit totals other than 15 credits (e.g. 5, 20 etc), the Examination Board may apply some discretion in permitting resits (e.g. if the credit total equals 65, as a result of a 20 credit unit). This is relevant for all HN programmes.

## **Resubmission**

14.5 Resubmissions can be authorised by the Course Manager or the Assessment Board and should only be authorised if all of the following submission conditions are met:

- a. The student has met the initial deadlines set in the assignment, has met an agreed deadline extension
- b. The assessor judges that the student has fully attempted to achieve all targeted learning outcomes in their original submission
- c. The assessor judges that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance
- d. The assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment.

14.6 If a student has not met the conditions listed above, the Course Manager or Assessment Board must not authorise a resubmission. In these instances, the student will be required to repeat the unit.

If the Course Manager or Assessment Board authorises a resubmission, the following conditions apply:

- a. The resubmission must be recorded in the relevant assessment documentation [HYPERLINK](#).
- b. The student must be given a clear and realistic deadline for resubmission that is consistent across all students granted a resubmission.
- c. Students must resubmit work within 15 working days of being notified that a resubmission has been authorised.
- d. The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance.
- e. Only one opportunity for reassessment of each assessment criterion and Merit and Distinction descriptor will be permitted.
- f. The original evidence submitted for the assessment can remain valid and be extended, or may need to be replaced partially or in full.
- g. Arrangements for resubmitting the assessment should be conducted in such a way that does not adversely affect other assessments and does not give the student an unfair advantage over others.
- h. You may opt to conduct a resubmission of the assignment under supervised conditions, even if this was not necessary for the original assessment. For example, this may be necessary to ensure that plagiarism cannot take place.

14.4 For QCF Higher Nationals approved prior to September 2016 on the Qualification Credit Framework (QCF). You must not cap resubmissions at Pass level, although if a student who submitted their work late is offered a resubmission, this is capped at Pass level.

QCF	RQF
Only one opportunity for resubmission will be permitted (new assignment).	One resubmission is allowed if a student does not achieve a pass on first submission (same assignment).
You must not cap resubmissions at Pass, although if a student who submitted their work late is offered a resubmission, this is capped at pass.	The reassessment opportunity will be capped at Pass for that unit.
A student may request or be offered a resubmission if they have not met all of the criteria (Pass, Merit or Distinction) available in an assignment.	A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component for which a Pass or higher has already been awarded.

14.7 In the case of student work that has been submitted late, a resubmission can only be authorised if the work has not met the Pass criteria and can only provide an opportunity for the student to achieve the Pass criteria.

## ANNEX 2

### FHEQ Descriptors (for teaching and learning related to students on HE programmes)

<p><b>Descriptor for a qualification at Certificate (C) level</b> e.g. HNC/ First 120 credits at level 4 for Fds/ BA. Other programmes such as AAT.</p>	<p><b>Teaching encourages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ knowledge of the underlying concepts and principles associated with their area(s) of study, and an ability to evaluate and interpret these within the context of that area of study;</li> <li>▪ an ability to present, evaluate, and interpret qualitative and quantitative data, to develop lines of argument and make sound judgments in accordance with basic theories and concepts of their subject(s) of study.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities for students to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems related to their area(s) of study and/or work;</li> <li>b. communicate the results of their study/work accurately and reliably, and with structured and coherent arguments;</li> <li>c. develop new skills within a structured and managed environment; and:</li> <li>d. develop qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of some personal responsibility.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Descriptor for a qualification at Intermediate (I) level</b> e.g HND/ second 120 credits at level 5 of an Fd/ BA</p>	<p><b>Teaching encourages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ knowledge and critical understanding of the well-established principles of their area(s) of study, and of the way in which those principles have developed;</li> <li>▪ ability to apply underlying concepts and principles outside the context in which they were first studied, including, where appropriate, the application of those principles in an employment context;</li> <li>▪ knowledge of the main methods of enquiry in their subject(s), and ability to evaluate critically the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems in the field of study;</li> <li>▪ an understanding of the limits of their knowledge, and how this influences analyses and interpretations based on that knowledge.</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities for students to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. use a range of established techniques to initiate and undertake critical analysis of information, and to propose solutions to problems arising from that analysis;</li> <li>b. effectively communicate information, arguments, and analysis, in a variety of forms, to specialist and non-specialist audiences, and deploy key techniques of the discipline effectively;</li> <li>c. develop existing skills, and acquire new competences that will enable them to assume significant responsibility within organisations; and:</li> <li>d. develop qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making.</li> </ol>

<p><b>Descriptor for a qualification at Honours (H) level: Bachelors degree with Honours e.g. final year degree</b></p>	<p><b>Teaching encourages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ a systematic understanding of key aspects of their field of study, including acquisition of coherent and detailed knowledge, at least some of which is at or informed by, the forefront of defined aspects of a discipline;</li> <li>▪ an ability to deploy accurately established techniques of analysis and enquiry within a discipline;</li> <li>▪ conceptual understanding that enables the student:</li> <li>▪ to devise and sustain arguments, and/or to solve problems, using ideas and techniques, some of which are at the forefront of a discipline; and</li> <li>▪ to describe and comment upon particular aspects of current research, or equivalent advanced scholarship, in the discipline;</li> <li>▪ an appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity and limits of knowledge;</li> <li>▪ the ability to manage their own learning, and to make use of scholarly reviews and primary sources (e.g. refereed research articles and/or original materials appropriate to the discipline).</li> </ul> <p><b>Opportunities for students to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects;</li> <li>b. critically evaluate arguments, assumptions, abstract concepts and data (that may be incomplete), to make judgments, and to frame appropriate questions to achieve a solution - or identify a range of solutions - to a problem;</li> <li>c. communicate information, ideas, problems, and solutions to both specialist and non- specialist audiences; and:</li> <li>d. develop qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility;</li> <li>▪ decision-making in complex and unpredictable contexts; and</li> <li>▪ the learning ability needed to undertake appropriate further training of a professional or equivalent nature.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
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