

Regent College London HN Assessment regulations

Contents

Introduction	2
Useful contacts.....	2
Assignment design	2
Designing assignment briefs	3
Internal verification of assignment briefs	3
Assessment tracking and recording	4
Formative assessment	4
Summative assessment: marking and grading.....	5
Academic misconduct	5
Assessment deadlines	6
Late submissions	6
Non-submission.....	7
Resubmissions	8
Repeating units	9
Compensation	9
Internal verification of assessment decisions	10
Standardisation	11
Student appeals	11
Retention of student evidence and assessment records.....	12
Assessment Board.....	12
Preparation for an Assessment Board	12
Providing results of summative assessments to students	13
Providing feedback on summative assessment to students.....	13
Progression from Level 4 to Level 5	14
Annex A: diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for marking and providing feedback to students	15

Introduction

1. This document describes how the College regulates, manages and administers the assessment of the Higher National Diplomas (HND) we provide on behalf of Pearson.
2. It is organised in chronological order of the assessment process. For each part of the process, there is:
 - a summary of what that part of the process is or involves;
 - a summary of what Pearson's requirements are;
 - the College's regulations (if any);
 - a description of other ways in which the College meets Pearson's requirements;
 - details of who in the College is responsible for doing that part of the process.
3. For ease of reference, the College's assessment regulations are in grey boxes and its policies and procedures are in white boxes.
4. The primary audience for this document is College staff who are responsible for teaching and assessing HNDs, supporting students and administering assessment. It may also be of interest to HND students who wish to know more about how assessment works.
5. For more information about Pearson's requirements, please see [BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment 2023 – 2024](#) (hereafter the 'Centre Guide') and Pearson's [programme specification for Business](#) (hereafter the 'programme specification').

Useful contacts

6. For more information or guidance about assessment for HNDs, please contact:
 - CEO and Pearson Quality Nominee – Dr. Selva Pankaj selva.pankaj@regentgroup.org.uk
 - Provost – David Donnarumma david.donnarumma@rcl.ac.uk
 - Head of HND – Muhammad Tabassum muhammad.tabassum@rcl.ac.uk
 - Dean of School of Health and Sports Science – Dr. Morris Anglin morris.anglin@rcl.ac.uk
 - Quality Manager – Roma Galvan roma.galvan@rcl.ac.uk
 - Director of Academic Quality – Sasha Carter sasha.carter@rcl.ac.uk
 - Chief Registry Officer – Jun Li jun.li@rcl.ac.uk

Assignment design

7. Pearson requires that assessment instruments designed by centres should, '...collectively ensure coverage of all learning outcomes and assessment criteria within each unit and should provide opportunities for students to generate evidence across all grades of achievement.'
8. Pearson further stipulates that, '...the targeted learning outcomes must be clearly indicated on each assessment instrument to provide a focus for students and to assist with internal

standardisation processes. Activities and guidance should enable students to produce evidence that meets the learning outcomes of the unit across all grades of achievement.'

9. Further information about Pearson's requirements for assessment design appears in pages 63 of the [Centre Guide](#).

Designing assignment briefs

10. The assignment brief is the document issued to students at the start of the assessment process which explains what they must do. It should motivate and support the student toward meeting the assessment and grading requirements of the unit.

11. Pearson recommends that clear assignment briefs will:

- 'Inform the student of the activities set;
- 'Inform the student of the methods of assessment;
- 'Set clear deadlines for submission of work.'

12. Pearson provides assignment templates for centres to use, but centres are free to design their own provided they contain the information set out in the [Centre Guide](#).

13. At the College, the Head of HND is responsible for designing all assignment briefs and making sure they comply with Pearson's requirements.

14. The Head of HND conducts standardisation meetings with teaching staff, which involve evaluating the efficacy of assignment briefs against the intended learning outcomes and student achievement for each unit. This may lead to changes to assignment briefs.

Internal verification of assignment briefs

15. Internal verification of assignment briefs involves other members of staff reviewing the briefs to confirm they are fit for purpose. Pearson stipulates that, 'All assignment briefs... must be internally verified every year, prior to issue to the student.'

16. More information about Pearson's requirements for internal verification of assignment briefs is provided in page 80 of the [Centre Guide](#), and in a separate Centre Guide to Internal Verification referenced in that guide.

17. To meet Pearson's requirements, the College has a policy on Internal Verification, set out below. This requires that internal verification is done and evidenced through something called the Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form. The Head of HND is responsible for making sure this procedure is followed.

The College's policy on internal verification of assignment briefs and examinations is that:

- All assignment briefs and/or examinations must be submitted for Internal Verification and appropriate changes made before being given to students;
- Internal Verification of assignment briefs and/or examinations must be evidenced through completion of the Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form;
- The Assignment brief and/or examinations must be approved following any required changes as a result of the Internal Verification procedure and approved on the Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form;
- The Head of HND should keep a copy of all completed forms for all assignment briefs and/or examinations given to students;
- Feedback to tutors setting assignment briefs and/or examinations should be provided by the Internal Verifier so that the tutor engages in quality enhancement.

Assessment tracking and recording

18. Pearson requires that student achievement is recorded in such a way that:
 - 'Assessment evidence is clearly measured against national standards;
 - 'Student progress can be accurately tracked;
 - 'The assessment process can be reliably verified;
 - 'There is clear evidence of the safety of certification.'
19. Student marks are recorded by Senior Lecturers and Associate Lecturers on mark sheets and submitted to Registry, who enter the data into the College's Student Record System (called UnitE).
20. Oversight responsibility for the tracking and recording of student marks rests with Registry.

Formative assessment

21. Formative assessment takes place before summative assessment and does not contribute to marks or grades but focuses on helping students to reflect on their progress through the unit and improve their performance. It is sometimes called assessment *for* learning (as opposed to summative assessment, which is regarded as assessment *of* learning).
22. Pearson does not have any requirements about formative assessment but does say it is good practice to have at least one formal opportunity to provide written formative feedback, '...at a point when students will have had the opportunity to provide evidence towards all the assessment criteria targeted.' [emphasis added].
23. At the College, academic staff are responsible for providing students with formative feedback in line with the following policy.

The College's policy on formative assessment is that academic staff should:

- include formative assessment opportunities in their teaching;
- explain the value of formative assessment to students;
- engage students with formative assessment activities in each teaching session;
- provide mechanisms for students to receive feedback that is constructive and supports student learning.

Summative assessment: marking and grading

24. Summative assessment is the final consideration of a student's assignment, agreeing which assessment criteria the student has met in the assignment and recording those decisions. However, students should be aware that summative assessment is subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board.

25. The grading of HNDs is at the unit and the qualification level. Each successfully completed unit will be graded as a Pass, Merit or Distinction:

- To achieve a Pass, a student must have satisfied all the Pass criteria for the learning outcomes, showing coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at Level 4 or 5 of the national framework;
- To achieve a Merit, a student must have satisfied all the Merit criteria (and the Pass criteria) through high performance in each learning outcome;
- To achieve a Distinction, a student must have satisfied all the Distinction criteria (and the Pass and Merit criteria), and these define outstanding performance across the unit as a whole.

26. The award of a Pass is a defined level of performance and cannot be given solely based on a student completing assignments. Students who do not satisfy the Pass criteria should be reported as unclassified.

27. Pearson has produced specific Merit and Distinction criteria that are linked to every Pass criterion for each unit. These may be found in the programme specification. Academic staff are responsible for grading summative assessments according to these criteria. Markers must show how they have reached their decisions using the criteria in the assessment.

Academic misconduct

28. Academic misconduct is gaining or attempting to gain, or helping others to gain or attempt to gain, an unfair academic advantage in formal summative assessments which contribute to a unit mark or grade. Examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism, collusion and ghosting (where a student submits as their own, work which has been produced in whole or part by another person on their behalf).

29. Academic misconduct in whatever form is antithetical to the ethos and values of the College. Students who are proven to have engaged in academic misconduct may be liable to severe penalties including withdrawal from the College.

30. The College's Academic Misconduct Procedure describes how we detect and investigate suspected academic misconduct. In essence, the member of staff marking the work is responsible for identifying possible academic misconduct (including by using plagiarism detection software) and bringing it to the attention of a Senior Lecturer or Programme Leader.

31. Allegations of academic misconduct must be investigated and resolved (including through hearings) before the relevant Assessment Board takes place.

32. It is important to note that the College's Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure does not apply to formative assessment, which does not contribute to a unit mark or grade. Where academic misconduct is suspected in work submitted for formative assessment, this should be addressed by feedback from academic staff, thereby helping the student to avoid misconduct in future.

Regulations on academic misconduct

The College's Academic Misconduct procedure must be used to deal with any instances of suspected academic misconduct.

Assessment deadlines

33. The dates on which assignments for summative assessment are handed out to students, and the deadlines for students to submit completed assignments, are recorded in the College's BTEC HND Assessment Plan spreadsheet. This makes sure that students are all assessed according to the same conditions and that some are not advantaged by having additional time or opportunity to learn from others.

34. The BTEC HND Assessment Plan also records the name of the assessor for each unit or component.

35. The Registry team is responsible for compiling, publishing and maintaining the BTEC HND Assessment Plan.

Regulations on assessment deadlines

The published assessment deadline must be adhered to by students and staff.

Late submissions

36. Late submissions refer to assignments submitted after the published deadline.

37. Pearson requires centres to develop and publish their own assessment regulations relating to late submission of student work, including arrangements for dealing with students affected by

adverse circumstances, such as illness.

38. The College's regulations on late submission, set out below, provide for:
- All students to submit their assignments up to two weeks beyond the published deadline with the mark capped at a pass;
 - Students affected by adverse circumstances to apply for an extension to the published deadline under the Mitigating Circumstances procedure. Where an extension is granted under this procedure (and only under this procedure), the work should be marked with no penalty.

Regulations on late submission of assessed work

All students may submit their work up to two weeks beyond the published deadline without seeking approval to do so. Work submitted up to two weeks late without approval will be capped at a pass mark. Assessed work submitted more than two weeks after the published deadline and without an extension being granted under the Mitigating Circumstances procedure will not be marked or graded. In such cases, the student may be asked, at the sole discretion of the Assessment Board, to resubmit assessed work for a different assignment brief for that unit.

Students affected by adverse circumstances may apply for an extension to an assessment deadline according to the College's Mitigating Circumstances procedure. The application for Mitigating Circumstances must be made before the original assessment deadline.

Where a student submits assessed work later than the published deadline and has an extension approved through the Mitigating Circumstance procedure the work will be marked with no penalty. This only applies where the student submits the assessed work to the deadline granted through the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure. Where a student is granted an extension but submits work later than the revised deadline, the work will not be marked or graded. In such cases, the student may be asked, at the sole discretion of the Assessment Board, to resubmit assessed work for a different assignment brief for that unit.

Non-submission

39. Non-submission is where a student does not submit assessed work to a deadline or an extended deadline. The College monitors non-submission as part of its student engagement procedure.

Regulations on non-submission

Where a student does not submit assessed work to a deadline or extended deadline, they will be deemed to have failed the assessment and will be recorded as a non-submission in the studentrecords system.

Students may be permitted one opportunity for resubmission after non-submission at the discretion of the Assessment Board. The Assessment Board shall record reasons for its decision.

Any resubmission of assessed work following non-submission will:

- require the student to address a new and different assignment brief for that unit; and,
- be capped at a pass mark.

Where a student is permitted a resubmission following non-submission and fails to submit the assessed work by the new deadline without an extension under the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure, they will be deemed to have failed the assessment and shall not be permitted a further resubmission opportunity.

Resubmissions

40. Resubmission is where a student either fails to achieve a pass for a given unit or fails to submit their work to the deadline (without an extension having been granted under the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure) and is expected to undertake a reassessment.

41. At the College, all resubmissions must be authorised by the Assessment Board.

42. Possible resubmission dates, and dates for the internal verification of resubmitted assessments, are set out in the BTEC HND Assessment Plan spreadsheet.

Regulations on resubmission

A student who undertakes a resubmission will have their grade capped at a pass for that unit. Regulations on resubmission following non-submission are set out above.

- A student who has failed to achieve a pass grade for assessed work will be permitted one opportunity for reassessment. A student will not be entitled to resubmission in any component for which a Pass or higher has already been awarded;
- Where the assessed work has been awarded an unclassified grade, submitted to a deadline or extended deadline, and there is no evidence of academic misconduct, the student will normally be permitted to rework the initial piece of assessed work;
- Where a resubmission is granted, the student will be given a deadline for making the resubmission. Late resubmission will be treated according to the regulations on late submission of assessed work above. Where a student does not resubmit a piece of assessed work without an extension under the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure,

they will be deemed to have failed the assessment and shall not be permitted a further resubmission opportunity.

Repeating units

43. Students may repeat a unit where they have failed to achieve a Pass for both the first assessment and the resubmission.
44. Pearson's rules about repeat units include:
 - the student must study the unit again with full attendance and (if required) payment of the unit fee;
 - the overall unit grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit;
 - units can only be repeated once.
45. Further information is given in the [Centre Guide](#).
46. At the College, all repeat units must be authorised by the Assessment Board.

Regulations on repeating units

- Where a student has failed to achieve a pass grade for a piece of assessed work at both first assessment and resubmission, the Assessment Board may, at its discretion, permit the student to repeat the unit. The Assessment Board shall record reasons for its decision;
- A student who is permitted to repeat a unit may only repeat a unit once;
- In repeating a unit the student must attend all timetabled teaching sessions and pay the unit fee as determined by the College;
- In repeating a unit the student's grade for the assignment(s) shall be capped at a pass grade;
- A student who, for the first assessment opportunity within a repeated unit, fails to achieve a Pass for that unit shall be expected to undertake a reassessment according to the regulations on resubmission above.

Compensation

47. Under specific circumstances, compensation allows a student to progress to the next level of study or gain an award when they have not passed all units. Pearson has rules on compensation, which are reflected in the College's regulations below.

Regulations on compensation

If a student repeats a unit and still does not achieve a Pass in neither their first submission nor resubmission, they will be required to either complete a different unit in full or take the unit as compensation.

Students can still be awarded an HND if they have attempted but not achieved a Pass in one of the 15 credit units completed at Level 4 and, similarly, if they have attempted but not achieved one of the 15 credit units at Level 5. However, they must complete and pass the remaining units for an HND as per the unit rules of combination of the required qualification.

Units that have been attempted but not achieved, and subsequently granted compensation, will appear as 'Unclassified'; i.e. a 'U' grade, on the student's Notification of Performance, that is issued with the student certificate.

Internal verification of assessment decisions

48. Internal verification of assessment decisions involves members of College staff checking that work marked by another member of staff has been marked properly.

49. Pearson requires that, 'Internal Verifiers must sample assessed work for each assignment to check the accuracy of assessment decisions. Internal verification of assessment decisions should be carried out by a staff member who is familiar with BTEC assessment at the appropriate level and has subject knowledge of the programme area.'

50. To meet Pearson's requirements, the College has an Internal Verification Policy, set out below.

51. The Head of HND is responsible for assigning internal verifiers by unit; the names of internal verifiers are recorded on the BTEC HND Assessment Plan maintained by the Registry.

The College's policy on internal verification of marking and feedback to students is that:

- Samples of student work selected for Internal Verification must cover all grades – referred, pass, merit and distinction;
- For each cohort of students at least 15 per cent of student work for any one unit must be sampled to represent the full spectrum of grades available;
- Each and every student must be sampled at least once each academic year over the duration of their programme of study;
- Clear records of Internal Verification and sampling of student work must be kept using the Internal Verification Form;
- Programme Leaders should keep a copy of all signed Internal Verification Forms;
- Feedback to tutors marking student work should be provided to further enhance the marking and feedback processes at the College.

Annex A provides a diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for marking and providing feedback to students.

Guidelines for resolving disagreements about grades and adequacy of feedback

Where the Internal Verifier disagrees with the grade awarded by the primary or first marker of the student work the following procedure should be followed:

- The Internal Verifier should discuss any student work where there is a disagreement of grade to be awarded. This should be done by reference to the individual learning outcomes form given in the assignment brief. If the first marker and Internal Verifier subsequently agree the grade this resolves the matter. The resolution should be indicated on the Internal Verification Form;
- Where the Internal Verifier and the primary marker are unable to reach agreement on the grade for a piece of student assessed work a third marker should be brought, normally the Programme Leader. The third marker shall make the final decision over the grade to be awarded in the absence of agreement between the other two markers.

Where the Internal Verifier regards the feedback provided by the first marker is inadequate or insufficient, the assessed work should be given back to the first marker so that they can provide improved feedback according to the College's policy below.

Standardisation

52. Standardisation is about achieving consistency of marking among different markers and providing consistent feedback to students.

53. At the College, standardisation is achieved through standardisation meetings, which the Head of HND is responsible for organising. All staff teaching HND units should attend these meetings.

The College's policy on standardisation is that standardisation meetings should take place at least once each semester and include the following topics for discussion:

- Pearson assessment criteria for pass, merit and distinction and how these are represented in assignment tasks;
- Consistency of marking by lecturers who mark the same assignment for the same unit, especially in relation to ensuring that all learning objectives are met to award a pass and clarification on the requirements for Merit and Distinction grades to be awarded;
- The requirement to provide constructive feedback to students that relates specifically to the assignment task and to avoid generic feedback;
- To ensure all lecturers marking student work are aware of and understand the relevant policies and regulations of the College (as set out in this document).

Student appeals

54. Pearson stipulates that Centres ensure student and staff are aware of:

- What constitutes an academic appeal and what is considered assessment malpractice;
- The related processes for instigating an appeal or investigating malpractice;

- The possible outcomes that may be reached;
- The consequences of both internal and external outcomes;
- The process that exists to enable students to make an appeal with Pearson relating to external or internally awarded assessment outcomes.

55. At the College, a student (or recent student) may appeal against the outcome of an Assessment Board. This outcome may be in the form of published or confirmed marks or grades, notification of progression (or non-progression) from one stage to another, and/or notification of a final award. Further information is given in the College's Consolidated Appeals Procedure.

Regulations on academic appeals

A student may appeal against the outcome of an Assessment Board using the College's Consolidated Appeals Procedure.

Retention of student evidence and assessment records

56. Pearson requires that centres:
- Store all assessment records securely and safely;
 - Maintain records of student achievements that are up to date, regularly reviewed and tracked accurately against national standards;
 - Retain both internal and external assessment records for centre and awarding body scrutiny for a minimum of three years following certification;
 - Have all current student evidence available for verification purposes;
 - Retain all student work for a minimum of 12 weeks after certification has taken place.
57. The retention of student evidence and assessment records is the responsibility of the Registry team.

Assessment Board

58. The Assessment Board is responsible for the approval of student marks/grades, student progression and final awards for HNDs, according to the responsibilities delegated to the College by Pearson. The Board is chaired by the Dean of School or Deputy Dean and its membership includes the Head of HND. A full explanation of the Board's duties, membership and other details can be found in the Assessment Board's Terms of Reference.

59. Assessment Board meets at the end of each semester, approximately six weeks after the assessment deadlines. A calendar of Board meetings is maintained by the Registry team.

Preparation for an Assessment Board

60. Pearson points out that good preparation before Assessment Board is essential if the Board is to discharge its responsibilities properly. Good preparation includes collating all information regarding students' achievement and identifying which students will need discussion when the

Board meets, for example because of Mitigating Circumstance. Good preparation also involves academic staff reflecting on the performance of their groups and units, and being ready to discuss individual students (such as those who have committed academic misconduct).

61. The Registry is responsible for collating all information about students' achievement. Academic staff are responsible for preparing themselves to contribute effectively about their own groups and units.

Providing results of summative assessments to students

62. Pearson requires that, 'Centres must have clear regulations on how students are informed of their results. No discussion of individual results or counselling of students should take place until after the results have been formally ratified and results lists have been published.'

63. The Registry is responsible for informing students of their results after they have been ratified by Assessment Board.

Providing feedback on summative assessment to students

64. The provision of good feedback to students is an integral part of their learning experience. Therefore, all teaching staff must ensure that the College's policy on feedback to students, set out below, is followed for all assessed work.

The College's policy on providing feedback to students on assessed work is that:

- Feedback, including the approved grade/mark for the assessed work, will be given to students after a meeting of the appropriate Assessment Board for summative work, and as soon as possible after being submitted for formative work;
- Students will receive feedback on every piece of assessed coursework (including both summative and formative), including dissertations and project reports, where appropriate;
- Coursework should be returned to students according to agreed timescales. Students are also entitled to feedback on examinations;
- Feedback will be provided in relation to learning objectives and assessment criteria that are linked to a specific assignment. Feedback should identify strengths and weaknesses of the assessed work. Comment should be made on the level of attainment with respect to each learning objective.

Written feedback must be legible, and can be either handwritten or, preferably, word-processed. Feedback may be provided through Turnitin for formative and summative assessed work.

Good practice for effective feedback

For all assessed work, other than examinations, all academic staff involved in assessment should ensure that feedback provided is **timely, relevant and meaningful** and **encouraging**.

- **Timely** Feedback should be returned as quickly as practically possible, and preferably, in sufficient time for students to be able to review the work in order to improve, based on feedback, the next related piece of work

- **Relevant and meaningful** Students need to know how to correct their mistakes. Focused, specific comments on aspects of the work will help students to understand key points. Clear marking criteria which articulate the important aspects of the piece of work provide a framework against which feedback can be given
- **Encouraging** Feedback should offer a balance of encouraging comments and criticism. Feedback should state what is good about the work as well as what could be improved.

All programmes should have a feedback statement which explains the purpose of the feedback and when feedback will be given.

There should be information for students that explains how feedback will be given – written, oral, group or individual, on feedback forms, etc. Students must be advised when to expect feedback on their assessed coursework. This can be provided in the Unit guides and Programme Handbooks.

It is important that students are given guidance on what to expect from feedback and how to use it. This can be done in several ways, as follows:

- Managing the expectations of students so that the purpose of feedback is clearly understood prior to handing in a piece of assessed work. Some students may be unfamiliar with the language used in assessment criteria and assessment feedback. Discussion of learning objectives and assessment criteria with students in class can ensure that students properly and fully understand what is required of them;
- Identifying all channels of feedback (e.g. verbally from peers or academic staff, self-reflective, group, formative and summative written feedback) can help students appreciate and use all modes of feedback to improve their learning;
- Supporting the process of self-assessment by asking students to submit evaluations of their work along with their assignments. This is especially of value with formative assessment tasks.

All feedback should be clear, purposeful and support the learning process.

Progression from Level 4 to Level 5

Regulations on progression from Level 4 to Level 5

A student is required to achieve at least 90 credits at Level 4 to progress to Level 5.

The Assessment Board is responsible for making and recording decisions about student progression.

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Annex A: diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for marking and providing feedback to students

