



**Havering College of Further and
Higher Education**

**Assessment Regulations for QCF
HNC/D Programmes**

Awarded by Pearson

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Assessment Regulations

These Assessment Regulations have been developed to ensure that all Higher Education assessment practice is compliant with Chapter 6 – Assessment of students - of the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education in the UK. The Assessment Regulations that follow apply to all current HE Pearson awards

1. General principles of assessment

1.1 Fulfilment of programme objectives

The purpose of assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the objectives of the programme of study and achieved the standard required for the award they seek.

The form of assessment is twofold:

Formative

The main purpose of formative assessment is to provide the student with feedback on his or her progress, so that strengths and weaknesses can be identified by the student and appropriate action taken. Formative assessment is mainly personal and focused on the individual's development.

It is good practice to plan for at least one formal opportunity to provide written formative assessment feedback on each assessment, at a point where students will have had the opportunity to provide evidence towards the assessment criteria targeted. This should be written into the assessment plan and be formally recorded. All records should be available for auditing purposes as Pearson may choose to interrogate records of formative assessment as part of their ongoing quality assurance.

Summative

The main purposes of summative assessment are to enable students to demonstrate their achievement of the programme's objectives and to ensure a fair judgement on the student's level of attainment. Summative assessment is applied simultaneously across a peer group of students and is course-focused.

Tutors should annotate on the learner work where evidence supports their grading decisions against the unit grading criteria. It is not expected that students are offered opportunities to revisit assignments at this stage of the assessment process unless approved by the Programme Leader.

Students will need to be familiar with the assessment criteria to be able to understand the quality of what is required. They should be informed of the differences between grading criteria so that higher skills can be achieved.

The Assessment Regulations that follow apply to both forms of assessment.

1.2 Confirmation of a consistent, national standard

Assessment reflects the achievement of individual students in fulfilling a programme's objectives. At the same time, assessment also relates that achievement to a consistent national standard of awards. Assessment is carried out by competent and impartial examiners, using methods which enable them to assess individual students fairly. To achieve this, the college and Pearson, requires external examiners (standards verifiers) to be involved in, and associated with final assessments which may count towards an award. The role of the external examiner is to ensure that fairness and justice are maintained at an individual and cohort level; and that the national standard of the college's/Pearson awards are confirmed and maintained.

1.3 Publication of assessment information

Each Programme Team is required to produce an Assessment Scheme detailing how each unit, at each level of the programme is to be assessed throughout the academic year. The Assessment Scheme will include both formative and summative assessment. This information will normally be published in the Student Handbook and will also be accessible via Moodle, the college's VLE system.

1.4 Eligibility for assessment

Students of the college registered for an award who have satisfied the college requirements with regard to the payment of tuition fees are eligible for assessment. Students who have not satisfied those requirements may be assessed, but will normally have their results withheld until such time as the outstanding fees have been paid.

1.5 Assessment of units

All units will be assessed. Assessment will take place during or immediately on completion of the teaching of each unit. Assessment will usually involve submitted assignments (written, practical, portfolio or oral) or tests. HE programmes at HCFHE are taught and assessed using learning outcomes and QAA Benchmarks (where available) to enable students to demonstrate learning and achievement for units, levels and programmes. All learning outcomes have to be successfully addressed in the assessment process.

Each successfully completed unit will be graded as a pass, merit or distinction.

- A pass is awarded for the achievement of all outcomes against the specified assessment criteria;
- Merit and distinction grades are awarded for higher level achievement.

Students must achieve at least a pass grade for all elements of assessment in all units.

Summary of grades

In order to achieve a pass in a unit	All learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met.
In order to achieve a merit in a unit	All learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. All merit grade descriptors are achieved.
In order to achieve a distinction in a unit	All learning outcomes and assessment criteria have been met. All merit and all distinction grade descriptors are achieved.

Generic grade descriptors and indicative characteristics

Assessment criteria	Statements that identify the important features to be present in the assessment evidence and are indicative of a satisfactory (i.e. pass) level of achievement.
Grade descriptors	Statements that identify the features within the assessment evidence which enable a tutor to measure achievement above the satisfactory level (i.e. merit and distinction).
Indicative characteristics	Guides to the expected student performance within a particular assignment supporting the generic grade descriptors. The indicative characteristics should reflect the nature of a unit and the context of the sector programme.

Merit descriptors	Exemplar indicative characteristics
In order to achieve a merit the student must:	(Centres can identify and use other relevant characteristics). The student's evidence shows, for example:
Identify and apply strategies to find appropriate solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective judgments have been made; • Complex problems with more than one variable have been explored; • An effective approach to study and research has been applied.
Select/design and apply appropriate methods and techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant techniques and theories have been applied; • A range of methods and techniques have been applied; • A range of source information has been used; • The selection of methods and techniques/sources has been justified; • The design of methods and techniques/sources has been justified; • Complex information/data has been synthesised and processed; • Appropriate learning methods/techniques have been applied.
Present and communicate appropriate findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The appropriate structure and approach have been used; • Coherent, logical development of principles/concepts for the intended audience; • A range of methods of

	<p>presentation have been used and technical language has been accurately used;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication has taken place in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; • The communication is appropriate for familiar and unfamiliar audiences and appropriate media have been used.
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Distinction descriptors	Exemplar indicative characteristics
In order to achieve a distinction the student must:	<p>(Centres can identify and use other relevant characteristics).</p> <p>The student's evidence shows, for example:</p>
Use critical reflection to evaluate own work and justify valid conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusions have been arrived at through synthesis of ideas and have been justified; • The validity of results has been evaluated using defined criteria; • Self-criticism of approach has taken place; • Realistic improvements have been proposed against defined characteristics for success.
Take responsibility for managing and organising activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy/independence has been demonstrated; • Substantial activities, projects or investigations have been planned, managed and organised; • Activities have been managed; • The unforeseen has been accommodated; • The importance of interdependence has been

	recognised and achieved.
Demonstrate convergent/lateral/ creative thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas have been generated and decisions taken; • Self-evaluation has taken place; • Convergent and lateral thinking has been applied; • Problems have been solved; • Innovation and creative throughout; • Receptiveness to new ideas is evident; • Effective thinking has taken place in unfamiliar contexts.

1.6 Academic offences

An important aspect of academic endeavours is recognition of the effort and work of the individual student. As such, the college views attempts to falsely claim the achievements of others as one’s own as serious academic offences and has [policies and procedures](#) to deal with such actions in a fair and just manner.

1.7 Attendance requirements and regulations

The college attendance requirement for all HE programmes is 90%.

1.8 Internal verification of assessment decisions

Internal verifiers conduct quality checks on assessment processes and practice to ensure that they meet national standards and that all students have been judged fairly and consistently. An internal verifier can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme that is able to give an expert “second opinion”. Where there is a team of tutors, it is good practice for all tutors to be involved in internally verifying each other. Please note, you cannot internally verify your own assignments or assessments decisions.

Internal verifiers must sample assessed work for each assignment to check accuracy of assessment decisions. Internal verifications should be carried out by a staff member who is familiar with the BTEC assessment at the appropriate level and has subject knowledge of the programme area.

During the course of the programme, internal verification sampling should cover the following:

- Every tutor;
- Every unit;
- Every assignment brief before it is issued to students;*
- Work from every assignment;
- Every assessment site (for multi-site centres);
- Pass, merit and distinction achievement (a student who has not yet achieved or a referred student is also a valid selection);

Internal verification should be completed before work is returned to the students.

Feedback from the internal verifier to the tutor should comment on the quality of their feedback to the student and the effective completion of documentation. The internal verifier should also give developmental feedback to the tutor telling them what could be improved. Internal verification of assessed work should be clearly recorded. If the internal verifier requires action, the tutor should complete this and return it to the internal verifier for their review and sign off.

*All assignment briefs, even those provided by published sources, must be internally verified every year, prior to issue to students.

This is to verify the brief is fit for purpose, by ensuring:

- The tasks and evidence will allow the student to address the targeted criteria;
- The brief is written in clear and assessable language;
- Students' roles and tasks are vocationally relevant and appropriate to the level of the qualification;
- Timescales and deadlines are appropriate;
- Equal opportunities are incorporated.

1.9 BTEC Standards Verifier (External Examiners)

External Examiners perform an essential role in the management and enhancement of academic quality and standards. External Examiners assist the college in the maintenance of its academic standards and in ensuring that these standards are comparable with those in the Higher Education sector across the country. The External Examiners will be appointed by Pearson.

External Examiners/ Standards Verifier:

- Checks management of the programmes is effective and meets Pearson's requirements and those of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education;
- Undertakes sampling in line with current requirements;

- Checks consistency of the interpretation of national standards by each tutor;
- Identifies whether assessment decisions meet national standards;
- Confirms that student evidence meets the grading criteria awarded;
- Confirms student work has been accepted as authentic by the tutor;
- Checks that timely and effective internal verification has been carried out on assignments, assessment decisions and feedback to students;
- Gives verbal feedback to the programme team or other centre nominated person on decisions made;
- Completes online report clearly identifying whether national standards are being met;
- Where required, identifies any remedial action required for re-sampling and conducts re-sample.

1.10 Probity in Assessment

Tutors and internal verifiers must declare any conflicts of interests to HE Quality and Standards.

1.11 Review of Assessment Regulations

Assessment regulations are reviewed annually to ensure that they comply with awarding body regulations.

1.12 Publication of an Assessment Schedule

At the start of each academic year, usually in September, each programme of study will provide a scheme detailing how and when assessments are to be carried out each academic year. This will normally be achieved via the Student Handbook and will also be accessible via Moodle, the college's VLE system.

It is the responsibility of Programme Teams to ensure that students are:

- (a) aware of the assessment regulations;
- (b) aware of any programme specific assessment regulations that affect their programme of study, e.g. attendance requirements etc.
- (c) provided with details of the assessment arrangements applicable to their own programme of study.

2. Assessment submissions

- All written assessments must be submitted via Turnitin unless instructed otherwise by the programme team.
- As part of the induction to the programme all students are provided with training and information to support the use of Turnitin as a submission tool. It is the responsibility of each student to complete the training and carefully familiarise themselves with all the information about the use of Turnitin.

2.1 Marking of assessments

- Student work will be marked and examples may be passed to the internal verifier
- Where there is agreement between the tutor and internal verifier the sample of work is forwarded to the External Examiner for the programme.
- Where there is a disagreement between the first and second markers a third internal marker will be brought in to adjudicate the final mark of the assessments. The third marker will resolve the internal dispute. A sample of assessments will be presented to the External Examiner who will moderate the marking process to ensure that there is consistency across the marks for the units and levels of the programme.

2.2 Grading of assessments

- All assessments must provide evidence that demonstrate that the learning outcomes of the individual units have been met in full. Failure to meet the learning outcomes of a unit will result in the work initially being restricted to a fail grade.

2.3 Submission of late work and mitigation

Students should only be given mitigation for legitimate reasons and extenuating circumstances, such as illness at the time of submission. The college has a clear, published assessment procedure (Havering College's [Mitigation policy](#)) for a student to formally apply for mitigation if they have genuine reasons for not meeting a deadline. If mitigation is granted, the new deadline must be recorded and adhered to. Mitigation requests must be made prior to the assessment deadline and should be supported by the Programme Manager. The duration of mitigation should be consistent across all students and should not be after summative feedback has been issued to the other students on the programme. All mitigation granted must be recorded and made available at the Assessment Board and to the External Examiner (EE). Recording details of mitigation enables the Assessment Board and the EE to confirm that the programme is operating consistently in accordance with the college's and Pearson's policies and guidance.

2.4 Resubmissions

Every assignment contributes to the final qualification grade, therefore it may be appropriate for the Programme Manager or Assessment Board to authorise an opportunity for a student to resubmit evidence to meet the assessment criteria targeted by an assignment. The Programme Manager can only authorise resubmissions if this responsibility has been delegated to them by the Assessment Board beforehand.

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. Resubmissions must not be capped at Pass level, although if a student who submitted their work late is offered a resubmission, this **is** capped at Pass level. Resubmissions can be authorised by the Programme Manager or the Assessment Board and should **only be authorised if all of the following submission conditions are met:**

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

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

A list of all resubmissions authorised by the Programme Manager must be submitted to the Assessment Board and made available to the External Examiner (EE) for review and discussion to ensure that the Assessment Board and EE have oversight of all authorised resubmissions.

A new assignment brief must be issued to students for whom a resubmission has been authorised. Any evidence produced by the student in their original submission that did meet the criteria remains valid and may be used for the resubmission assignment brief. Any assignment briefs used for resubmissions must be internally verified before being issued to students.

2.5 Procedure for resubmission

If the Programme Manager or Assessment Board does authorise a resubmission, the following conditions apply:

- The resubmission must be recorded in the relevant assessment documentation
- The student must be given a clear and realistic deadline for resubmission that is consistent across all students granted a resubmission. It is recommended that students be required to resubmit work within 15 working days of the student being notified that a resubmission has been authorised
- The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance
- Only one opportunity for reassessment of each assessment criterion and Merit and Distinction descriptor will be permitted
- The original evidence submitted for the assessment can remain valid and be extended, or may need to be replaced partially or in full
- Arrangements should be made for resubmitting the assessment in such a way that does not adversely affect other assessments and does not give the student an unfair advantage over others.

It is possible 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.

The External Examiner (EE) is likely to want to include assessments that have been resubmitted as part of the sample they will review.

2.6 Repeat Units

The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) does **not** allow for compensation. This means that BTEC Professional and Higher Nationals qualifications on the QCF require students to achieve every Pass criterion in order to successfully achieve the qualification.

2.7 Conditions for repeating a unit

If a student has met all of the submission conditions, but still not achieved the targeted Pass criteria following resubmission, the Assessment Board may authorise a repeat unit opportunity to meet the required Pass criteria.

Alternatively, the Assessment Board, having reviewed and discussed a student's assessment profile, can offer one **final** resubmission of Pass criteria if it is agreed that it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so.

- If the Assessment Board does not authorise a final resubmission opportunity, the student would be required to repeat the unit.
- If the Assessment Board does authorise a final resubmission opportunity, a new assignment must be issued to the student. If, after this final resubmission opportunity, the student has still not met the Pass criteria in the unit, they would be required to repeat the unit.

The Assessment Board must **only** authorise a repeat unit in circumstances where they believe it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so. When repeating a unit:

- The student must study the unit again
- The overall grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit
- The college policy that states that one is the maximum number of opportunities a student has to repeat a given unit
- The standard rules regarding assessment, including those stipulated in this guide, apply to students who are repeating units
- The External Examiner (EE) is likely to want to include assessments for students that have repeated a unit as part of the sample they will review.

Any evidence previously produced by the student for the unit being repeated that did meet the Pass criteria remains valid and may be used for assignments within the repeat unit. Students who are repeating a unit only need to generate evidence for any Pass criteria that they did not achieve in their previous submissions.

3. Assessment Boards

Each programme of study leading to an award must have an Assessment Board to consider the outcomes of assessments. Assessment Boards have a responsibility for considering the performance of students in the subject or set of related units.

3.1 Dates of Assessment Boards

There will normally be one Assessment Board each academic year. This will usually fall in June/July after the completion of your programme. There may also be a separate board to deal with referrals. Dates will be published in the student handbook.

3.2 Composition of Assessment Boards

Assessment Boards for HE programmes at Havering College will normally be constituted as follows:

- Head/Deputy Head of HE Quality and Standards who is independent of the programme under consideration will Chair the Board;
- The Secretary from HE Quality and Standards will take the minutes and distribute all paperwork that needs to be completed. Paperwork must be returned to HE Quality and Standards 7 days prior to the assessment board taking place;
- The Programme Manager for the programme;
- The External Examiner for the programme, as appointed by Pearson, has the right to attend but the college cannot insist upon attendance;
- All members of the programme team.

Agendas, minutes of previous meetings and schedules for the Assessment Board will be provided by HE Quality and Standards. The agenda is normally determined by HE Quality and Standards so that all Assessment Boards operate in the same way.

3.3 Responsibilities of Assessment Boards

The responsibilities of the Assessment Boards are to:

- (a) ensure that their assessment decisions are fair, transparent and consistent, in accordance with the programme specifications;
- (b) use their academic judgement to ensure that appropriate standards of assessment are maintained and that these are comparable with other U.K. programmes;
- (c) consider the quality of the students' performance in relation to the published assessment criteria;
- (d) determine any requirements for deferred assessment(s);
- (e) consider and attend to the outcomes of the College's Mitigation Panel;
- (f) consider the overall performance profile of individual students and to decide on the appropriate outcomes in terms of award of credit, level completion, failure, deferral, referral, progression and award;
- (g) make recommendations on:
 - (i) the award of credit to students, within the criteria set out above;
 - (ii) the progression of students upon level completion;
 - (iii) programme awards, as appropriate.
- (h) determine any requirements for all students failing a unit(s);

- (i) consider any recommendations from the college's Academic Panels into academic offences and apply any penalty/penalties where appropriate;
- (j) formally acknowledge the findings of any related Academic Offences procedure;
- (k) reconsider its judgement following the outcome of any college appeal panel.

3.4 Procedures of the Assessment Board

The Board will ensure that all assessment material is treated sensitively and securely; and that measures are taken to maintain the confidentiality of its deliberations. Only information which has been agreed by the Board will be shared externally. All formal information will be shared in writing with the individuals to whom it pertains.

The Board has a duty to assess all students being put forward. The Board has powers to take whatever action is necessary to carry out its functions in a fair and consistent way. An Assessment Board has the power to agree means of obtaining further evidence if it is not satisfied that it has sufficient evidence upon which to make a decision.

In exceptional circumstances, where the achievement of this is problematic, the Board can suspend itself, while taking advice, but should reconvene as soon as it is possible to complete its task.

All discussions and subsequent decisions will be fully recorded and only made available to members of the Board, or in the case of appeals, made available to the HE Quality & Standards. Students will be informed in writing of the decisions of the Board.

3.5 Publication of Results

This occurs in two stages.

Stage 1 – informing students of results before an Assessment Board

This involves informing students of provisional marks in advance of Assessment Boards. Provisional marks are defined as those marks which have been assessed and internally verified. Students should always be informed that marks are provisional until they have been ratified by an Assessment Board. Students should also be informed that marks can be increased, decreased or remain the same during ratification by the Board.

Stage 2 – publication of results following an Assessment Board

The deliberations of Assessment Boards are strictly confidential to members and to other academic and administrative staff with legitimate access to them; and on no

account may the confirmed results be conveyed to students before the formal publication of results. In the normal course of events publication will be via the programme team's Moodle site.

3.6 Assessment Board Minutes

The proceedings of Assessment Boards must be formally minuted.

The minutes shall record the:

- a) complete list of students and moderated marks or grades for each unit of study, provided usually via a schedule detailing results for each level of the programme of study;
- b) names of students for whom AP(C) L was applied to individual units;
- c) names of students for whom mitigation was considered and the outcome(s);
- d) details of any deferral or referral requirements and when the next opportunity for assessment will occur;
- e) definitive list(s) of students qualifying for an award; together with the nature of the award and the level or grade awarded;
- f) action taken as a result of the outcome of any academic panel;
- g) details of any issue of principle/precedence arising from the discussions of the Board;
- h) details of any issues requiring further consideration by the Quality and Standards section.

3.7 Appeals against decisions of Assessment Boards

Procedures for appeals arising from Assessment Board decisions are described in [Academic Appeals Procedure](#)

4. Progression, Referral and Suspension of Studies

4.1 Level completion

Credits are awarded for units in which a grade of at least a pass grade has been achieved. Credits are accumulated, at each Level of the programme from 'core' and 'option' units. The credit weighting of each unit, together with their designation as 'core' or 'option' is defined in the Programme Specification of each programme.

4.2 Progression

To complete a level of a Pearson awarded programme, students must accumulate a minimum of 120 credits from units, named at that level, within the Programme Specification. Students successfully completing the StARs' training programme cannot use the 10 credits, from this course, to replace the credits for any failed or referred programme specific units, to achieve level completion.

For HNC, students must complete a minimum of 120 credits at level 4: and for HND, 120 credits at level 5.

There may be variation between programmes regarding rules of combination.

4.3 Referral

Students who do not achieve a pass grade for the assessment task of any unit will be deemed to have referred the unit.

Normally, students will have the opportunity to retrieve their failure by resubmitting the required assignment(s).

Students will, normally, be given one opportunity for a referred unit. Students receive two opportunities, in total, to successfully complete assessment for all units.

The referral may be in all or some of the components of assessment of an individual unit.

The pass mark for the referral attempt is the minimum pass mark for the level of study, i.e. a pass grade

In normal circumstances, any student who has exhausted the referral opportunities offered by the Regulations has no right to continue as a student on that programme of study. The Assessment Board will normally decide that the student has failed the programme and must now leave.

Only in exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Assessment Board, will a student be allowed the opportunity to submit work for a third time. In these circumstances the Assessment Board may decide:

- a) to permit a further re-submission of the assessed task(s) or;
- b) to permit the student to repeat the unit

Students who do not complete the programme will receive a transcript detailing credit achieved, i.e. those credits which have been presented to and confirmed by an Assessment Board will be provided to the student.

Any student who does not meet the assessment requirements after a period of deferral will be deemed to have failed the programme.

A student who has failed may be permitted to re-register for an alternative award, subject to the admission requirements for that award being met and subject to a

satisfactory reference being available from the Programme Team that the student is leaving.

4.4 Suspension of studies

Students can choose to suspend their studies if it is not practical for them to continue on their programme in the current academic year for mitigating reasons.

When the college deems individual students to have fallen too far behind to maintain their progress in any academic year (if 50% or more of unit assignments remain unsubmitted or 50% or more of programme credits remain outstanding with less than 50% of the academic year remaining), students may be advised to temporarily suspend their studies until such time as the circumstances affecting performance have passed, provided that the maximum period of registration for the programme is not exceeded.

Suspension of Studies must be carried out in line with Assessment regulations.