



Higher Education Assessment Policy

Academic Year 2019-20

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The rationale of the assessment policy is the need to ensure that to ensure that assessments awarded to learners are fair and that the college meets its obligation to assure assessment practice is in accordance with **national standards**, higher education **awarding body requirements**, the principles set out in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2018) and the Joint Council for Qualifications' *General and Vocational Qualifications General Regulations for Approved Centres*.
- 1.2 The HE Assessment Policy is communicated to all students as part of their induction process and is available via the College website and the VLE. The College works in partnership with the Universities of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and the University of Cumbria and as such students must be informed of their right to access the partner universities' respective academic regulations and appeals procedures (see 2.2).
- 1.3 Robust mechanisms exist at the College to ensure that assessment is fair and appropriate. Tutors will assess the quality of student work according to agreed criteria and standards, and without regard to individual circumstances, and samples are checked by External Examiners who oversee the assessment process. However, the academic appeals procedure may be instigated if a student wishes to appeal against an assessment decision based upon their academic achievement or progress.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this Assessment Policy is to ensure that staff and learners on Higher Education programmes are fully aware of the criteria and standards against which learner progress and success will be judged. In particular this policy specifically addresses the assessment policy for Higher National Programmes delivered by the College.

3. Scope

- 3.1 For the purpose of this policy, assessment is taken to include all college-assessed work for higher education programmes, which contributes towards external Awarding Body assessment

decisions. The Policy does not cover outside public examinations where the examining boards own procedures will apply.

3.2 Assessment of students on Higher Education courses with partnership institutions is subject to the academic regulations and procedures of the awarding Higher Education institution. The College works in partnership with the Universities of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and the University of Cumbria; as such students must be informed of the partner universities' respective assessment policies which are available here:

- [UCLan](#)
- [University of Cumbria](#)

3.3 Students on Higher National BTEC programmes are subject to College policies and procedures. This policy applies to all BTEC HNC and HND awards offered by the College. The College reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the policy where it will assist in the proper delivery of education. These changes will normally come into effect at the beginning of an academic year but the College may introduce changes during the academic year when it reasonably considers these to be in the interests of students. The College's Academic Regulations are available [here](#).

3.4 Cheating and Plagiarism are outside the scope of this policy; they are covered by the College's *Maintaining Student Responsibility (MSR) Conduct Procedure and the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*.

4. Principles

4.1 The roles and responsibilities of Lecturers, Assessors, Internal and External Examiners are recognised as being essential to the delivery and quality assurance of all programmes.

4.2 An assessment schedule will be made available to students at induction and will be reviewed regularly and the College will ensure that students have access to the assessment policies and procedures. These include:

- Maintaining Student responsibilities (Academic) Procedures
- Complaints procedures
- Academic Appeals Procedure
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy

4.3 The Course Leader will ensure that the assessment requirements for the course are published. This will include:

- Course handbook and programme specification
- Assessment schedule (including reassessment dates)
- Learning outcomes, assessment criteria, weightings and mode(s) of assessment for each unit
- Procedures for the submission of assignments, including the procedure for dealing with late submission of work, and indicative feedback dates
- Criteria relating to grading and marking schemes

- 4.4 Formal assessment opportunities are identified on tutors' schemes of work and on assessment schedules for students.
- 4.5 Learners are expected to work to the deadlines set out in their assessment schedule (or year planner) and should be made aware from the outset of the consequences if they miss deadlines. It is important that all learners are assessed fairly and consistently, and that tutors do not give individual learners an unfair advantage by giving them additional time to complete their assignments.
- 4.6 In extenuating circumstances (Appendix 1) a deadline extension may be authorised at the tutor's discretion where submission within this timescale would be reasonable taking into account those circumstances. Authorisation of a deadline extension requires written permission. If a learner is successful in their application for an extension, the tutor must record the revised deadline and ensure they adhere to it.
- *Extenuating circumstances are exceptional factors outside of a learner's control that have adversely affected their performance within their course/programme of study. These factors may have prevented them from attending examinations or other timed assessments or to miss assessment submission dates. Examples are illness, accidents or serious family problems. Everyday occurrences such as colds or known conditions such as hay-fever will not qualify unless the effects are unusually severe and this is corroborated by a medical note.*
- 4.7 Work submitted after the published deadline and without an authorised extension will not be marked and will be recorded as "Did Not Submit". Students will be offered a single reassessment at the next available opportunity. Merit and Distinction criteria will not be included in the reassessment brief. Students must be made aware of the consequences of failing to meet deadlines.
- 4.8 Assessments are carried out regularly and outcomes are reported within 20 working days with written and verbal feedback. Cross marking, Internal Verification and Standards Moderation will conform to awarding body requirements.
- 4.9 In instances where a student has failed to achieve a pass grade for the unit, on the first attempt, they may be given the opportunity for reassessment. An opportunity for reassessment will only be available if a student has failed to achieve a Pass. In such instances, the student should be provided with clear feedback and guidance as to why they have failed, so that they are able to identify what additional work they need to undertake for reassessment. Reassessment should only be offered following the completion of the unit. If the approach has been a 'single unit staged' assessment, and the student has failed to achieve a pass grade in one of the early assessments, they should be given the grade and feedback, but reassessment should not be scheduled until the student has completed the other assessments.
- 4.10 Candidates are aware of their right to appeal against an assessment decision in accordance with the Academic Appeals Procedure.

4. Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 The processes associated with assessment of Higher National Programmes are the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier and overseen by the Higher Education Quality Improvement Group. Implementation of these principles is at curriculum team level.
- 4.2 Assessment practices and student outcomes are considered during Annual Monitoring cycles.
- 4.3 This policy is subject to annual review by the HE Quality Improvement Group and College Executive Team.

5. Related policies and guidelines

5.1 Related policies include:

- *Academic Appeals Procedure*
- *Managing Student Responsibility Conduct Procedure*
- *Managing Student Responsibility Academic Procedure*
- *Plagiarism, Copying & Cheating Policy*
- *Malpractice and Maladministration Policy*
- *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy*
- *Higher Education Admissions Policy*
- *Complaints, Comments and Compliments Procedure*

5.2 The following internal documents are available to staff via the Intranet:

- *Higher National Curriculum Leaders' Handbook*
- *Higher Education Quality Handbook*
- *Higher National Annual Monitoring Report (course level)*

6. External references

6.1 In respect of Higher Education programmes this policy addresses the following aspects of the **UK Quality Code for Higher Education**:

- **Expectation for Quality**: Courses are well-designed, provide a high quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be **reliably assessed**
- **Advice and Guidance for Assessment**: core practice

6.2 Pearson's guide to assessment "**BTEC Higher Nationals - (RQF) Assessment & Feedback Guidance for Centres/Tutors**" (2018) provides useful guidance on all aspects of assessment.

BTEC Higher National Extension Authorisation Request Form

This form is for the use of tutors who wish to provide a learner with a resubmission opportunity (where all submission rules have been met) or extend the deadline for submission of an assessment because of extenuating circumstances, either before or during the assessment period.

Both cases can only be authorised by the Lead Internal Verifier. This form must be completed by both the tutor and learner and should identify the reasons for the request and it should be submitted within 5 working days of the last assessment (i.e. last assessment submission date or final examination) for the module for which ECs are being claimed.

If you wish to submit your claim before the submission date, it must be timely i.e. not too far in advance as any evidence you submit in support of your claim risks being out of date by the time of the submission date or your circumstances may no longer apply.

*Please note that extensions can be no longer than **10 working days**.*

When completed, this is an auditable quality assurance document that must be made available for internal and external standards verification.

Learner:		Tutor:	
Unit:		Original Submission date:	
Course:			
Reason for resubmission or extension: <i>(delete as appropriate)</i> I would like to extend this assignment end date / allow a resubmission because:			
Criteria for resubmission or extension: The learner agrees that the following conditions will be met:			
Agreed date for resubmission/extension <i>(delete as appropriate)</i>			
Student signature:		Tutor signature:	
Date:		Date:	

Decision of lead internal verifier: *(delete as appropriate)*

I agree this **resubmission / extension** request. The learner has agreed to comply with the conditions specified in the criteria for resubmission or an extension.

Signature of IV:

Date: