

Title:	Pearson HE Assessment Regulations		
Reviewed / updated by:	Group Deputy Director: Higher Education		
Document Owner:	HE Quality		
Date Approved :	July 2018		
Latest revision	August 2024		
To be reviewed:	August 2025		
Approved by	Higher Education Committee		
Publication	Intranet		✓
	VLE		✓
	Website		✓

Table of Contents

1. Policy Statement	3
2. Scope	3
3. Responsibilities in the context of the Assessment Regulations	3
4. Planning Assessment	5
5. Assignment briefs	5
6. Planning Internal Verification	5
7. Formative and Summative Assessment	6
8. Group assessment	7
9. Time constrained assessment activities (Open Book Assessment - OBA)	10
10. Authenticity and authentication	12
11. Observation records and witness statements	12
12. Assessment Submission, Tracking and Recording Process	14
13. Assessment Extensions and Extenuating Circumstances	15
14. Assessment Submission Process	16
15. Failure of a Unit	17
16. Assessment Resubmissions (RQF)	18
a) Procedure for Assessment Resubmissions (RQF)	18
b) Resubmissions (RQF)	19
17. Repeat Units	19
18. Progression	19
19. Compensation (RQF)	20
20. Retention of Assessed Work and Assessment Records	20
21. Assessment Board	21
22. Academic Misconduct	22
23. Right of Appeal	22
24. External Examiners (EEs)	23
25. Programme Duration	24
26. Achievement and Unit Certification	24
27. Break-in Study	24
28. Annual Programme Report	24

1. Policy Statement

The College is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are explicit, valid and reliable and that assessment is conducted with rigour, integrity and fairness, meeting the requirements and expectations of the awarding organisation, Pearson. Assessments should also promote quality and equality.

2. Scope

These regulations apply to all Pearson Higher National Certificate/Diploma (HNC/D) and Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training qualifications offered by New City College. These regulations are based on the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment.

The regulations are reviewed annually and are aligned to updates of the Pearson BTEC Centre Guide and Quality Code. These Assessment Regulations, and any proposed amendments, are approved by the College's Higher Education Committee (HEC).

3. Responsibilities in the context of the Assessment Regulations

The College will ensure that students have access to Pearson HNC/D and Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training assessment regulations and ancillary assessment policies and procedures. These include:

- Academic misconduct;
- Extenuating circumstances;
- Complaints;
- Appeals;
- Break-in study;
- Recognition of prior learning;
- Reasonable adjustments;
- Special examination (assessment) arrangements.

All College policies and procedures are located on the College website:

[Policies and Procedures | New City College \(ncclondon.ac.uk\)](https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/policies-and-procedures)

Senior Curriculum Manager/Course Leader

This is the person who is responsible for a particular programme and will ensure that programme requirements are published. A Course Leader (CL) is designated to take overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of the programme. They may also act as an Assessor and/or Internal Verifier. The CL will work with the Senior Curriculum Manager (SCM) and will:

- Produce a programme specification including learning aims and outcomes, programme structure, the rationale for sequencing of units and an outline of the assessment methods used for each unit;
- Develop programme/student handbook;
- Create and/or approves the programme assessment plan;
- Keep records of the verification process;
- Ensure an effective system of recording student achievement is in place;
- Self-assess and design actions for improvement annually.

Personal Tutor

This is the person who has responsibility for acting as the Personal Tutor for individual students and/or small groups of students.

Assessor:

An Assessor is anyone responsible for the assessment of students. The Assessors will devise assignment briefs, deliver the programme of study, and assess the evidence produced by students against the assessment criteria in the programme specification.

Assessor responsibilities include:

- ∞ Undertakes standardisation with the team;
- ∞ delivers content using effective approaches and takes account of support materials;
- ∞ designs, adapts and uses assessment instruments;
- ∞ identifies formative and summative assessment opportunities for the student and provides constructive feedback to enhance assessment;
- ∞ checks that all student work is authenticated and that any evidence accepted for assessment is the students' work;
- ∞ Assesses student work according to the agreed assessment plan and against national standards;
- ∞ tracks student achievement, maintains accurate records, and provides summative assessment decisions;
- ∞ Oversees any permitted resubmissions;
- ∞ completes any remedial action identified by the Internal Verifier.

Internal Verifier

Internal Verifiers conduct quality checks on assessment processes and practices to ensure that they are in line with the national standards and that all students have been judged fairly and consistently.

An Internal Verifier (IV) can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme that can give an expert "second opinion". Where there is a team of Assessors, it is good practice for all Assessors to be involved in internally verifying each other and share good practices.

Please note that as an Internal Verifier you cannot internally verify your assignments or assessment decisions.

The Internal Verifier:

- ∞ Approves and signs off the assignment briefs and the assessment decisions;
- ∞ confirms the quality of assessment instruments as fit for purpose;
- ∞ provides feedback to the Assessor, including action to be taken if assessment instruments are judged to be incorrect;
- ∞ participates and works with the team in standardisation activities;
- ∞ undertakes internal verification in line with the internal verification plan;
- ∞ checks the quality of assessment to ensure that it is consistent, valid, fair, and reliable;
- ∞ confirms whether assessment decisions meet national standards;
- ∞ provides feedback to the Assessor, including action to be taken if assessment decisions are judged to be incorrect;
- ∞ ensures own assessment decisions are sampled if assessing on a programme.

4. Planning Assessment

Teaching and assessment plans should be developed jointly by the programme team and agreed by the Senior Curriculum Manager/Course Leader. Key areas to consider are:

- ☞ schemes of work;
- ☞ timetabling, academic calendar;
- ☞ unit sequencing or integration;
- ☞ assignments and projects;
- ☞ resource planning, such as when to deploy specialist staff;
- ☞ planning assignment deadlines across the programme to ensure that students are not overwhelmed at key points;
- ☞ unit feedback from students;
- ☞ how the authenticity of student work can be assured.

Where units are integrated within a programme, the plan should show that all targeted criteria can be achieved. As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan must include:

- ☞ names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers (IVs);
- ☞ assignment hand out and hand in dates;
- ☞ formative and summative feedback dates;
- ☞ internal verification sampling plan.

To reduce the likelihood of assessment malpractice, all assessors and internal verifiers must review and revise all unit assessments/ assignment briefs for each cohort/year to maintain the integrity of the assessment process.

5. Assignment briefs

The assignment brief is the document issued to students at the start of the assessment process. 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.

6. Planning Internal Verification

Internal verification is the quality assurance system you use to monitor assessment practice and decisions. It ensures that:

- ☞ assessment plans are in place to ensure full coverage of the qualification;
- ☞ assessment instruments are fit for purpose;
- ☞ assessment decisions accurately match student evidence to the unit assessment criteria;
- ☞ assessors are standardised and assessment and grading are consistent across the programme;
- ☞ samples are prepared/collated for scrutiny by External Examiners.

The internal verification process must be planned at the start of a programme. An internal verification schedule must be agreed, to ensure that all assignment briefs are internally verified before distribution to students.

The schedule for verifying assessment decisions should cover:

- ☞ every student;

- ☞ every assessor;
- ☞ every unit;
- ☞ work from every assignment;
- ☞ every assessment site/campus.

The purpose of internal verification is to confirm that the brief is fit for purpose, by ensuring:

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

Sample size (this may be increased in consultation with the SCM/CL if the risk factors below have an impact):

<10	4	From a range of outcomes recorded - Pass, Merit, Distinction and Referred
11 - 19	6 - 8	
19 - 29	10-12	

The IV sample should be constructed in a way that assures the entire assessment is rigorous. A well-constructed sample should consider:

- ☞ the full range of assessment decisions made: work meeting criteria for distinction, merit, pass, and referred, should all be included in the sample;
- ☞ the experience of the Assessor: new or inexperienced HE Assessors should have extra work internally verified than an experienced Assessor;
- ☞ new HNC/D programmes: when a unit or programme is first introduced, the sample should be increased.

7. Formative and Summative Assessment

Internal assessment is the process where HE assessors make judgements on evidence produced by students against required criteria and provide feedback.

a) Formative assessment

Formative assessment involves both the Assessor and the student in a two-way conversation about progress. The process does not confirm achievement of grades but focuses on helping the student to reflect on their learning and improve their performance. The main function of formative assessment is to provide feedback to enable the student to make improvements to consolidate a Pass or attain a higher grade and reflect on the level of the work required and the elements needed to meet the criteria. This should be scheduled and implemented with sufficient time for students to revisit their draft assignment tasks, and make changes or further improvements to their work.

b) Summative assessment

Summative assessment is a final assessment decision about the assessment criteria of each unit; it is the definitive assessment and recording of the student's achievement must take place.

Students should be informed that summative assessment grades are provisional and are subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board and the external examiner.

It may be useful to discuss different forms of assessment, including formative and summative, in group tutorials. You can also make the connection to how the different methods help students to think critically and support the development of the broad set of skills.

Formative assessment	Summative assessment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower stakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher stakes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informs students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sums up achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasis on feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Performance indicator

*All College devised internal assessment materials **must** be internally verified before being issued to students.*

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG)

It is good practice for Assessors to "mark" spelling and grammar, i.e. highlight mistakes on student work and expect the student to either correct them (at the formative feedback stage) or note them (at the summative feedback stage).

Mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless:

- ✎ the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of student understanding, or
- ✎ specific assessment criteria require good communication, spelling and grammar, and/or correct use of technical language.

If student work has consistently poor spelling, grammar or language it should not be accepted for marking but should be returned to the student to be corrected. The student must be given a deadline by which to correct the work and strategies for improvement should be discussed.

8. Group assessment

Working in groups can provide students with valuable learning opportunities. It encourages them to exchange viewpoints or consider alternative opinions and collaborate and learn from one another. When groups work well, students can produce quality learning outcomes and develop specific teamwork skills, as well as generic skills valued by employers.

Where group work is used, assessors should be aware of some fundamental principles. These can be divided into two areas:

- What is being assessed and how to assess it?
- Ensuring assessment is fair. This is particularly important if groups are composed of students with mixed abilities, experiences and/or motivations.

It is important that assessors clearly identify the purpose of using group work within an assessment:

Group learning activities and skills, such as team building, leadership, etc. may be assessed towards gaining transferable skills and recorded as being achieved and feedback given, but they are not to form part of the assessment decisions for specific units.

a) Designing group assignments

Developing a suitable process for the selection of the team and having an interim appraisal and assessment process to check that each individual makes a sufficient contribution to the group work;

Helping students to understand the criteria to be assessed for the group product and process, where process is being assessed;

Informing them how individual contributions to the group will be measured and assessed against the unit specific learning outcomes, assessment, and grading criteria;

Developing assignments with activities that have multiple sub-activities that students can select and allocate to one another within the project;

Reviewing and agreeing all assessment decisions and overall grading in the Assessment Board.

b) Assignments involving group work

In assignment briefs, students should be provided with a full explanation of the requirements for the assignment in writing together with the usual assessment details (scenario, hand-out and hand-in dates, learning outcome(s) and associated assessment criteria, etc.). It is suggested that this should include:

The activities to be undertaken	The criteria for assessing the group report/presentation (product)
The basis for group membership	The criteria for assessing the group process, if it is to be assessed
Rules that cover the operation of the group	The procedure for assessing individual contributions mapped to the learning outcome/s and associated assessment and grading criteria
Confidentiality agreements over what occurs within the group	Who will carry out the assessment (e.g. Assessor, peers, employers, self, etc.)
Activity allocation within the group	The fall-back position if a group loses a member or an individual's contribution does not meet the requirements of the activities.

Guidelines on assessing group work

- Group projects should be included in the assessment schedule for a unit only where one or more learning outcomes of the unit indicate that they might be appropriate. In other words, does the learning outcome naturally fit the device of a group assessment?
- A variety of assessment methods and consequently, where appropriate, group working skills should be developed;
- Students should be informed, in detail and in advance, of the basis for assessment of group projects, including the methods to be used to measure the extent of individual contributions;
- If the group project or its assessment places on students an obligation to exercise skills or judgements beyond those required for the subject (e.g. peer assessment), then adequate training should be provided to assist students to exercise that judgement;
- If there is to be peer assessment of the contribution of the students to a group project, then the process for collecting feedback should be confidential between the individual student and the Assessor. If peer assessment includes the measurement of the contribution, the method should be clear and simple to use and self-assessment should also be included;
- A common group grade should not be assigned to all members of the group; individual contributions should be measured and graded against the learning outcomes, the assessment and grading criteria;
- Evidence of observation of presentations and discussions (with peers, Assessors etc.) should be detailed and mapped to criteria in order to provide evidence of achievement of individual contributions;
- It is good practice to encourage students to reflect on what they have learned from the group work experience and produce a written evaluation;
- In some cases, presentations may provide evidence only sufficient for Pass criteria, for example, where a presentation contained no corroborated detail of individual activities undertaken by members of the group. In such cases, evidence for higher grades may be achieved through formalised questioning of individual students mapped to the assessment criteria, or having the students produce a supplementary report of their activities;
- Feedback can be directed to the group with reference to individual contributions and achievements;
- The achievement of the Merit and Distinction grade descriptors should be measured against individual contributions and the method of measurement should be clear within the assignment brief.

9. Time constrained assessment activities (Open Book Assessment - OBA)

The word 'test/open book assessment' is used to describe any type of time limited assessment activity.

The widespread use of time limited assessment activities (e.g. tests) is supported within BTEC Higher National qualifications.

When planning this type of assessment, the following points should be considered:

- ☞ Is the test an integral part of an overall unit assessment plan?
- ☞ Is the test structured validly so as to satisfy the targeted learning outcomes and assessment criteria? If used, are grade descriptors appropriately contextualised?
- ☞ Does the unit (and programme) have an appropriate spread of assessment activities?
- ☞ Is the test assessed according to the relevant assessment procedures?

Integration within a unit assessment plan

All units should have a unit assessment plan, indicating where assessment and grading opportunities are available within the various assessment activities of the unit.

An individual assessment activity should show which of the learning outcomes are being targeted. The RQF activities must further be contextualised within a relevant vocational scenario, as well as a narrative description of the activity that appropriately reflects how the activities will enable the student to access the full range of assessment criteria within the targeted learning outcomes. From the context and activity description, a judgement can then be made regarding the validity of the assessment in terms of the grading opportunities.

A test/OBA should clearly specify which assessment criteria and grading descriptors are being targeted. The action used in each of the questions can then be attributed to individual assessment criteria/ and thus confirm that the test/OBA is valid in terms of content and level.

The test/OBA should also be valid in terms of purpose. Tests/OBAs provide a high level of certainty where authenticity is an issue. As such, a test/OBA could be a valid method of assessment, where the principal requirements are confirmation that a student has an 'on-demand' factual knowledge of an aspect of a subject and if necessary, the ability to apply or explain it.

Tests/OBAs could be constructed to address only selected assessment criteria or to include material relating to contextualised grading descriptors and so discriminate between Pass, Merit, and Distinction levels of performance.

RQF tests/OBAs

In designing test/OBA instruments for HN (RQF) assessments, the targeted Learning Outcomes on each test/OBA instrument must be clearly indicated to provide a focus for students and to assist with internal standardisation processes.

The test/OBA activities should enable students to produce evidence within the timeframe specified, that meets the Learning Outcomes of the unit across all grades of achievement. Criterion-based referencing should not be used within HN (RQF) tests/OBAs, as assessment should take place holistically across all of the student evidence submitted.

There are some exceptions to this, however, notably in units where the testing of students' learning requires students to demonstrate discrete application of information (typically numerical data) against Assessment Criteria that cannot be examined holistically in the context of the relevant Learning Outcomes.

It is not permissible to use multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank question types in RQF tests/OBAs.

Spread of assessment activities

A holistic view of the programme should be taken to ensure there is an appropriate spread of assessment activities within and across the units. The units making up the programme should collectively allow students opportunities to develop, and be assessed in, higher level skills, such as analysis, literature searching, teamwork, management responsibilities, effective communication etc.

Where tests/OBAs are used, they should not be so numerous as to skew the balance of skills that can be best developed through written assignments, case studies, experimentation, investigative activities etc.

Where a test/OBA is used to distinguish Merit and Distinction performance, then the different grading components of the questions should be identified so that it is clear which assessment criteria (RQF) are being targeted. This can be achieved by appropriately contextualising the questions so as to satisfy the demands of the respective grading descriptors, i.e. using the language of the grading descriptors, within an appropriate vocational context.

In addition to the overall duration of the test/OBA, there should be clear guidance to students on recommended times to be spent on answering Pass, Merit and Distinction items in the paper.

Where Pass, Merit, and Distinction items are discrete, the paper must also make it clear that the student is **required to achieve Pass criteria questions at a minimum** to achieve the overall learning outcome.

Structure of a test/OBA

The duration of the test/OBA should be clearly stated. Where a test relates only to the Pass criteria of learning outcomes, each question relating to the targeted assessment criteria should:

- Be identified and clearly annotated on the paper (programme teams may wish to use the notation to indicate the first and second listed assessment criteria for outcomes 1 and 2 respectively);
- Be structured in a way that allows the student provide evidence that sufficiently addresses the unit content relevant to the assessment criteria;
- Be set at the appropriate level;
- Use valid action verbs that address the demands of the assessment criteria.

BTEC assessment procedures

It is not acceptable to use numbers to assess individual questions or to aggregate numbers to arrive at a final grade. These fundamental features of outcome-based assessment must be taken into account in test-based assessments.

10. Authenticity and authentication

Only evidence for assessment that is authentic should be accepted, i.e. that is the student's own and that can be judged fully to see whether it meets the assessment criteria.

Reduce or limit opportunities for copying or collaboration by ensuring that each student has a different focus for research. On some occasions, it will be useful to include supervised production of evidence. Where appropriate, practical activities or performance observed by the Assessor should be included.

Students must authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment. They do this by signing a declaration stating that it is their own work when they submit it.

Assessors should only assess student evidence that is authentic. If they find through the assessment process that some or all of the evidence is not authentic, they need to take appropriate action, including invoking malpractice policies as required. See Pearson HE Academic Misconduct policy.

It is important that all evidence can be validated through verification. This means that it must be capable of being reassessed in full by another person. When practical and performance evidence are used, assessors need to think about how supporting evidence can be captured through using, for example, videos, recordings, photographs, handouts, activity sheets etc.

The authentication of student evidence is the responsibility of the curriculum team. If during an external examination, an External Examiner (EE) raises concerns about the authenticity of evidence, or student declarations of authenticity are not available, a set timeframe will be given to produce these.

If any concerns are not resolved, or declarations are not produced, within the timeframe given, the EE will not release certification for the relevant programme(s).

11. Observation records and witness statements

Pearson strongly recommends the use of witness statements, Assessor observation records, or other paperwork. However, in order for these to be useful, they must record achievement at criterion level against the activity that is being observed. Checklists prepared against unit grading criteria are one way of doing this.

Tutor observations and witness statements are very useful supplementary evidence of achievement. However, an observation sheet or witness statement on its own may not be considered sufficient evidence for verification. It is important that it is supported by other evidence, such as audio/visual records of the activity, production reports, notes, self-evaluation by the student, etc. that can substantiate that the activity took place as described.

a) Observation records

An observation record is used to provide a formal record of an Assessor's judgement of student performance (process evidence e.g. during presentations, practical activities) against the target grading criteria. The record will:

- Relate directly to the evidence requirements in the grading grid of the unit specification
- May confirm achievement or provide specific feedback of performance against national standards for the student
- Provide primary evidence of performance
- Be sufficiently detailed to enable others to make a judgement about quality and whether there is sufficient evidence of performance

- Confirm that national standards have been achieved.

Observation records should:

- Be accompanied by supporting/additional evidence. This may take the form of visual aids, video/audio files, CDs, photographs, handouts, preparation notes, cue cards, diary record or log book and/or peer assessments-records, etc.
- Note how effectively these were used to meet the grading criteria
- Record the Assessor's comments
- Be evidenced in students' portfolios when assessment is carried out through observation along with relevant supporting evidence
- Be completed by the Assessor who must have direct knowledge of the specification to enable an assessment decision to be made
- Be signed and dated by the Assessor and the student
- Also include students' comments.

b) Witness statements

A witness statement is used to provide a written record of student performance (process evidence) against grading criteria. Someone other than the Assessor of the qualification/unit may complete it.

This may be an Assessor of a different qualification or unit, a work placement supervisor, a technician, a learning resources manager, or anyone else who has witnessed the performance of the student against a given grading criteria. It can be someone who does not have direct knowledge of the qualification, unit or evidence requirements as a whole but who is able to make a professional judgement about the performance of the student in the given situation.

The quality of witness statements is greatly improved, and enables the Assessor to judge the standard and validity of performance against the grading criteria, if:

- The witness is provided with clear guidance on the desirable characteristics required for successful performance
- The evidence requirements are present on the witness testimony, but this may need further amplification for a non-Assessor
- The student or witness also provides a statement of the context within which the evidence is set.

The witness statement does not confer an assessment decision. The Assessor must:

- Consider all the information in the witness statement
- Note the relevant professional skills of the witness to make a judgment of performance
- Review supporting evidence when making an assessment decision
- Review the statement with the student to enable a greater degree of confidence in the evidence
- Be convinced that the evidence presented by the witness statement is valid, sufficient and authentic.

When a number of witnesses are providing testimonies:

- It may be helpful to collect specimen signatures
- All witness testimonies should be signed and dated by the witness
- The job role/relationship of the witness with the student should also be recorded.

These details add to the validity and authenticity of the testimony and the statements made in it. Centres should note that witness testimonies can form a vital part of the evidence for a unit, but they should not form the main or majority assessment of a unit.

12. **Assessment Submission, Tracking and Recording Process**

It is essential to track and record student achievement throughout the programme. All assessment must be recorded in such a way that:

- ☞ assessment evidence is 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.

SCM/CL and Assessors **must** keep and maintain assessment tracking to record all assessment activities for the qualification on programme level and a unit-by-unit basis.

The assessors should track student progress, recording what each student has achieved and what still has to be done using the unit tracker template. This helps to ensure full coverage of the units and provides opportunities for grading at the correct level. It also helps enable internal verification and provides samples for External Examiners (EEs) and other external audits as required.

Meeting Deadlines

Students should be encouraged to develop good time management. It is important that students are assessed fairly and consistently and that some students are not advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments.

See the Assessment Rules flowchart.

13. Assessment Extensions and Extenuating Circumstances

Extensions

Students should only be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons and extenuating circumstances, such as illness at the time of submission.

Students are responsible for submitting work by the deadlines specified. Where a student becomes aware of and has good reason(s) as to why they are going to have difficulty submitting work by the due date, a request for an approved extension of time should be made. The duration of extensions should be consistent (maximum seven days) across all students and should not be after summative feedback has been issued to the other students on the programme.

Extension requests should be made before the assessment deadline and should be formally approved by the Senior Curriculum Manager/Course Leader. If an extension is granted, the new deadline must be recorded and adhered to. *Multiple extensions to a student should not be allowed.*

All extensions granted by the SCM/CL must be recorded and made available at the Assessment Board and to the External Examiner (EE). Recording details of extensions enable the Assessment Board and the EE to confirm that the programme is operating consistently following the centre's and Pearson's policies and guidelines.

a) Authorised Extensions

The following represent legitimate requests for an authorised extension to an assessment deadline:

- sudden illness (certified note);
- bereavement or personal trauma;
- an accident that necessitates time-off from College or prevents the student from completing the assessment;
- jury service;
- serious illness of a family member;
- other notified personal reasons that prevent the student from submitting their work by the assessment deadline.

b) Extenuating Circumstances (ECs)

'Extenuating Circumstances' are serious and exceptional circumstances outside the student's control, normally unforeseeable and unpreventable, which the student feels significantly affected their ability to meet the deadline.

Students will be required to submit their EC requests at the end of each semester/ term to higher.education@ncclondon.ac.uk for consideration. The EC panel will consider the validity and seriousness of extenuating circumstances and make recommendations in respect of their assessments i.e. new submission date. The recommendations will be presented to the assessment board.

Where an extenuating circumstance has been accepted by the College, the grade will not be capped unless the task is already 'EC'.

Students should use the Extension Application Form to apply for the extenuation circumstance, available on the college website:

[Policies and Procedures | New City College \(ncclondon.ac.uk\)](https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/policies-and-procedures)

Grounds to Reject an Application

An application may be rejected where one or more of the following criteria apply:

- the application was submitted after the summative assessment deadline;
- uncertified illness;
- the student missed work because they were on holiday;
- the submitted work has been lost due to a problem with their PC, printer, or any other hardware/software used in its publication;
- the student claims they did not know the assessment deadlines and/ or procedure;
- any other reason where there is insufficient evidence to support the request.

14. Assessment Submission Process

Students must submit their work through Turnitin. Mathematical questions may still be completed using conventional means and scanned and uploaded on Turnitin.

Students can complete a similarity check before the assignment is submitted electronically. For summative submission, the work must show the percentage/ similarity index as being at or below 20%. The student should be satisfied the Turnitin score that is at or below 20%, questions and references can be included. Work submitted above this score will be considered by the assessor for potential plagiarism and may be investigated under alleged academic misconduct.

Feedback and grades are also recorded and released to the student electronically.

All parts of an assignment must be attempted by the student for the submission to be accepted. *The incomplete assignment will be treated as a non-submission.*

See the Assessment Rules flowchart.

a) Referral for Pass/ Merit/ Distinction Grades

Assessors to ensure that the evidence must satisfy the pass criteria first. Merit and distinction grades cannot be awarded until the pass criteria have been achieved.

Assessors should take a holistic approach when assessing the evidence. If the student has not met the standard for the pass criteria the work must be referred. The assessor should provide feedback on why the work is referred.

For any referred work, students should address the missing criteria and cannot submit further evidence meeting the higher criteria as it will not be assessed. To ensure mistakes are not made with this the assessor must provide feedback against the assessment criteria indicating the criterion has not been achieved. Assessors should provide annotated comments confirming the grades within students' evidence.

After referral the pass criteria is assessed and, if met, the merits and distinctions that were submitted on the original hand in date will remain as achieved.

If the merit and distinction criteria are not fully met, it should be indicated in the annotated feedback comments.

If the second submission is referred again and the student failed to meet the pass criteria, there will be no opportunity available except to **Repeat** the unit or apply compensation, if the assessment board approves. Further rules will apply for the compensation, see below.

b) Assessment Late Submission

c)

- Students must not be advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments.
- Each programme must publish the units' assessment issue, submission and resubmission dates. Students can only be given authorised extensions for valid reasons and extenuating circumstances.
- Where an assessment is submitted after the published deadline and where an extenuating circumstances form has not been submitted, this will be treated as a non-submission.
- Late submissions will be capped at a Pass Grade, the student will be informed what the grade would have been, if different.

15. Failure of a Unit

A student who does not achieve the requirements to pass a unit has failed that unit. The circumstances in which a unit can be failed are:

- Following the first attempt and resubmission, the student has not made any valid attempt in one or more assessment tasks i.e. non-submission;
- Following resubmission, the student does not achieve the minimum overall pass criteria in a unit;

16. Assessment Resubmissions (RQF)

The key points regarding resubmissions and RQF HN is summarised in the following table:

RQF
One resubmission is allowed if a student does not achieve a pass on first submission (same assignment).
The reassessment opportunity will be capped at Pass for that unit.
A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component for which a Pass or higher has already been awarded.

When splitting units across more than one assignment brief, it is recommended practice not to confirm grades until all assignments have been assessed.

a) Procedure for Assessment Resubmissions (RQF)

- 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. **Students should resubmit work within 10 working days of the student being notified that a resubmission has been authorised (see Assessment Board)**
- The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance
- The original evidence submitted for the assessment can remain valid

Resubmissions are authorised by the Assessment Board and **if all of the following submission conditions are met:**

- The student has met the initial deadlines set in the assignment, has met an agreed deadline extension, or has submitted work late, which has been accepted
- 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

b) Resubmissions (RQF)

A student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification will be given one opportunity to undertake a **reassessment**.

- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted.
- Reassessment will involve the reworking of the **original task**.
- For examinations/tests/OBAs, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task.
- *A reassessment will be capped at a Pass grade.*
- A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.

Assessors should assess the student's performance holistically for the entire unit.

17. Repeat Units

- If a student does not achieve a pass grade after a resubmission opportunity, the unit grade will be recorded as '*Not Achieved*'.
- The student may be able to repeat up to two units at the discretion of the College and the Assessment Board. The student must study the units again with full attendance and pay the unit fees.
- Overall unit grades for the repeated units will be capped at a 'Pass'. Units are allowed to be repeated only once.
- All information and records should be stored safely for the External Examiner's sample.
- The key points are summarised in the following table:

RQF
A unit can be repeated if the Assessment Board decide it is an appropriate course of action.
The unit must be studied again.
The unit must be capped at a Pass grade.
The unit can only be repeated once.

18. Progression

Where a student passes all units for a given academic year, the student will normally progress to the next stage or level.

Where a student has not passed all the units but has had an extenuating circumstance accepted at either the first assessment or a reassessment point (deferral), then they will be allowed to progress with a further opportunity at reassessment, at the discretion of the Assessment Board.

Where a student has been referred for several units, s/he will not be allowed to progress until these units have been passed.

19. Compensation (RQF)

The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance in all units. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC or Level 5 for the HND, based on unit achievement.

All units with a valid combination must have been attempted for each qualification. Students can be awarded **a 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 a HNC or HND as per the unit rules of combination of the required qualification.

These units (one at L4 and one at L5) will appear on the student's Notification of Performance that is issued with the student certificate as 'Unclassified'; i.e. a 'U' grade.

Compensation must be approved by the assessment board.

20. Retention of Assessed Work and Assessment Records

Students' evidence and assessment records must be kept safely and retained for **one year** from the date of certification per Pearson requirements. The associated assessment records will be retained **up to three years** from the date of certification (Pearson Rules).

All assessment records should be maintained and recorded using the IQA stages 1-5 portal and College systems.

The SCM, Internal Verifier and Assessors need to:

- Store all assessment records securely and safely relating to both internally set assessments with formative and summative feedback;
- Maintain records of student achievements that are up-to-date, 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.

In certain cases, it may be more feasible to retain photographic evidence of three-dimensional pieces of work rather than retaining the work itself.

All assessment records (including internal verification records) must be secure against hazards like theft and fire, etc. The records must be of sufficient detail to show exactly how assessment decisions were made (i.e. to assessment criterion level). Data should only be accessible by relevant staff in accordance with data protection requirements. Records must be securely kept for the Pearson audit and in case of student appeals, certification issues, etc.

Up to date and accurate student progress information regarding registration, student feedback and progress, and achievement (at assessment criterion level) must be recorded. Staff must check the accuracy of the information recorded.

The records must be of sufficient detail to show exactly how assessment decisions were made (i.e. to the assessment criterion level). Records must be securely kept for IQA audit and in case of student appeals, certification issues, etc.

Up to date and accurate student progress information regarding registration, student feedback and progress, and achievement (at assessment criterion level) must be recorded using ProMonitor/VLE. All assessment staff must check the accuracy of the information recorded.

Office for Students requires all students' evidence to be retained for minimum five years, in case students' complain or appeal against outcomes.

21. Assessment Board

The main purpose of the Assessment Board is to make recommendations on:

- The awards to be made to students;
- The grades achieved by students on the individual units;
- Progression of students onto the next stage of the programme;
- Extensions and Extenuating circumstances;
- Consider cases of cheating and plagiarism;
- Referrals and deferrals;
- Authorise resubmissions;
- Consider comments of the External Examiner (if applicable).

Assessment Boards may also monitor academic standards.

The membership of the Assessment Board shall be as follows:

- The Chair (usually the Group Deputy Director:HE or the Group Director in which the programme is based, or his/her nominated representative provided they are not involved in the delivery of the programme);
- Senior Curriculum Manager;
- Course Leader;
- Assessors;
- Internal Verifiers for the unit(s) being considered;
- A representative from MIS/examinations;
- External Examiner (invited/ if available).

A full list of members of the Assessment Board must be recorded.

The quorum for a meeting of an Assessment Board shall be four members. Where an External Examiner is unable to attend, the meeting may go ahead in their absence, provided that their comments are sought before the meeting and reported to the meeting.

Departments may hold a pre-board to ensure that all the required information is available to the Assessment Board. Dates for Assessment Boards shall be scheduled at the end of the academic year as published on the HE Quality Calendar.

The Chair should identify the programmes of action open to the Assessment Board. Consideration of individual results should be conducted as follows:

- The unit grades of each student should be considered;
- The consideration of extenuating circumstances should be conducted;
- Any amendments to the grades will be agreed and recorded on the Unit tracking sheet on ProMonitor;
- The overall outcome/grade for the student will be agreed;
- The consideration of resubmission/deferred work discussed, approved and agree date(s)
- The decisions of the Assessment Board will be formally recorded in the minutes.

Only designated staff are authorised to disclose results in accordance with College practice. Assessors should take care not to disclose the confidential proceedings of the Assessment Board and should guide individual students on what they now have to do.

22. **Academic Misconduct**

All incidences of academic misconduct, such as cheating and plagiarism, must be dealt with according to the College's Academic Malpractice Policy.

- Students must be informed of this policy during induction and given guidance about what constitutes malpractice and the study skills required to avoid it.
- The College has adopted the use of Turnitin for Higher Education courses (section 14)

23. **Right of Appeal**

a) Student Appeals

A student appeal is a request to review decisions made by a centre on their progression, assessment and awards.

Students who have concerns about the outcome of an assessment should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their subject lecturer or assessor. If they wish to take the matter further, they should do so through the College's Appeals Procedure.

There is a single appeal process for students who wish to appeal against an outcome arising from:

- Decisions relating to academic misconduct;
- Decisions of Assessment Boards.

The Senior Curriculum Manager, Internal Verifiers and Assessors need to ensure that all students 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 appeal with Pearson relating to external or internally awarded assessment outcomes.

Procedures should be known and understood by students and staff. Malpractice issues can be minimised by ensuring students and staff are aware of the issues: plagiarism, collusion, fabrication of results, falsifying grades, fraudulent certification claims; referencing skills; promoting a zero-tolerance approach.

The appeal process must be understood by staff and students. *It should be transparent and enable formal challenges to assessment grades.* A thorough student induction programme should ensure that the key information about assessment and appeals policies are communicated.

If students are not satisfied with the result of their appeal after following their centre's processes, they can request that the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) review their complaint.

The OIA will not deal with complaints about academic judgement but will look at academic appeals. Following the OIA process does not prevent students from pursuing a complaint or appeal with Pearson.

b) Appeals Procedure

In the first instance students who have concerns about the outcome of an assessment procedure or the procedure itself should discuss the matter fully with the assessor. If they continue to have concerns, then they must follow this appeals procedure.

Stage One

- ☞ Students wishing to appeal must do so in writing, within five working days of the receipt of their assessment.
- ☞ The investigation should be completed and detailed response given to the student within **five working days** of the receipt of appeal.

Stage Two

Should the student not be satisfied with the result of the appeal, the Deputy Director:HE HE and Access will review the case and make the final decision.

Guidance Notes

Where an appeal may lead to changes on an Awarding Organisation's formal student assessment record (e.g. a Pearson SRF) then the Examinations Officer should be informed immediately by the SCM/CL, both about the lodging of the appeal and its ultimate outcome.

24. External Examiners (EEs)

The EE is a subject assessment specialist appointed by the awarding organisations to conduct an external examination. This verifies that centre management of programmes is effective and performs audits on the assessment decisions. An external examination is conducted by an annual visit.

It is the responsibility of the SCM/CL to ensure that:

- The EE is invited to attend the Assessment Board;
- Actions and recommendations from the EE report are noted and monitored to completion through the AMR;
- The EE is informed of progress against actions and recommendations;

- Actions, recommendations and commendations from EE reports are shared with colleagues for the purpose of comparison and identification of good practices and themes for development.

25. **Programme Duration**

- The Pearson HNC Diploma is a 120 credit level 4 qualification normally lasting one year.
- The Pearson HND Diploma is a 240 credit level 5 qualification lasting two years.
- The Pearson Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training is a 120 credit qualification lasting one year.

26. **Achievement and Unit Certification**

- Pearson HNC/D grades cover a Pass, Merit, and Distinction.
- To achieve a 'Pass' grade for a unit, students must complete all the assessment criteria.
- The Pearson Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training units are all at a 'Pass' grade.
- Grades will be confirmed by the Assessment Board.

27. **Break-in Study**

A break in study or permanent withdrawal from the programme may be necessary if circumstances prevent the student from continuing their studies. This must be discussed as soon as possible with the student and the Senior Curriculum Manager so that the correct procedures are followed. Please refer to the Break in Study guidance and form on the College website:

[Policies and Procedures | New City College \(ncclondon.ac.uk\)](https://www.ncclondon.ac.uk/policies-and-procedures)

28. **Annual Programme Report**

All HE programmes will be evaluated annually to ensure that strengths and weaknesses are identified and actioned. Annual Programme Reports (APRs) will be drafted in the summer and validated in the autumn and be compared across the curriculum so that themes may be identified and reported to Group Deputy Director: HE.

Pearson Higher Education RQF - Assessment Rules



