



## Assessment Policy

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Linked policies:	<p>Internal Verification Policy          Complaints Policy          Academic Appeals Policy          Learning Teaching and Assessment Policy          Student Handbook          Data Privacy Notice and Consent Policy</p>
External reference :	<p>UK Quality Code UKSCQA/02 [March 2018]          Expectations for Quality Core Practice 5  <i>The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.</i>          Related QAA Advice and Guidance:          Theme 6: Monitoring and Evaluation  <i>Providers evaluate, analyse and use the information generated from monitoring to learn and improve.</i></p>
Audience:	Students, Tutors, Assessors, Module Leaders, Internal Verifiers and Programme Leaders.

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## 1. Introduction

The following provides all the details concerning assessment regulations. These are the rules and processes that students and academic staff need to follow in order to carry out assessments correctly and to the same standards across the College. This policy should be read together with the individual policies of the Pearson awarding body policy on assessments for BTEC HND in Business and with policies and procedures of the College's university partners, Bucks New University (BNU), the University for the Creative Arts (UCA), the University of West London and any other partner whose assessment policy and processes the College is required to comply with.

## 2. Precedence

The Assessment Policy and Procedures of awarding bodies (e.g., Pearson) and OBC's university or college partner(s), will take precedence over this policy and procedures where the following applies:

- The assessment relates to a student on a course leading to a qualification by a recognised awarding body (e.g., Pearson) or on that is being delivered by OBC in partnership with a university or college such as Bucks New University (BNU), the University of West London (UWL) or the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) or any other university of college that OBC is in partnership with.
- The relevant awarding body or partner university or college requires OBC to follow their Assessment policy rather than the OBC policy provided here.

## 3. Definitions

An assessment is an activity or task completed by a student according to specific requirements provided in an assignment brief or examination paper, which is marked by an assessor in order to measure how well the student meets the standards of a course of study and/or a qualification. Assessments can refer to both formative and summative activities or tasks. They can be oral, written or practical and can refer to coursework or examinations.

### 3.1. Formative Assessment

A formative assessment is when a student submits some coursework or takes a test before their final assessment takes place. The formative assessment is designed to help students understand how well they are doing on the course and to show them what they need to do to improve before their summative assessment. Formative assessment needs to be submitted by students in a timely manner so that they can receive feedback, with adequate time to take feedback on board before the student has to submit their summative assessment. Formative assessments are usually submitted at the middle of a term or semester (usually week 5, 6 or 7) and the feedback with grade should be provided to the student no later than three weeks before the end of the term. The grade provided to the student is only a guide for the students to see how well they are doing and will not count towards their final grade.

### 3.2. Summative Assessment

A summative assessment is the final coursework a student must submit or exam the student needs to take for any unit they have studied. Students will usually submit coursework or take exams at the end of a term or semester for each unit they have completed during the term or semester. The student must submit their summative assessment by a deadline that is provided at the beginning of the term or semester when they receive the assignment brief explaining what they need to do.

## 4. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to ensure students and academic staff understand how assessments are conducted at the College. The policy includes information on setting activities or tasks, meeting deadlines, what happens when deadlines are not met, marking and verification of assessments and giving feedback with grades to students. It also includes information on how overall grades are decided and what happens if a student is unable to pass.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

The College aims to ensure that assessment procedures carried out at the college:

- are clear for all students and academic staff to understand and follow
- meet the requirements and expectations of external bodies where relevant including Pearson and the College's university or college partners.
- meet the academic and employability needs of students doing the assessments

The key objectives of this policy and procedures are in line with the guiding principles of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education:

- Assessment criteria is based on the achievement of learning outcomes
- Teaching activities are directly linked to learning outcomes and assessment methods
- Assessments are reliable, which means their accuracy can be trusted
- Assessments are consistent, which means the same standards are applied in every case
- Assessments are fair, which means individual student circumstances in comparison to other students, including reasonable adjustments for disabled students or those with learning difficulties, are taken into consideration
- Assessments are valid, which means the assessment allows the student to demonstrate if they have or have not met the learning outcomes.
- A holistic approach to assessments is taken so that the overall performance and understanding of students can be assessed
- Feedback is constructive and supports learning
- Feedback is provided at the right time (within three weeks of submission)
- Students have all the information and support they need for assessment

## 6. Scope

This policy covers all types of assessment for all courses delivered at the College's campuses. These currently include the following courses.

Oxford Business College (OBC) courses

- Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) in Business
- International Foundation Programme in Business, Law and Engineering

Bucks New University (BNU) courses:

- BA (Hons) in Business Management with integrated Foundation Year
- BA (Hons) in Business Management
- BA (Hons) in Business Management (Top-up)
- 

University for the Creative Arts (UCA) courses

- BA (Hons) in Business, Innovation and Management (Top-up)
- BA (Hons) Business Management

Unified Seevic and Palmer's (USP) course

- Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) in Business

University of West London (UWL) course:

BA (Hons) In Business Studies with Foundation Year

Courses delivered in partnership with BNU, UCA and UWL follow the assessment regulations of the two university partners.

## 7. Assessment Regulations

Assessments for all courses apart from those delivered in partnership with Bucks New University, the University for the Creative Arts (UCA) and University of West London are based upon the information provided in Student Handbooks and the following regulations apply:

### 7.1. Deadlines

Students must submit their assignments and take examinations according to strict deadlines. Student are informed about the deadlines at the start of their course in module booklets and assignment briefs. Deadlines are explained at induction and provided to students on the College Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Deadlines may sometimes be pushed back to a later date at the discretion of the Assessment Board. Deadlines will never be brought forward reducing the time students have to submit or prepare for an exam. Students will be notified in advance if an assessment date is pushed back for any reason.

## 7.2. Mitigating Circumstances

If students know that they cannot meet a deadline, they must request mitigating circumstances before the deadline. They may do this in writing or by email to the Programme or Module Leader and Head of Academics. They must explain the reason why they cannot submit their work and the reason needs to be valid. Examples of valid reasons includes:

- The student is suffering from a physical or mental illness. In this case the College may ask for evidence from a doctor. The College may refer the student to the College Counsellor for help and support.
- There has been a bereavement in the student's immediate family
- The student is struggling with a disability or learning difficulty that deserves special consideration and reasonable adjustments
- The student has technical difficulties preventing them from submitting work online.
- The student is a victim of a crime
- The student has unexpectedly been left alone to care for a relative.

Examples of reasons that are not normally considered valid include:

- The student has too many work commitments
- The student does not understand what they have to do but they have not attended any of the additional support classes or academic clinics provided by the College
- The student wants to travel for holiday or work reasons
- The student simply wants more time to improve their work

## 7.3. Feedback on Submissions

The College aims to provide students with written feedback for all formative and summative assessments that have been submitted by the deadline within three weeks. The College will try to provide feedback to students in the same timeframe if work is submitted late or at an extended deadline but there may be delays if Tutors/Assessors are not available at that time.

## 7.4. Second Marking and Internal Verification

Second marking refers to a second assessor marking work that has been assessed by another assessor. Internal verification refers to feedback given to another assessor on the feedback they have given to a student. After the submissions have been assessed, the College carries out sampling of assessments for second marking and internal verification purposes. Each Assessor has an Internal Verifier (IV) or moderator who will check a sample of their assessment decisions to make sure they agree with them. There should be second marking and verification for 20% of every module assessed. Where there is more than one assessor for any module, a relatively equal number of submissions should be second marked and verified for every assessor. For example, where there are two assessors for a module, 105 of samples should be second marked and verified for each assessor.

If the second marker disagrees with assessment decisions to the extent that it affects the overall grade of the student, the first marker can adjust their grade and feedback. If they disagree, they can pass the submission to the Lead Internal Verifier for a final decision. Where the original assessment decision is changed, the IV or Lead IV will need to check all the assessments carried out by the same lecturer for the same module, in order to ensure they are graded accurately and consistently. For more details see the Internal Verification Policy.

#### **7.5. External Verification/Examination**

In addition to internal verification there is an external verification process carried out by awarding organisations. For UCA, BNU and UWL programmes External Verification is conducted by the respective university partners. For HND programmes the external verification is carried out annually by a Pearson External Examiner who checks that the assessment decisions and the internal verification decisions are correct and meet the expected standards.

#### **7.6. The process of marking and giving feedback**

##### **1. Submissions**

The student submits their work by the deadline

##### **2. Within two weeks:**

The Tutor/Assessor writes feedback and gives the student a grade within two weeks. The feedback and grade follow the grading criteria provided in the Student Handbook, Programme Specification and/or Assignment Brief

##### **3. By the end of the third week:**

The College carries out sampling and internal verification of assessment work and assessors adjust feedback and grades if necessary, to ensure all assessment decisions are reliable, fair, consistent and valid.

##### **4. By the end of the third week**

The student receives their feedback and grade. The student may appeal against the feedback and grade. See the Appeals Policy and Procedures for details.

#### **7.7. Resubmissions**

If a student is unable to pass their summative assessment, they may resubmit it by the resubmission deadline which is usually two weeks after they receive their feedback. Students will have the opportunity to read the feedback and to resubmit their work, correcting or adding to their submissions as necessary in order to pass. Students who resubmit without mitigating circumstance can only achieve a Pass and will not be able to get a higher grade.

### 7.8. Retakes

Students who fail on their resubmission will have to retake the unit and submit work for a new assignment brief or take another exam at a new deadline. Retakes will also be capped at a Pass. In order to do a retake, a student will need to attend classes, and these will need to be scheduled, which may incur additional tuition fees for the student. It also means the student may need to extend the date at which they finish their course. Students should avoid having to do retakes if they can.

### 7.9. Failure to Pass

Students who continuously fail to submit or pass units in time may not be able to progress to the next level e.g., a HND student would not attain their interim HNC or full HND award if they fail to submit or pass units in time. Such students will still be able to submit work to attain unit certificates but not the full award. The final decision will be taken by the relevant Progression, Assessment or Examination Board.

### 7.10. Grades

There are three ways in which student work is graded depending upon the awarding organisation. For the International Foundation Programme the College uses percentage scores as follows:

Percentage score	Grade awarded
70% or more	A
60-69%	B
50-59%	C
49% or less	F

For Pearson BTEC HND courses, all grades are based upon the following:

PASS  
 MERIT  
 DISTINCTION

Students who do not Pass are classified as REFERRED. If they resubmit or retake, they can only achieve PASS for the particular unit.

University partners follow the usual classifications:

First Class 1  
 Upper Second Class 2.1  
 Lower Second Class 2.2  
 Third Class: 3



### 7.11. Compensatory Credit

Students may be allowed compensatory credit for some programmes. For Pearson BTEC HNDs students are allowed compensatory credit for one 15-credit unit in the first year of their studies when they complete the HNC L4 and another in their second year of studies when they complete the HND L5. This means they can submit and fail one 15-credit HNC unit and still pass HNC in the first year, and they can submit and fail one 15-credit HND unit and still Pass the HND in the second year. Students cannot Pass HNC or HND if they fail more than one unit at each level. For details on how to achieve an overall Merit or Distinction, see the following explanation taken from the Pearson BTEC Assessment Guidelines.

### 7.12. Calculating Final Grade for HND

The table below shows how final grades are calculated for HND qualifications.

	Points per Credit		Point Boundaries
Pass	4	Pass	420 - 599
Merit	6	Merit	600 - 839
Distinction	8	Distinction	840 +

For every unit passed the credits are multiplied by 4; for every Merit they are multiplied by 6 and for every Distinction by 8. There are 8 HNC L4 units studied in the first year and 7 HND L5 units studied in the second year. All units are valued at 15 credits apart from Research Project, a HND unit which is 30 credits. This means that if a student passes a 15-credit unit, they will gain 4 x 15 credits = 60 points. If they achieve a Merit, they will gain 6 x 15 credits = 90 points and if they achieve a Distinction, they will gain 8 x 15 credits = 120 points. All the points are added together at the end of the first year for HNC units and a final grade is given according to the number of points gained.

If students Pass HNC, they can progress to the HND in the second year and counting starts from zero. Students may progress to their second year if they only pass 6 HNC units. However, they will need to pass a 7<sup>th</sup> HNC unit before they can complete and pass their HND in the second year. They can fail the 8<sup>th</sup> unit and receive compensatory credit.

The final HND grade is based on the total points achieved by the end of the second year and does not include the points gained in the first year.

### 7.13. Publishing Grades

When students receive feedback with grades that have been internally verified it is important that they understand the grades may still be amended by the College Assessment Board, or the Awarding Organisation following the decisions of External Verification and Examination Boards. For this reason, all grades provided to students by the College are provisional until they have been ratified by the relevant Assessment Board, External Examiner or Examination Board. This does not usually take place until the end of the academic year.