



## Internal Verification Policy

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Responsible Committee:	Academic Board & Assessment Committee & LTA Sub-committee
Approved by & date:	December 2020 (MC)
Linked policies:	2.1 – 2.11 Academic Management Policies and Procedures 4.2 Lesson Observation Policy 4.3 Individual Learning Plan 4.4 Grading Standardisation Policy 4.5 Personal Tutor Code of Practice 4.6 Student Participation and Feedback Policy 4.7 VLE Policy 4.8 Academic Appeals Policy 5.8 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy 7.1 Equality & Diversity Policy 9.5 Disability Policy
External references	UK Quality Code UKSCQA/02 [March 2018] Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) British Council (BC) Pearson (Edexcel) International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), Accreditation Service of International Colleges (ASIC), Office for Students (OfS).
Audience:	Programme Leaders, Tutors, Students

## **1 Introduction**

The College's internal verification policy is designed to ensure that the quality of the assessment practices meets the threshold standards as well as the requirements of Pearson (Edexcel) AO.

## **2 Purpose of internal verification (Pearson HND programmes)**

Internal verification ensures that assessment is accurate, consistent, current, timely, valid, authentic and to awarding organisation standards. It also ensures that assessment instruments/assignment briefs are fit for purpose and provides feedback which informs quality improvement

## **3 Pearson HND Programmes**

The College is responsible for the internal verification of all assessments for Pearson (BTEC HNC/D) programmes. BTEC HNC/D assessments are prepared, verified and marked by the College and moderated by the Pearson external examiner.

## **4 Expectations**

- the chosen assessment instruments and assessment guidelines are valid and applied consistently by all assessors for the same qualification across all candidates.
- arrangements are effective for the safe storage of internal assessment materials.
- access to assessment materials is effectively managed.
- the final assessment decisions made by assessors are accurate, reliable and recorded.
- steps are taken to minimise the risk of plagiarism.

- assessment evidence is the candidate's own work.
- the effectiveness of the assessment and internal verification system is monitored and reviewed any changes required by Pearson are implemented.

## 5 The internal verification process: an overview

- The assessors decide how they are going to assess the candidates. For example, if candidates are required to demonstrate competence in a practical skill, then a practical exercise would be designed.
- The internal verifier confirms that the assessments are valid and that the assessment specification and marking schedule are appropriate. This will be done by discussion at internal verification and/or standardisation meetings and recorded on the IV form.
- Assessment is carried out using internally verified materials which the internal verifier has checked.
- The assessors evaluate the candidate's evidence to ensure that it meets requirements of the qualification. Agreed marking schedules should be used.
- The internal verifier confirms that assessors are marking consistently, applying the standards defined for the Unit. He or she usually does this by sampling the work of the assessor.
- Assessment records, materials and evidence are retained in line with Pearson/BTEC requirements.

Guidance documents from Pearson which relate to requirements and exemplars of good professional practice are maintained in the Pearson/BTEC Centre Management File.

## 6 Internal verification procedures

It is important that internal verification procedures are consistent across the whole College and the following procedures are applied:

- an internal verification plan should be drawn up for each unit.
- assessment briefs and preliminary papers should be scrutinised to ensure they meet Pearson standards and are reliable, valid and secure.
- all assessment briefs must be internally verified before being distributed to students.
- sample size is the square root of the total number of assignments to assess. Hence if there are 12, four are sampled. The verifier will try to select a range of grades from Pass, Merit, Distinction and Referred to verify. The assessor will try to select work from different students in each module rather than the same student in each module where possible.
- the internally verified pieces of work should be signed by both assessor and internal verifier.

- interim IV sampling will be conducted during standardisation meetings prior to full marking going ahead by assessors in order to identify any potential issues of consistency and validity of assessment decisions.
- assignment briefs with comparatively high non-submission or referral rates will be revisited before being reused in order to identify risk associated with the briefs.
- all student work should be assessed within two weeks of submission and samples should be verified within one week after assessments have been completed.
- IV forms should be completed by the IV providing developmental feedback to the assessor.
- the generic College checklists and forms should be used and retained as evidence for external verification and appeals.
- all evidence should be retained securely in accordance with Pearson regulations after the student leaves the College.

## 7 Responsibilities

### 7.1 Pearson/HNC/D Quality Nominee

- develops and implements improvements to quality assurance systems
- liaises with Pearson
- arranges for the training of internal verifiers and assessors
- coordinates the operation of the internal verification system
- arranges for the induction of candidates
- coordinates external verification activity on behalf of the College
- coordinates appeals

### 7.2 HNC/D Programme Leader

- operates systems to standardise assessment and ensure that the work of all assessors is sampled over a defined period
- monitors consistency of assessment records
- supports assessors by offering guidance and advice, particularly in the case of new or inexperienced assessors. [The work of these assessors should be sampled more often].
- prepares a plan for internal verification
- decides on the methodology/ mechanisms to be used
- samples assessment materials
- liaises with external verifiers and Pearson/BTEC coordinator
- coordinates meetings of assessors
- produces records of internal verification for external verification and as evidence for appeals.

### 7.3 Assessor

- contributes to the design and review of assessment materials
- plans the assessment process with the programme coordinators and candidate
- assesses evidence against the Pearson standards and makes judgements
- completes the assessment records
- liaises with other assessors and the internal verifier and participates in internal and external verification.

### 7.4 Internal Verifier's (IV) Responsibilities

The IV must ensure that assessors are producing assignments that comply with Pearson (Edexcel) requirements. BTEC HNC/D Unit briefs must include:

- The teaching programme and assignment deadlines
- Grade descriptors contextualised where appropriate
- Assignment task(s) designed to elicit evidence from the students at the level required

- An appropriate scenario or case study

The Internal Verifier must carry out the following processes:

- Verify assignment briefs before they are handed out to students
- Ensure that Pearson set assignment briefs are verified by Pearson (Edexcel)
- If in doubt, have other assignment briefs verified by Pearson (Edexcel)
- Carry out risk-based sampling for verification of assessed student submission
- Verify and/or second mark samples of assessed student submissions
- Provide feedback/recommendations to the Tutor/Assessor with regard to the assessment feedback and the grading decisions no more than one week after receiving the assessed student work.
- Provide reports on verification of assignment briefs and assessments to be considered at meetings of Tutors, the Assessment Committee, Exam Board and Academic Board.

## 8 The Lead IV

The Lead IV is responsible for

- Providing an assessment and internal verification plan with timelines
- Recording internal verification decisions on work sampled
- Giving feedback to IVs and Assessors to support them in their decision making
- Resolving disagreements between IVs and Assessors
- Ensuring that feedback and recommendations from IVs are followed up by Assessors
- Collating documentation to provide an audit trail of IV activities

## 9 IV Sampling Strategy

At the end of each term for BTEC HNC/D programmes the College will take a risk-based approach to sampling each unit for internal verification:

- The work of each class will be verified (up to 30% depending upon risk) during their programme of study.
- Each unit for every cohort of students will be sampled (up to 30% depending upon risk).

Internal verification is risk-based and will, therefore, be more frequent when

- The qualification is revised
- There are problem units

- There are problem students
- There are problem Tutors/Assessors

In instances of a new course, new module, new delivery method or new Tutor/Assessor, 50% of the course/ cohort will be verified. If over 50% of the verified work is found to require changes, the full 100% will be verified.

In instances that an established course, module or Tutor is found to have more than 25% grade changes following verification, a larger sample (up to 100%) will be verified.

## **10 Internal verification records**

### **10.1 Internal verification schedule**

- a list of the units for which the assessors have responsibility
- a list of the assessors with whom the internal verifier liaises

### **10.2 Records relating to the design of assessment**

- record of comments made about the assessments
- the source of each individual question used

### **10.3 Records relating to the delivery of assessment**

- notes of meetings with assessors
- confirmation that assessment complies with the unit standards

### **10.4 Records relating to the review of the assessment**

- feedback from the external verifier, assessors and candidates
- changes made to the assessments in the light of feedback

(Forms are provided as an appendix to this procedure)

## **11 Internal verification methods**

The programme coordinator is responsible for working with his/ her department to ensure that verification can take place smoothly. In terms of the actual mechanisms used for internal verification, there are many options. These may include:



- checklists that are particularly useful when relying on observation or conducting interviews or role plays.
- model solutions and suggested answers for use when any assessment has been carried out.
- discussions about assessment; it may be necessary to discuss levels of performance for particular candidates.
- cross-assessing/ block marking; it is sometimes useful for assessors to agree standards by marking each other's work.
- a bank of assessments which have already been agreed.

## 12 Claiming certification

Certificates may only be claimed after an Assessment Board meeting. Once certification has been approved, two members of the Academic team must be present to make certification claims. One member makes the claim online whilst the other member checks the grades off on the tracking sheet.

## 13 External Verification of HND

Pearson Edexcel is the awarding body for the College's HND programmes and as such are responsible for allocating an External Examiner (EE).

- The EE helps ensure that the academic standard of each award and its component parts is set and maintained at the appropriate level, and student performance is properly judged against this standard.
- The assessment process measures student achievement appropriately against the intended outcomes of the programme, is rigorous, consistent and reliable.

The EE in also reports on:

- Whether the academic standards set for the awards, or part thereof, are appropriate.
- The extent to which the College's assessment processes are rigorous, ensure equity of treatment for students and have been fairly conducted within the organisational regulations and guidance.
- The standard of student performance in the programmes or parts of programmes for which they have been appointed to examine.

- Where appropriate, the comparability of the standards and student achievements with those in other higher education institutions (HEIs).
- Good practice they have identified.
- Prior to certification the EE will confirm grades awarded to students who meet the learning outcomes of the assessment.