



**Higher Education Framework for
Assessment
(Including code of practice)
2017-18**

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Purpose

The framework and procedures are designed to:

- Ensure that the student has a clear understanding of the assessment process
- Ensure that the student has a clear understanding of how to make an appeal
- Ensure procedural parity between all applicants making an appeal
- Protect the interests of the applicant making an appeal
- Enable College staff to manage appeals effectively

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The term assessment encompasses all forms of activity that check and validate the student's work. It may be implemented through the systems as laid down by examining or awarding organisations; or it may occur through observation of student activities, marking written work, assignment or any other form of evidence presented by a student or candidate. Any task, activity, essay or project that contributes to the students' final achievement in a vocational area, academic subject or key skill will fall within the scope of this framework.
- 1.2 Assessment is at the centre of the student's experience. It provides a means of evaluating student progress and achievement and must reflect individual student achievement. Bolton College is committed to providing fair access to assessment for all learners.
- 1.3 This framework relates to Higher Education (HE).

2. Scope

2.1 This framework applies to all Higher Education (HE) students who are studying a **Higher National BTEC** course at the College. The related procedures are relevant to these HE students and to the College staff administering them. Refer to:
<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/post-results-services.html#tab-Appeals>

2.2 For the **University of Bolton**, please refer to their Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures:
<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/studentinformation-policyzone/Student-Information-Policy-Zone-2017-18.aspx>

2.3 For the **University of West London**, please refer to their Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures:
<http://www.uwl.ac.uk/students/current-students/policies-procedures-and-regulations>

2.4 The framework recognises that different student groups will have different needs and assessment practice needs to be flexible enough to take account of this diversity.

2.5 Responsibility for the implementation of the framework lies with all staff involved in curriculum delivery, student support and assessment.

2.6 Please note that a student cannot appeal against an assessment decision under the following circumstances:

2.7 It is the College policy that a tutor may refuse to mark any assessment/assignment that is late unless the student has informed the tutor of any difficulties they are experiencing and has been granted an extension of 5 working days. If the student

does not submit the assessment/assignment within the 5 working days, then the student should submit formal Mitigating Circumstances. The tutor can refuse to mark student work that has been submitted late. If the tutor accepts student work that has been submitted late they must not downgrade work to a pass level **unless** the assessment and merit/distinction grade descriptors require evidence of:

- Meeting agreed timelines
- the ability to plan/organise time effectively
- the ability to work to industrial/commercial practices that include implicit timelines

2.7 Unless there are exceptional circumstances as to why the student could not submit Mitigating Circumstances, then the student can appeal against the assessment decision.

(Refer to the Student Academic Appeals, Regulations and Procedures document):

<https://www.boltoncollege.ac.uk/content/3/681/higher-education-key-strategies-amp-frameworks>

3. College Responsibilities

It requires active commitment from all staff – assessors, internal verifiers/ quality assurers, Heads of Area, Curriculum Leaders and any other members of the course team to ensure that:

- 3.1 Records of assessment are kept in a secure location and accessed by staff authorised to do so.
- 3.2 All activities are planned and executed in accordance with all current procedures laid down by the college and the Awarding Organisation.
- 3.3 All evidence is assessed and recorded to Awarding Organisation requirements and or guidelines.
- 3.4 Assessment is carried out by suitably qualified/experienced staff acceptable to the College and the Awarding Organisations.
- 3.5 There are identified members of staff who will assess or mark the candidates'/student's work for that particular programme.
- 3.6 Assessors attend standardisation meetings and maintain a current continuous professional development (CPD) file as required by the college and Awarding Organisation.
- 3.7 All assessors work is subject to quality assurance and monitored by the course internal verifier/quality assurer.
- 3.8 There is equality of opportunity in terms of access to assessment, appropriate diagnostic assessment and appropriate support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, or other special assessment requirements.

4. Student Responsibilities and code of practice

Students have a responsibility to support the college staff in meeting the requirements of the assessment framework. Students are required to:

- 4.1 Submit assessments/assignments on time as detailed on the assessment/assignment brief
- 4.2 Arrive for practical assessments on time and appropriately dressed/prepared
- 4.3 Attend examinations 10-15 minutes before the scheduled start of the examination
- 4.4 Prior to the deadline for completion, make their tutor aware of any reason for late submission
- 4.5 Not use any dishonest means in relation to assessed work, including plagiarising as outlined in the Framework and Procedures for Dealing with Plagiarism, Copying and Cheating
- 4.6 Students should submit assignments by the deadline given by the module tutor. If the student cannot submit on time then it is their responsibility to apply for a **5 day**

extension from the module tutor. The student should submit a **‘Mitigating Circumstances Application Form’** in order to avoid a penalty. **Students should submit a Mitigating Circumstances Application Form as soon as they realise that they cannot submit their assignment on time.**

If there are circumstances beyond the control of the student to submit an assignment, this will be taken into consideration once the student has informed their course leader and tutor.

The tutor can refuse to mark student work that has been submitted late. If the tutor accepts student work that has been submitted late they must not downgrade work to a pass level **unless** the assessment and merit/distinction grade descriptors require evidence of:

- Meeting agreed timelines
- the ability to plan/organise time effectively
- the ability to work to industrial/commercial practices that include implicit timelines

If there are circumstances beyond the control of the student to submit an assignment, this will be taken into consideration once the student has informed their course leader and tutor.

5. Information for Students

Students should be given information on how they will be assessed and their entitlement to assessment as part of their induction programme. In addition, course handbooks should include information on assessment which is specific to the programme, covering:

- 5.1 Methods of assessment to be used
- 5.2 Assessment requirements – amount and standard of work to be produced
- 5.3 Assessment criteria on which judgements will be made (including details of grading where appropriate)
- 5.4 Assessment plan/calendar/submission dates
- 5.5 Details of how quickly assessed work will be returned
- 5.6 Reference to the assessment appeals procedure (Appendix 1)
- 5.7 Knowledge of how to avoid plagiarism (see the college ‘Framework and Procedures for Dealing with Plagiarism, Copying and Cheating’)
- 5.8 The above information should be compiled with reference to assessment strategies and guidelines produced by the Awarding Organisation.

6. Assessment Planning

6.1 Assessment schedules should include:

- The timing/phasing of assessments (i.e. date/week/duration/submission date), with reference to the Programme Handbook
- The assessment conditions (home study, realistic work environment, group work etc.)
- The unit specification, syllabus reference or elements from the national standards covered
- Planned time for review, feedback and action planning
- All assignments/assessment activities should be internally quality verified/assured before issue to students, to check and confirm that they are fit for purpose.

6.2 Assignment Front sheets should include:

- Programme and level of study
- Title and number of assignment
- Submission date
- Learning outcomes to be covered (reference to syllabus/specification)

- Assessment and grading criteria
- Details of assignment task(s) and evidence to be produced
- Space for both assessor feedback and student comments

7. Feedback to Students Following Assessment

7.1 Students can expect:

- Feedback within a time limit specified by the relevant course team and within 15 working days of the scheduled submission or in some cases, for example, within 4 working weeks, as specified by an awarding body. Each course should specify when students' can expect feedback.
- Full and clear feedback on assessments/assignments with clear written guidance on what has gone well and how the student can improve
- Support and formative assessment feedback; a 'critical friend'

7.2 Feedback to students should always be recorded and should state clearly:

- The standard achieved by the student
- Which criteria/learning outcomes have been met and which have not
- Feedback should always be specific to the criteria being assessed, have constructive, developmental comments that allow for future higher attainment and highlight any incorrect spellings

8. Internal Verification/Quality Assurance Procedures

- 8.1 Each course team should have an agreed internal verification/quality assurance strategy in line with the guidelines in the college Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance Handbook. This should ensure quality and consistency of assessment across the programme team.
- 8.2 Internal verification/quality assurance strategies should also make reference to specific Awarding Organisation guidelines.
- 8.3 Strategies should ensure that internal verification/quality assurance is on-going throughout the course (not end-loaded) with times included in a course calendar, and that all assessment activities are verified before issue to learners.
- 8.4 The college Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance Handbook provides full guidance and information and can be found on the Intranet via SiD Moodle.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

Course teams will monitor and evaluate assessment practice through:

- 9.1 Internal verification/quality assurance procedures
- 9.2 External verification/quality assurance reports
- 9.3 Feedback from students via student module and end of year course surveys/evaluations
- 9.4 Student feedback at course / programme committee meetings
- 9.5 Feedback from internal quality audits
- 9.6 Student achievements and destinations

10. Monitoring of Appeals

The College reviews the number and outcomes of HE appeals and may report this to internal quality assurance forums. Monitoring reports will not contain any personally identifiable information.

11. Internal Assessments Appeals Procedure

If the student is not satisfied with any decisions of any assessed work, he or she has the right to appeal. Refer to the HE Student Academic Appeals, Regulations and Procedures.

12. Related Documents

- Student Academic Appeals Policy, Regulations and Procedures
- Framework and Procedures for Dealing with Plagiarism, Copying and Cheating
- HE Strategy
- HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy
- HE Student Handbook
- Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance Handbook

13. Extract taken from BTEC Centre Guide to Assessment: Level 4 to 7 – October 2016 pages 38-45

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Firsts/news/BTEC-Centre-Guide-to-Assessment-Levels-4-7.pdf>

Higher Nationals awarded by Higher Education Institutions under License

Individual Higher National units are graded at Pass, Merit or Distinction. Where a Licensed HEI uses percentages or literal grading they should map their unit grading system to Pass, Merit or Distinction for HNs. Typically, this would be 40% to 54% = Pass, 55% to 69% = Merit and 70% or above = Distinction.

Higher National qualifications also have an overall grade, i.e.:

- HNC or HND
- HNC or HND with Merit
- HNC or HND with Distinction

The procedure used by Licensed HE Institutions in determining the overall qualification grade should be in line with that used for other awards made by the HE Institution

Meeting deadlines

Deadlines for assessment are an important part of BTECs. Students must be encouraged to develop good time management that will stand them in good stead in the workplace. It is important that students are assessed fairly and consistently and that some students are not advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments. You are at liberty to refuse to accept work that is late for assessment but must ensure that students are made aware of the consequences of failing to meet deadlines. Learners may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness at the time of submission. It is best practice to have a clear assessment procedure for a learner to formally apply for an extension if they have genuine reasons for not meeting a deadline. If an extension is granted, the new deadline must be recorded and adhered to.

Key principles

You can refuse to mark student work that has been submitted late if this is part of your centre's code of practice.

If you accept student work that has been submitted late you must not downgrade work to a pass level **unless** the assessment and merit/distinction grade descriptors require evidence of:

- Meeting agreed timelines
- the ability to plan/organise time effectively
- the ability to work to industrial/commercial practices that include implicit timelines

The generic grading descriptors published in each BTEC Higher National specification can also be used to devise contextualised merit and distinction grading criteria that require evidence of meeting time-related activities, for example:

Merit Descriptor	Indicative Characteristic	Distinction Descriptor	Indicative Characteristic
Identify and apply strategies to find appropriate solutions	An effective approach to study has been applied	Take responsibility for managing and organising activities	Substantial activities, projects or investigations have been planned, managed and organised

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