Assessment & Internal Verification Policy

August 2015

BTEC HND

Version 1.0

LONDON WATERLOO ACADEMY

BTEC HND
Assessment & IV Policy

Higher Education Assessment Policy

Introduction

This policy is based on complying with the requirements of Pearson BTEC and the QAA Quality Code in every respect. It is intended to formalise the approach which the Academy takes to its own assessment of students, in order to ensure that there is parity of treatment for all its higher education students, whichever awarding body validates and quality assures their qualification.

1   Purpose

1.1   To provide assessment regulations for assessment on the BTEC HND Business programmes and clarify marking of resubmitted and referred student work.

1.2   To adhere to the requirements of delivery and assessment as required by BTEC (Pearson/Edexcel) and operate within the guidelines as published.

2   Background

2.1   BTEC provides only limited specific guidance concerning a number of issues related to student assessed work. For example, it is not clear how London Waterloo Academy should deal with students who submit assessed work after the published deadline and how to grade student work that has been resubmitted after referral. Pearson devolves these matters to their approved centres. These regulations aim to fulfill the requirements of Pearson and offer clarity in terms of LWA'S own practices, in order to operate effective Assessment Boards and to ensure parity and fairness of treatment of students.

3   QAA Quality Code

3.1   The QAA Quality Code, Chapter B6: Assessment of students and the recognition of prior learning sets out the following Expectation about the assessment of students which higher education providers are required to meet:

Higher education providers operate equitable, valid and reliable processes of assessment, including the recognition of prior learning, which enable every student to demonstrate the extent to which they have achieved the intended learning outcomes for the credit or qualification sought.

The requirement is for higher education providers to be fair and equitable in their treatment of students for all aspects of the assessment process, including late submission of work and submission of referred work.

3.2   The Expectation for Chapter B6 is guided by eighteen Indicators of sound practice. They key ones in relation to our concerns here are:

Indicator 16: Boards of Examiners/assessment panels apply fairly and consistently regulations for progression within, and transfer between, programmes and for the award of credits and qualifications.

Indicator 17: The decisions of examination boards and assessment panels are recorded accurately and communicated to students promptly and in accordance with stated timescales.

The assessment regulations detailed below are intended to provide LWA with a sound and fair approach to the assessment of students and meet both the requirements of the QAA Quality Code and Pearson.

4   BTEC Centre Guide to Assessment: Level 4 to 7

4.1 The BTEC Centre Guidance to Assessment: Level 4 to 7, Issue 4 December 2013 offers centres guidance concerning assessment regulations. With respect to students meeting deadlines for submitting assessments the following guidance is offered:

Deadlines 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 work that is late for assessment but must ensure that students are made aware of the consequences of failing to meet deadlines. (Page 40)

The assessment regulations detailed below are intended to be consistent with this guidance.

4.2   With respect to resubmissions BTEC offers the following guidance:

Providing initial deadlines have been met, a student may be given the opportunity to retake a completed assessment after a summative grade has been given. Your centre will need to provide a specific assessment opportunity that is authorised by the Programme Leader.

The assessment regulations detailed below allow for a student to resubmit an assessment that was handed in to deadline in order to improve their grade from either pass to merit or distinction or from merit to distinction. Students who have not handed in their work to the required deadline cannot avail themselves of this opportunity.

5   Assessment policy & regulations

I.   All students will be treated fairly and equitably with respect to all aspects of the assessment process.

II.   LWA College will publish and inform students of deadlines by which they are to hand in their assessments; both initial submission dates and resubmission dates will be made available for each unit.

III.   All student groups will be informed of their assignment submission dates at the start of the first term of the academic year. This calendar will be drawn up with careful attention to the even spread of assignment dates through the academic year so as not to unduly burden students at any particular time of the year

IV.   For Pearson approved and validated programmes, all assessment will follow as laid down in the awarding body guidelines. LWA follows the Pearson programme specifications and is aligned to suit sector market needs and the delivery of modules cannot be changed without agreement of Pearson, students and the Director of Studies. All assignment grades are provisional until ratified by the Assessment Committee and will be presented as such when feedback is given to students

V.   Student inductions will include an introduction to assessment and the methods for

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assessment to be used during the course of their studies and will be supplemented with study skills and technique sessions through the year to give all students the best possible chance of succeeding on their chosen programme of study

VI.   New staff will be given appropriate training and support as part of their induction to assessing at higher education level, which may include further training at the college depending on the requirements of the partner institution. In their first term, their mentor will ensure that their marking is discussed with them on an ongoing basis and that examples from other members of the team are shared with them.

6   Referrals

I.   A student who has had their assessed work referred from the first submission and is again referred following resubmission will be required to resubmit missing learning outcomes in order to pass the unit, and will only progress to the second year following an academic assessment by the Principal. The decision over a further resubmission is at the recommendation of the Assessment Board, and will only occur after assessment of the student's ability to progress to second year. Where 'referral' has occurred due to minor omissions, and in instances where students are allowed to further re-submit a fee of £25:00 will be incurred for each unit.

7   Assessment Board / Committee

I.   The composition of the Assessment Board / Committee (sub-committee of the Academic Board is set out in the committee handbook, and shall include all except the student representative. Only the Assessment Committee has the authority to consider claims of extenuating circumstances, on production of appropriate evidence from the student concerned.

II.   The Assessment Board / Committee, team meetings, standardisation sessions and the moderation process will be used to ensure that there is consistency of practice with regard to assessment across the faculty.

III.   Students are expected and encouraged to submit their work suitably presented, including due regard to correct spelling and grammar, so as to foster the skills which they will need to succeed in employment.

IV.   All practical work and presentations which are considered to be part of a final grade will be recorded or assessed by members of staff so as to enable moderation to take place and as evidence in the event of an appeal.

8   Assessed Coursework

I.   Copies of all assignments and examinations issued to students which form part of their final award will be lodged securely with the Head of Administration.

II.   Assessed work (or recorded evidence thereof) and feedback will be kept by the College for the duration of a student's year of study and until the Assessment Committee has considered awarding of their qualification

III.   The designated course tutor will ensure that all work is marked and moderated in advance of the Assessment Committee / Board, that marks are available in an appropriate format for the awarding body and that a constructive dialogue is maintained throughout the year with the External Verifier / Examiner.

9 Non-submission of coursework

I. A student who does not submit coursework at the first published deadline for that particular piece of coursework or assignment is permitted to submit the coursework for the second published deadline; this carries a fee of £50.00.

II. A student who does not submit coursework by the first published deadline and submits course work by the second published deadline (carrying a fee of £50.00) but has their coursework referred will be allowed a resubmission of their referred coursework under the normal conditions of re-submission (this carries no fee). If the resubmitted coursework is again referred, and 'referral' has occurred due to minor omissions, the student will be allowed to resubmit. In instances where students are allowed to further re-submit for a second time a fee of £25.00 will be incurred for each unit. In instances where referred work is again referred academic progression into the second year will be assessed.

III. Progression from the first year of study to the second year of study will require an academic judgment of a student's abilities as recognized through their grade profile. Students carrying referrals will be allowed to resubmit, either from the first semester to the second semester as normal, or from the second semester to a published date before the start of the second year. Students will normally be required to be carrying at least six submissions from the first year to the second year, unless there are extenuating circumstances to be taken into account. Each student will be considered for progression at the end-of-year Assessment Board for their particular cohort.

10 Assessment Strategy and Schedule

I. The overall assessment strategy and schedule shall be agreed within each **Programme Team** at the start of the academic year. The Heads of Department shall prepare the Assessment Schedule using the approved format and make this available to students and Programme Team members via email. If any changes are required to take account of unforeseen circumstances or to better balance the assessment load for students, the schedule should be amended in a timely manner and reissued.

11 Module Packs

I. Module Leaders shall prepare Module Packs and issue them to students in hard copy at the start of each module and also submit them to their respective Programme Manager for uploading to the electronic Course Files. The Module Packs shall be prepared in the approved format and include information on assessment titles, modes and submission dates.

12 Assessment Briefings

Module Leaders shall prepare detailed Assessment Briefings for all coursework assessments, which shall include assessed learning outcomes, assessed student activities, references and a marking scheme. The Briefings shall be prepared using the approved format and be Internally Verified before issue to students. Module Leaders shall also provide a verbal introduction and explanation to each coursework assessment and provide guidance through taught sessions and individual tutorials as needed.

II. All assignment briefs and examinations which form part of a student's final award, will be internally verified by the IV team before being issued to students and a record kept to confirm that this took place

III.   All assignment briefs will be written in clear and concise language and will include as a minimum:
IV.   Details of title(s) of programme/module.
V.   The learning outcomes which the student is expected to evidence in their work.
VI.   Assessment criteria and weighting (where applicable).
VII.   Hand-out date.
VIII.   The deadline for submission.
IX.   The deadline for feedback to the students within no more than two working weeks.
X.   Name of unit/module tutor.
XI.   Internal verifier name.
XII.   A statement on plagiarism that is signed by students on submission or submitted through Turnitin.
XIII.   The teaching team will endeavour to use a wide variety of assessment methods on each programme so as not to disadvantage a range of students with different learning styles and will make every reasonable adjustment for those with disabilities whilst maintaining academic standards.
XIV.   Assignment briefs will be made available to the universities and awarding bodies if requested in order to engage in a constructive and supportive dialogue thereon for further development .

13   Internal Verification of Assessment Briefs

I.   The Internal Verifier shall verify all assessment briefs submitted by Module Leaders in a timely manner, prior to issue to students. Their decisions, comments and recommended actions shall be fed back to the Module Leader and recorded in the approved format. The Internal Verifier will maintain a file of all documentation relating to this process and make it available to the Programme Manager (if different) or External Examiner.

14   Internal Verification of Assessed Work

I.   A representative sample of each coursework assessment and examination scripts shall be verified after marking and grading to ensure appropriateness and consistency of both assessment and, in the case of coursework, feedback. The sample will normally consist of the top, middle and bottom graded assessments, together with any borderlines or fails. A larger sample shall be taken for cohorts in excess of 12 students. All decisions, comments and recommended actions will be fed back to the Module Leader, recorded in the approved format and retained in the Internal Verification file.
II.   Internal Verification shall not normally necessitate the second marking of coursework assessments or examination scripts, however, there are situations where this shall be the advisable course of action, for example:

1. If a Module Leader is new to HE assessment and requires more detailed guidance and feedback
2. If coursework assessment or examination script is a borderline pass/fail
3. If a coursework assessment or script cannot be readily marked due to content or presentation

III.   A sample of all marked assignments will be internally moderated in accordance with the Pearson BTEC awarding body policy. A moderation grid will be maintained as a record of this activity.

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15 Submission of Coursework

I. All coursework shall be submitted by 4.00pm on the date specified on the Assessment Brief. No individual extensions to submission times or dates can be agreed by Module Leaders unless the Extenuating Circumstances procedures have been followed. Group-wide extensions may be agreed, for example, if weather delayed a practical assessment. However, this must be done with the agreement of the Programme Manager and the assessment brief re-verified and re-issued to all affected students.

II. All coursework shall be submitted to the Director of Studies. It shall be accompanied by the Assessment Brief with the student evaluation section completed and a completed submission sheet. The Director of Studies will sign off the submission sheet and return the duplicate copy to the student for their records. The top copy will be attached to the coursework. The Curriculum Administrators will log all submitted coursework before passing it to the relevant Module Leader for marking.

III. Submission of work by students will be recorded and dated to avoid potential uncertainty. This will normally be in the form of an email submission and an assignment receipt.

IV. Students must submit their work as stated in the format in their student handbooks or as required by the assignment brief.

16 Re-Submission of Coursework

I. Students who achieve a pass or merit grade for the assessment upon first submission and have met the deadline may resubmit their assessment in an attempt to achieve a higher grade. Students may only resubmit once per unit for this opportunity to enhance their initial grade. This is subject to a charge of £50 to cover additional marking.

II. The Assessment Board will record decisions, on a broadsheet, for each individual student and these decisions are communicated to the student following a meeting of the Assessment Board.

17 Late Submission

I. Students who are unable to meet published deadlines for handing in assessed work may use the College's Extenuating Circumstances Policy and procedure to request an extension to a deadline. This will be recorded within grade records as 'EC'.

II. If a student has not had their request approved for an extension to a deadline, made through the Extenuating Circumstances Policy, then the assessment will be regarded as a non-submission; this is recorded as 'N'.

III. Students who wish to hand in an assessment after the deadline, and have not had an extension to the deadline approved using the Extenuating Circumstances Policy will have the opportunity to submit their work, subject to payment of a fee of £50, and will receive the grade accorded.

IV. It is the responsibility of the student to request an extension to a deadline using the Extenuating Circumstances Policy in advance of the date of the deadline.

V. A student may only be granted an extension to a deadline through using the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and procedure..

VI. A student who fails to hand their work in to a published deadline may submit their work late up until the next deadline published by the College. A student will only be allowed to make further submissions after the second deadline after an academic assessment of their potential by the Principal or the Head of Higher Education before progression to the second year. Students with a poor academic performance

will be required to leave the course if this assessment results in non-progression, and the student will be withdrawn from the programme and de-registered with Pearson and the Student Loan Company (SLC). The decision over a second or further resubmission is at the recommendation of the Assessment Board, and will only occur after assessment of the student's ability to progress to the second year.

VII. Work that is handed in on time or handed in to an approved extended deadline (through the Extenuating Circumstance Policy) and receives a 'referred' grade will have the opportunity to resubmit their work addressing the learning objectives that had not been met. Resubmitted referred work will be marked and the student may achieve the full range of grades, including pass, merit and distinction.

VIII. Where work is submitted late without evidence of extenuating circumstances, the regulations of the awarding body will take priority in consideration of whether the work can be assessed and, if necessary, the final decision will rest with the Assessment Committee. The ability to meet a deadline is an important part of preparing students for employment and the consequences of late submission of work must be made clear to students. Learners may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons such as illness and they must complete the concessionary paperwork that is available from the registrar or course tutor.

18 Marking and Grading

I. The Module Leader shall mark all coursework assessments in accordance with the Assessment Brief and specified marking scheme, leading to the award of an overall percentage grading. The Module Leader shall also mark any examination scripts associated with their module.

II. In the case of coursework assessments, the Module Leader shall complete the feedback sheet identifying strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement, as well as allocating marks and final grades. Module Leaders will support this feedback with appropriate in-text annotations. In relation to examinations, Module Leaders shall complete the mark sheets and annotate the scripts as appropriate.

III. Coursework that is submitted after the specified submission time and date shall be marked and feedback shall be given. However, the grade will be recorded as zero unless the Extenuating Circumstances procedures have been followed. Where coursework is not submitted or examinations are not sat, then a zero grade will also be applied.

IV. All assignment grades are provisional until ratified by the Assessment Committee and will be presented as such when feedback is given to students.

V. In order to achieve any higher education qualification, a student must achieve every learning outcome. Only the Assessment Committee in exceptional circumstances, has the authority to consider waiving of this.

VI. No student shall be permitted to trail credits which would jeopardise their chances of achieving their full award. The final decision as to this lies with the Assessment Committee but will not exceed a maximum of 30 credits in any one year.

VII. **Pearson programmes only:** merit and distinction criteria relating to meeting agreed timelines will be added to every unit/assignment brief. Therefore, a late submission will result in a maximum grade of pass. Tutors can refuse to mark student work that has been submitted late (more than 4 weeks after the submission deadline). If this happens students will be asked to resubmit work, but for a different assignment brief that will not contain merit and distinction criteria. If a student meets the initial deadline, and has taken part in formative assessment, and does not achieve the learning outcomes, a re-submission assignment brief will be provided to give a further assessment opportunity, with no Merit or Distinction grading criteria. The student must not have further guidance and support in producing further evidence. The re-submission could be under different conditions, for example, as a timed classwork. Any original submitted work will remain valid and the re-submission work

will replace learning outcomes that were not achieved.

19   Feedback to Students

   I.   Assessed and Internally Verified coursework assessments shall be returned to students within 20 working days of the submission date. This is the College's standard timescale. Adherence shall be monitored and recorded through the Internal Verification process and any deviation from the timescale shall be explained and communicated to the affected students.
   II.   Written feedback on coursework assessments shall be accompanied by oral feedback on either a group or individual basis, ensuring that opportunities to improve are fully explained, understood and taken on board in subsequent submissions.
   III.   Examination scripts and associated written annotations are not normally returned to students. However, Module Leaders shall provide oral feedback on request, for example, in the event that a student is required to resit an examination.
   IV.   It is good practice to identify spelling and grammar errors in formative feedback and expect students to correct this in summative feedback. Any students showing particular concern could be referred to the Head of English Language and the group profile used to check whether specific support is required and whether it is in place
   V.   All students should have the opportunity for at least one formative assessment during an assignment and this should be timetabled into the scheme of work. It is important not to create an advantageous situation for one student and usually, more than one formal, formative feedback is not necessary. Formative assessment involves the assessor and student/s and takes place prior to summative assessment.
   VI.   Following both formative and summative assessment, students are not able to re-submit work to achieve a higher grade. Any further opportunities to improve grades must be made available to all students and in agreement with the awarding body, and/or external examiner.

20   Appeal against Grading

   I.   If a student considers that their coursework assessment has not been marked and graded in accordance with the College's Assessment Policy, then they may lodge an appeal. This shall follow the College's internal process for appeals, which is as follows:
   II.   Any learner shall be entitled to appeal when he/she feels that an assessment (marking) of work submitted as part of a programme is unfair. This may be regarding:
      a.   Access to assessment
      b.   Method of assessment
      c.   Assessment decision
   III.   In the first instance both parties (the learner and the assessor) shall make every effort to resolve the grievance informally. If the matter cannot be resolved then the following formal steps must be taken:
   IV.   The learner shall appeal directly to the assessor concerned setting out clearly the nature of their disagreement using the learner appeals form available from the Programme Manager.
   V.   If agreement cannot be reached then the relevant Internal Verifier will be asked to consider both parties views and make an appropriate decision.
   VI.   If a decision still cannot be reached, the Principal is to be approached to resolve the issue. The Principal's decision in this matter is final.
   VII.   A student may appeal against a decision taken by the Assessment Board using the academic appeals procedure, which is available through their tutors.
   VIII.   No appeal is permitted which challenges the academic judgment of a member of staff.

21   Arrangements for Students with Learning and other Disabilities

1. To ensure that the approach to assessment is as inclusive as possible, a variety of assessment methods and processes will be adopted in order to accommodate different learning styles and capabilities including:

- Lectures
- Academic tutorials
- Field work
- Laboratory work
- Site visits
- Directed independent study
- Learning from work experience
- Case studies
- Independent research projects
- Problem-solving exercises
- Group tasks, activities and debates

II. Where necessary, adaptations and time allowances will be made for students with assessed learning or physical disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

22   Extenuating Circumstances

I.   Where students have experienced ill health or other circumstances, which have or are affecting their ability to complete work on time or to their normal academic standard, they may be eligible to apply for Extenuating Circumstances. All Programme Managers, with assistance from Personal Tutors and other Student Support Staff, shall keep themselves up to date with regard to any issues that are putting their students at risk of non-completion or non-achievement and ensure that they are given the opportunity to apply.

II.   Where such circumstances apply, Programme Managers shall assist the affected students with completing the standard appeals form and collating the required corroborating evidence. The Principal, Director of Studies and Programme Managers, shall then meet to discuss the application. Their decision shall be communicated to the student within five working days..

23   External Verifier (Evaluator)

I.   The External Verifier will be invited annually to review claims. He will appraise and ensure compliance of Levels, appropriateness of standards, tasks, written brief and links to outcomes.

II.   All assessed work, which leads to a final HE award must be referred to and reviewed by an External Verifier appointed by Pearson BTEC. The roles and responsibilities of the EV are defined by Pearson BTEC.

III. The External Verifier must review a sample of assessed work from all modules of all HE programmes. The respective HE Programme Managers shall contact their External Verifier at the start of the academic year to determine what sample is required and thereafter ensure that assessed and Internally Verified work is collated and provided to them in a timely manner.

IV.   As part of the review, the Programme Managers shall make arrangements for their respective External Verifier s to make an Interim Visit to the College to discuss assessment procedures and experience with Programme Teams and students.

V.   The outcomes of the External Verifiers' reviews will be reported verbally to the and in writing to the College and shall be taken into account in the Annual Programme Monitoring Process.

VI. External Verifier s shall not be required to undertake second marking of coursework assessments or examination scripts and shall not modify the marks of individual students. However, they may revise whole module marks up or down if they consider that under or over marking has taken place.

24. Plagiarism

I. All suspected cases of plagiarism will be considered, in the first instance, at the Assessment Committee, which will meet no less than twice termly to review ongoing compliance with the Assessment Policy, with additional meetings to consider cases of plagiarism as the need arises. The Board will be chaired by the Principal and attended by the Heads of Department. and those tutors necessary for consideration of cases of suspected plagiarism. Thereafter, the regulations of the relevant awarding body will be implemented.

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Review date: December 2016

QA Annual Review Action to be taken	Time Frame for Action	Person(s)Responsible
3.0 *Assessment Strategy and Schedule*	Yearly	Director of Studies
3.1 The overall assessment strategy and schedule shall be agreed within each **Programme Team** at the start of the academic year.	Yearly	Director of Studies Heads of Department
The Heads of Department shall prepare the Assessment Schedule using the approved format and make this available to students and Programme Team members via email	Termly	Heads of Department Teachers
4.0 *Module Packs*	Yearly	Head of Dept
4.1 Module Leaders shall prepare Module Packs and issue them to students in hard copy at the start of each module and also submit them to their respective Programme Manager for uploading to the electronic Course Files.	Termly	Module Leader
5.0 *Assessment Briefings*	Termly / session	Tutors
5.1 Module Leaders shall prepare detailed Assessment Briefings for all coursework assessments		Module Leader
Module Leaders shall provide a verbal introduction and explanation to each coursework assessment and provide guidance through taught sessions and individual tutorials as needed.	Termly / session	Module Leader
5.2 Internal Verification of Assessment Briefs	Termly / session	IV Team
5.3 The Internal Verifier shall verify all assessment briefs submitted by Module Leaders	Termly / session	Internal Verifier
6.0 *Submission of Coursework*	Termly / session	
Ensure that all coursework has been submitted by the time and on the date specified on the Assessment Brief.	Termly / session	Director of Studies
7.0 *Marking and Grading*	Termly	Tutors
7.1 The Module Leader shall mark all coursework assessments and complete feedback	Termly / session	Module Leader
8.0 *Internal Verification of Assessed Work*	Termly	IV Team
8.1 A representative sample of each coursework assessment and examination scripts shall be verified after marking and grading	Termly / session	Internal Verifies
9.0 *Feedback to Students*	Termly / tutorial	Tutors
Written feedback on coursework assessments and oral feedback given	Termly	Tutors
10.0 *Appeal against Grading*	Yearly	Assessment Committee
11.0 Ensure arrangements in place for Students with Learning and other Disabilities	Termly	Student Welfare

DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX		
Policy / Procedure title:	Assessment and Internal Verification Policy	
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