

HIGHER EDUCATION ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Related Documents: HE Academic Offences Procedure, Complaints Procedure for HE Students

Higher Education (HE) Assessment Policy

All students are entitled to:

- be involved in the assessment of their work
- know the timings of assessments at the beginning of the academic year
- know the criteria against which they will be assessed
- know the methods by which they will be assessed
- know the level of their performance in relation to the grades and standards of their course
- know the Target Grade (TG) at which they should be working
- assessments carried out in fair and equitable ways
- the right of appeal against any outcome of assessment or against the process provided the appeal falls within the awarding body criteria
- formative assessment that should be provided before any summative assessment is made and with such timeliness to ensure the student has an opportunity to use this formative assessment to improve

Assessment of work

The College will ensure that assessment:

- is inclusive and individualised
- is fair and accurate
- is designed to develop students' independent learning
- meets the requirements of the relevant College policies and: The UK Quality Code Chapter B6: *Assessment of Students and Recognition of Prior Learning* and, where appropriate,
 - Pearson regulations relating to assessment and Edexcel BTEC HNC/D regulations
 - relevant partner university requirements

The assessment criteria and how these will be applied will be made known to the candidates to make themselves familiar with the assessment criteria prior to submission for assessment. The criteria for achieving must be included in the assignment brief. Such criteria will be published by the awarding organisations (AO's). Where AO's regulations appear to conflict with this policy the AO regulations will take precedence. Students on Birmingham City University's Diploma in Education and Training, delivered by the College for example, will be assessed under BCU regulations.

Action to be taken where there is non-completion or unsuccessful completion of units or assessments is subject to the awarding body requirements.

For Pearson Qualifications

Meeting Assessment Deadlines and Mitigating Circumstances

Students need to be aware of the importance of meeting assessment deadlines. The Programme Handbook will state the importance of meeting all deadlines. Where a deadline is not met, except in mitigating circumstances, the work will be regarded as a non-submission and that work will not be included in the assessment decision. This may lead to a student failing to achieve the minimum required Pass for that unit.

Students may be given authorised extensions for legitimate reasons, such as illness, at the time of submission or via an '*Application for an extension due to mitigating circumstances*' identified in the Programme Handbook. All students will be assessed according to the same conditions and teams will ensure that some are not advantaged by having additional time or opportunity to learn from others. Granting of extensions and missed deadlines of individual students will be monitored by Assessment Panels.

Resubmission

In the case of Pearson qualifications one re-submission is submitted if a unit a student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment.

Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted

Reassessment for course work, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original task.

For examinations, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task.

A student who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a Pass for that unit.

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.

Repeat Units

The following applies to a student who, for the first assessment opportunity and resubmission opportunity, still failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification:

At the College's discretion and Assessment Panel decision, students can be permitted to repeat a unit.

The student must study the unit again with full attendance and (if required) payment of the unit fee.

The overall unit grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit.

Units can only be repeated once. The External Examiner is likely to want to include assessments that have been re-submitted as part of the sample they will review

Assessment Appeals

The only grounds on which an appeal may be based are as follows:

- I. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the student which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of
- II. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative errors)
- III. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment
- IV. There is evidence of assessment malpractice

If a student believes that they have grounds for appeal in relation to assessment of his/her work, s/he may appeal using the procedure identified in the *Higher Education Academic Appeals Policy*.

Inclusive Learning

To support and promote inclusive learning assessments may need to be reasonable adjusted to take account of an individual's needs, such as a learning difficulty or disability.

Adjustments made should be in line with recommendations made in the student's Individual Learning Support Plan and guidance from the HE Keyworker. Such adjustments should ensure that valid judgements can still be made of the skills of students against the relevant grading criteria. Assistive technologies may be appropriate to aid with such adjustments.

Teachers will keep records of any adjustments made to provide evidence for awarding organisations that this is 'normal practice' for that student. Without this evidence it may not be possible to provide later adjustments

in controlled assessments or examinations. Teachers should also be aware of the rules for adjustments defined by awarding bodies.

Vocational Assessments

Good vocational learning is vocationally-based, active, motivational and progressive. It will be closely linked to assessment; allowing development of skills, knowledge and attributes that will enable the learner to complete assessments. From the start, it is important to consider the most effective way of delivering and assessing a unit or assignment. Learning strategies may include:

- project work carried out as an individual or as part of a group
- work-based learning
- lectures and seminars
- facilitated activities
- visits to companies with a facilitator to structure the visit
- visiting speakers from the vocational sector.

Vocational assessments must reflect the nature of the skills that have been taught and must be an appropriate method to assess those skills. Much of the assessment of a student's vocational skills will therefore be based on their practical ability.

The purpose of vocational assessment is to deliver valid, reliable, fair, and manageable assessment. The assessment programme must be designed so that skills and knowledge can be developed in line with the assessment criteria. There is a range of assessment methods that can be utilised, such as:

- presentations, written reports, accounts, surveys
- log books, production diaries
- role play
- observations of practical tasks or performance
- articles for journals, press releases
- production of visual or audio materials, artefacts, products and specimens
- peer and self-assessment.

Curriculum Leaders must ensure that a range of appropriate assessment methods are used across a programme. Curriculum Leaders and subject teachers should refer to the awarding body's assessment guidelines for details of appropriate assessments.

Feedback for vocational assignments where formally contributing to a unit grade, whether this is an assignment that makes a partial contribution or one that covers the whole unit, will be recorded on a standard feedback template. The templates used will be those provided by the awarding body.

Assessments will be verified/ moderated in accordance with the procedures set out by the relevant awarding body.

Internal Verification/Moderation

Assessments will require verification/moderation. Such activity must be carried out in line with the appropriate awarding body's requirements. The Curriculum Leader should monitor these activities to ensure that:

- Assessments are fair and accurate
- Assessments decisions are made against the relevant criteria
- Feedback identifies why an assessment decision has been made and what the learner can do to improve
- Compliance with the awarding body's requirements
- All teachers and a range of students' assessments are scrutinised
- Any actions arising from these activities are completed

The verification/moderation documentation completed should be that provided by the awarding body.

Assessment Panels will scrutinise assessments every term to monitor assessments and verification across an HE programme. Membership of Assessment Panels will be:

HE Coordinator (Chair), Director of Studies, Curriculum Leader, Minute taker

Invited attendees will include curriculum team members including the Programme Leader who are expected to attend, the External Examiner (EE) (who may not necessarily attend but must be invited), Assistant Principal (Learning and Standards)

The agenda for each Assessment Panel will be:

- Non-continuation rates
- Progression of students from year one to year two

- Outcomes of any student disciplinary
- Complaints
- Academic Appeals
- Module/Unit Review
- Update on actions taken following EE Report
- Consideration of marks
- Non-submissions and extensions
- Re-submissions and repeat units
- Defer/Refer deadline dates

Assessment Panels will meet at the end of each year of the programme to consider the EE report and reflect on the progress and achievement of each student on the programme and assessments and verification across the year. During the initial QAA 4-year monitoring period Assessment Panels will meet each term to ensure close monitoring of assessment across the programmes.

Enrolment for students on subsequent years of study are dependent upon the regulations for each award as determined by the awarding body and subject to successful completion of assessments.

For Pearson Higher Nationals grades for individual units are awarded at the annual Assessment Panel and submitted to Pearson on completion of the award for calculation of the final grade and certification.

Students have to meet the assessment criteria to pass a unit. Where a student has not submitted work or the work submitted has not met the assessment criteria to pass, the student will be given one referral opportunity to submit further work in order to meet the assessment criteria. Repeat units are possible. See above.

Minutes from Assessment Panels will be submitted to the SLT and the HE Committee.

Marking and Feedback

Teachers must keep a record of what has been set for assessment and that it has been completed.

There must be clear feedback when work is returned. For simple assessments such as class tests or quizzes this may simply be a checking of work. For more significant assessments this must be written and be

advisory in nature. The feedback must indicate what has been done well, with reference to grading criteria if appropriate, and what should be done to improve. On some vocational courses this feedback may be around the development of knowledge, understanding and skills, on the criteria the student achieved and on the criteria not achieved, and why.

Marking and feedback should provide encouragement to students whilst retaining a sense of realism; the emphasis should be on positive achievement.

Not all work needs to be marked in the same way and a mix of marking methods is likely to be used on any one programme. It would be inappropriate to have only one type of marking and Curriculum Leaders should ensure there is a range of types used with an emphasis towards the advisory style marking.

Assessed work will be returned to students with meaningful feedback within ten working days and this assessed work will have been internally verified/moderated within this time, if required.

Any assessment decisions will clearly state that the decisions are 'subject to external verification'.

Students will be made aware that all grades are provisional until they are ratified by the Assessment Panel and External Verification by the External Examiner.

If the authenticity of a piece of work is in doubt the assessor will follow the procedures set out in the College's Academic Offences Policy.

External Examiners

Awarding Bodies are responsible for the appointment of External Examiners (EE).

The QAA requires HE providers to manage the assessment standardisation and verification process, including the procedure for dealing with External Examiner (EE) recommendations.

EE recommendations will be included in the self-evaluation document (SED) of each programme and the College SED to inform enhancement.

Assessment Panels will meet scrutinise EE reports and will identify actions for improvements where required.

Outcomes of EE reports will be reported to the HE Committee for consideration and monitoring.

Summative Assessment Submission

Where practical and appropriate students are required to submit work electronically through *Turnitin* via *JCC Connect*. This is the College's plagiarism checking software.

Submission of work will follow the process outlined in Appendix One. Where this is not possible, for example, live performance, the curriculum team will ensure any assessed work follows the requirements of the awarding body.

All work set is expected to be completed by students within the time limits set in the assessment plans except in extenuating circumstances. In such cases the procedures laid down by the awarding body must be followed.

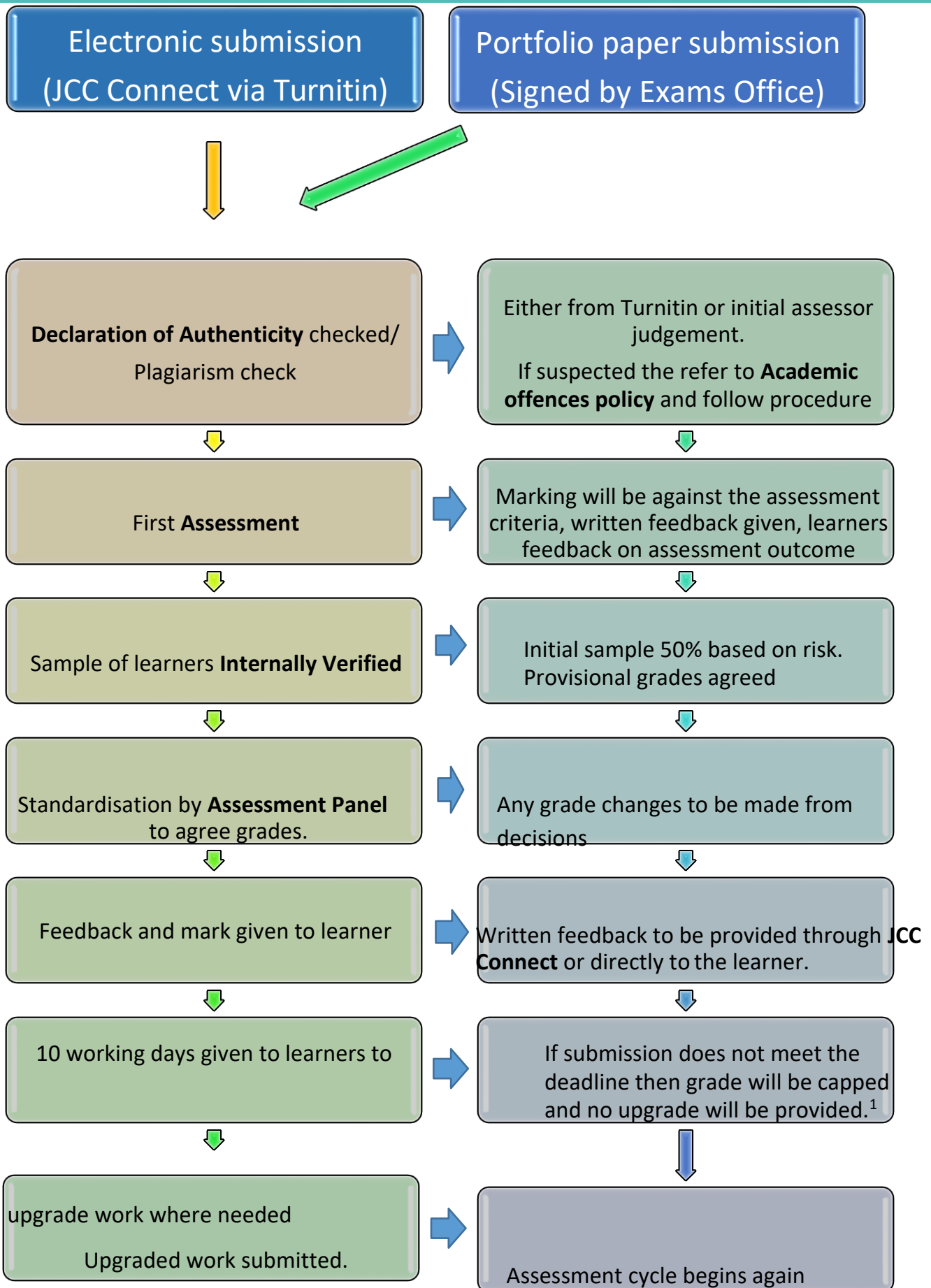
Record keeping

Curriculum teams should have records to show how each student they teach is progressing. Where assessments are part of the formal assessment calendar these will be recorded.

Curriculum teams should have an overview of the progress of students on programmes.

All Curriculum Leaders will review their area and ensure all records are up to date at least every 6 weeks.

JCC HE Submission of Assessment flow chart



1. If the unit is not achieved, follow Pearson guidance to retake the unit, upon recommendation of assessment panel