



# **London College of Business Studies**

## **Academic Assessment and Internal Verification Policy**

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# Academic Assessment and Internal Verification Policy

## General Principles

Appropriate assessment at London College of Business Studies will be accessible to all learners; it will support their learning and encourage their success. The integrity and consistency of assessment processes and practices are essential in order that learners' qualifications are valued by the learners themselves, employers, other educational institutions, the public and other interested parties. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Quality Assurance Policy.

### 1. The Learners' Experience of Assessment

- 1.1 Initial assessment will form an accurate basis for identifying an appropriate programme of study, or additional study to address individual student needs.
- 1.2 Assessment tasks will be clearly presented to learners so that they may undertake them with confidence.
- 1.3 Learners are able to benefit from feedback that will clearly inform them of how they are performing and how they might develop further, including in their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- 1.4 Progress will be monitored and reported promptly and regularly to learners and to those with a legitimate interest such as employers, sponsors and parents.

### 2 The Management of Assessment

- 2.1 All aspects of the assessment process will comply with the requirements of the awarding bodies/organisations for which the college has approval.
- 2.2 All entries for external assessment will be correct in terms of units and subjects and will be made within the required deadlines, as set out by the awarding bodies/organisations.
- 2.3 The types and levels of assessment used will be suitable for the learners, the programmes followed and in line with awarding body/organisation requirements.
- 2.4 Assessment will be fair and accurate.
- 2.5 Assessment will be planned and scheduled so that it is manageable and coherent. The assessment plan will be kept and maintained by the Academic Department.
- 2.6 Achievement towards learning goals will be recorded and accredited (where appropriate).
- 2.7 Programme/course teams will review assessment outcomes in order to inform development.
- 2.8 The hand-in and referral procedures for learner work will be specified for each programme type and will be published in the programme/course handbook. In exceptional circumstances, an extension to the hand-in date may be granted providing

the appropriate procedures be followed. Such agreements should be reflected through the appropriate mediums.

- 2.9 Quality Assurance of assessment will ensure compliance with the above principles.
- 2.10 Assignments will be marked and returned within a reasonable period, usually from two weeks from the date of submission, unless notified in advance by the Academic Team.
- 2.11 There will be appropriate arrangements for the storage of assessment material, according to awarding body/organisation requirements.
- 2.12 Where appropriate, a record of assessment and feedback discussion may be included in the learner's individual learning plan (ILP)

### **3 Quality Assurance of Assessment**

- 3.1 The College will meet the quality assurance requirements of each awarding body/organisation.
- 3.2 There will be appropriate systems of internal verification and standardisation that are monitored to ensure their effectiveness.
- 3.3 The College will monitor and act upon recommendations from EV and EM reports.
- 3.4 Assessment processes will be subject to the College's Plagiarism Policy.
- 3.5 Learner appeals on assessment shall conform to the procedures of the college or awarding body/organisation as applicable.
- 3.6 Staff development should support high quality assessment processes.
- 3.7 The College will commit to ensuring the dissemination of good practice in assessment and verification throughout the organisation.
- 3.8 Performance reviews will evaluate assessment issues and agree an action plan.

### **4 Assessment Principles and Procedure**

Below are the principles and procedures applied to all college assessments.

#### **4.1 Assessment Principles**

All assessments will be carried out according to the following principles:

- 4.1 **Fairness** – assessment requirements and criteria will be published in a form easily understood by the learner. Clear, written feedback to the learner will be provided on all main assessments completed. Learners will have the right to request a review of the assessment procedure and to appeal against any procedural errors in line with awarding body/organisation criteria.
- 4.2 **Validity** – assessments will measure what is intended.

- 4.3 **Reliability** – assessments will be rigorously applied, to ensure that assessment decisions on all occasions fulfil the standards of the relevant qualification and the requirements of the awarding body/organisation.
- 4.4 **Utility** – assessments will be easy to administer and easily understood by learners.
- 4.5 **Transparency** – assessment will perform a formative function in enabling learners to evaluate their progress and lecturers to provide feedback to support learners in their future learning and performance. Lecturers will ensure that learners clearly understand the requirements of the assessment process and the standards and specification of the qualification.

The above principles will be achieved by the application of quality assurance procedures as laid out in section 3 above “Quality Assurance of Assessment”.

## **5 Progression and Completion**

### **5.1 Full-time students**

A full-time HNC student must at least pass 8 units (120 credits) to qualify for the award.

A full-time HND student must pass all units to gain the qualification. Pearson would expect that an HND student would have achieved at least 90 credits at Level 4 before progressing to Level 5 units. This allows for the students to submit the remaining 30 credits at Level 4 while undertaking their Level 5 study.

### **5.2 Part-time students**

Part time students are required to complete all modules within the duration of their programme (3 or 4 years).

## **6 Main Assignments and Coursework**

- 6.1 These are pieces of work completed by learners as a portfolio of evidence for grading purposes and contributing to the achievement of the qualification (dependant on awarding body).

## **7 Procedures for Main Assignment Assessment**

### **7.1 Planning**

- a) Staff should ensure that they have an assessment schedule at the beginning of the course/programme. Where required an internal verification plan will also be agreed and included in addition to the assessment plan. These documents may also be made available to the learners on request.
- b) All learners should complete an appropriate initial assessment according to approved College guidelines. This initial assessment shall be used by the lecturer to inform him/her of:
  - any additional learning support needs,
  - appropriate teaching and learning strategies required,

- any literacy and numeracy requirements.
- c) When the learner starts the course/programme they should be given a 'Programme/course Handbook' with the induction pack containing all the arrangements for assignments, including:
- how many assignments have to be completed,
  - procedures of submissions and related Academic Offences/plagiarism information,
  - any circumstances in which deadlines can be extended,
  - rules and procedures for applying for extensions to deadlines,
  - a section on how the final grade for the qualification is calculated,
  - the name of the internal verifier (if appropriate).

The responsibility for managing the production of the Programme/course Handbook with the induction pack rests with the appropriate senior management.

- d) It will also tell the learner about:
- what is considered to be malpractice in completion of an assignment and penalties for any offences,
  - how a learner can appeal for a review of an assessment decision.

## 7.2 Assignment Briefs

- a) All assignments will be issued with a cover sheet. The brief will identify the assignment task(s) and give the assessment criteria against which the work will be judged. The cover sheet should always include the elements below, but can include other elements as required.

If applicable, the cover sheet should include a note stating that learners must keep a backup copy of all work in progress, and final assignments, in case of IT failure or work being lost.

- b) The following dates should be evident on every assignment given to learners:
- date when issued,
  - date for any formative assessment or feedback (if applicable),
  - date when assignment is to be handed in,
- c) All assignments should be issued with clear assessment criteria, which inform the learner of what is required to achieve the highest grade (in line with awarding body procedures). The criteria to distinguish pass/merit/distinction should also be issued. Learners should be told that all marks or grades are provisional when awarding body moderation is required.

The assignment should be:

- challenging to learners,
- varied in approach,
- contribute to the development of learners' skills,
- reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of learners.

- d) Learners must be given a clear procedure of how and to whom the assessment is to be submitted. All assignments will be either submitted online via web-portal platform whichever advised OR via other methods as required. Student will be kept informed of the medium to be used and assignments will be submitted to the designated lecturer through these mediums.
- e) The assignment must be manageable for learners, especially in the spread of deadlines.
- f) Assignments must be manageable for learners in that whole unit assessments are broken down into smaller elements.
- g) There must be some formative assessment of learner performance (in line with awarding body guidelines), which may be written or oral, to improve the final performance. Learners must be advised to keep a copy of all assignments, even as work in progress, in case learners lose assignments or in case of IT failures.

### 7.3 Submission and return of work

Full details related to extenuating/mitigating circumstances are available in our Extenuating Circumstances Policy available on the website. Please refer to that policy for details.

- a) If, due to certain circumstances, a learner cannot hand work in on time, and a lecturer does not feel it fits the agreed criteria for an extenuating/mitigating circumstance claim, then an extension must be requested. This extension will be considered as a late submission deadline.
- b) If a late submission is accepted, then the assignment should be assessed normally, when it is submitted, using the relevant assessment criteria; with any penalty or cap applied after the assessment. The learner should be informed that the grade for the assignment will be capped at a maximum grade of Pass. Where the result of assessment may be capped, due to late submission of the assignment, the student should be given an indication of their uncapped mark; in order to recognise the learning that has been achieved, and assessment feedback should be provided in relation to the uncapped achievement. As with all assessment results, both the uncapped and capped marks should be recorded and ratified by an appropriate assessment board; taking into account any mitigating circumstances that may have been submitted. If the assignment is not handed-in by the original or re-negotiated deadline (Late Submission Date), then the work will not be marked. Failure to submit an assignment on or before a LATE submission deadline would result in a FAIL grade and you may have to retake the module in another semester. In case of repeating/retaking the module, the grade will be capped at Pass.
- c) If a learner fails to hand in main assignment material by the agreed date, action will be taken by the programme/course leader.
  - If a learner fails to hand in part or all of an assignment by the agreed date the programme/course leader should be promptly informed, to enable further action.
  - The programme/course team leader will then determine, the appropriate action, which will include an interview with the learner to investigate the reasons for non-submission.
  - If this final date is not met, options and actions will be reviewed/agreed and confirmed in writing.

- d) All assignments will be either submitted online via web-portal platform whichever advised OR via other methods as required. Learners will be kept informed of the medium to be used and assignments will be submitted to the designated lecturer through these mediums. Assignments will be going through the plagiarism checking functions of the software Turnitin and learners will have confirmation of submissions.
- e) All assignments must be marked within the agreed time of the hand in date. All marked work should be returned to the learner with the following:
- clear mark or grade as required by the awarding body,
  - written feedback which clearly shows the reasons for success/failure against each of the criteria for assessment,
  - where the learner has the opportunity to improve clear guidance should be given (in line with awarding body requirements) on actions required to affect improvement
- f) If the member of staff cannot return the work within the required time and this is likely to result into considerable delay in the return of work then the learners should be informed and notified of any new deadline if appropriate.
- g) If the learner has work referred then the Academic team will decide and make a written record of a resubmission date. If learner gets referred in a module because he/she did not pass the coursework (if applicable), the mark will be followed by the indicator R or Refer.
- 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
  - 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. For example, a student who obtained a Merit will not be allowed to resubmit an assignment for assessment in order to obtain a higher grade of Distinction.

*Please refer to Pearson Guidance on HN in Business available at: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/BTEC-Higher-Nationals/Business/2016/Specification/btec-higher-nationals-business-specification.pdf> if required for reference.*

- b) In the event that there is a college closure, the loss of buildings or an emergency relating to disease or pollution, then:

Copies of all essential coursework or examination marks should be held in a fireproof room or cabinets.

It is crucial that all coursework or examination marks are logged and backed up. All marks stored on the college network will be appropriately backed up.

Programme/course Leaders must convene meetings as soon as possible to consider the effect of the emergency on learner coursework, assessments and examination entries and compensate learners as appropriate.

#### **7.4 Storage of work**

- a) Assignments will be stored in designated areas and for the duration as required by the awarding body.
- b) Learners' assignment work should be retained as per awarding body guidelines
- c) All main assignment marks should be appropriately recorded and copies kept in the secured destination with the Academic Management.

### **8 External Assessment**

- 8.1 External assessments are carried out in accordance with the awarding body's requirements. All learners are required to follow the instructions laid down by the awarding bodies. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from the examination.
- 8.2 Any learner with a learning difficulty and/or disability is entitled (on request) to special consideration in accordance with the awarding body/organisation guidelines.
- 8.3 All learners are notified of the time and location of their external assessment.
- 8.4 The cost of initial registration with the awarding body and each examination and/or submission of coursework is the responsibility of the learner.

### **9 Plagiarism and derivative work**

- 9.1 Where it is suspected that main assignments may be subject to plagiarism or contain derivative work then lecturers should refer to the college 'Guidelines (policy) on Plagiarism' for appropriate guidance.
- 9.2 Lecturers should always follow awarding body guidance.

### **10 Appeals Procedure**

Please refer to College's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure for details on the process to be followed in the event of an appeal made against academic assessment.

### **11 Internal Verification and Standards Moderation**

Please also refer to the Internal Verification section in the Quality Assurance Policy as both sections are to be read in conjunction.

- 11.1 Internal verifier(s)/moderators must be appointed at the start of the course/programme
- 11.2 Internal verification/moderation must be planned, on-going and not end loaded.

- 11.3 The internal verifier/moderator monitors different aspects of the programme.
- 11.4 An assessment plan will include dates or week numbers within the semester for internal verification to take place.
- 11.5 All teams should carry out standardisation activities in order to ensure consistency.
- 11.6 All main assignments must be internally verified before being given to learners to complete.
- 11.7 There should also be standardisation sessions/meetings in order to facilitate and support the internal verification process.
- 11.8 Internal verification applies to all programmes delivered regardless of the process of grade determination.

The following applies to taught programmes that are:

Internally set, internally marked and externally moderated;  
 Internally set, internally marked and externally moderated;  
 Externally set, internally marked and externally moderated;  
 Externally set, externally marked and externally moderated (examinations)

All internally assessed programmes follow a specific policy and procedures in order to comply with the relevant awarding body's requirements as well as to adhere to the college's general objective of delivering a high quality education within the allocated time frame.

## Internal Verification Policy

### 11.8.1 Purpose

Broadly the purpose of the IV policy is to check that the evidence of good practice is clearly present. This will normally include:

- A review of all assignment briefs before they are handed out to the students
- A review of a sample of the assignments
- Providing feedback to the assessors by the Internal Verifier as appropriate

### 11.8.2 Procedures

The college has established following procedures in order to support the policy.

- The college will have at least two internal verifiers at all times
- An assessor cannot be an internal verifier for his/her own work and has to be cross verified by the another internal verifier
- The review of **all assignments briefs** before they are handed out to the students will include the verification of:
  - The **outcomes to be covered in each assignment are clearly stated** and are taken from the approved unit specification
  - **ALL** outcomes are to be covered in the total assessment process for each unit
  - The **tasks are clear and unambiguous**
  - The **setting is appropriate** to a business within the area/country of the location of the college

- The **level of the tasks** (as illustrated by the verbs used to describe the tasks) is appropriate to the outcome and the level of the unit
  - The **criteria for assessment (marking scheme)** are clear
  - That an opportunity has been provided for the student to display the required range of **business skills** outlined within the unit specification
  - The **approved format for the assignment has been used** and is complete and includes a **guidance** to the students as how to complete the assignment
- Review of sample of an assignment will involve sampling in such a way that it allows seeing, over the duration of the programme of study, work from every unit assignment, and every student. Where there is more than one assessor for a unit, the work of every assessor must be verified.
  - The Internal Verifier will provide a feed back to the assessors as appropriate and it might include a request to re-prepare an assignment brief as well as to re-mark the assignment work in the light of the Internal Verifier's comment.
  - The Internal Verifier cannot change assessment decisions unless he/she is so concerned with the results of preliminary sampling that he/she reviews every piece of work being assessed for the assignment/unit. It is more normal, in such extreme circumstances, for the Internal Verifier to request a second marker to re-mark all of the works.

### 11.8.3 Internal Verification Documents

- Internal Verification Plan
- Internal Verification of Assignment briefs
- Internal Verification of Marked assignments

<b>Cohort size</b>	<b>Minimum IV sample size</b>
10	6
20	9
30	11
40	13
50	14
60	15
70	17
80	18
90	19
100	20

**Calculation based on  $2\sqrt{\text{cohort size}}$**

For cohorts of less than 10 there should be 100% internal verification. The above shows the minimum IV sample size and the Academic Management may wish to increase the sample size if required.

