



Internal Verification Policy

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Produced by	Compliance Committee	Approved by	Academic Board
Related policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment Policy • Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy • Academic Appeals Policy • Recognition of Prior Learning Policy 		
External reference points	<p>Pearson (Edexcel)</p> <p>Office for Students, 24-11-24, Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England:</p> <p>B4.1, the provider must ensure that:</p> <p>a. students are assessed effectively;</p> <p>b. each assessment is valid and reliable;</p> <p>c. academic regulations are designed to ensure that relevant awards are credible.</p> <p>UK Quality Code UKSCQA/02 [March 2018]</p> <p>Theme 6: Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>Providers evaluate, analyse, and use the information generated from monitoring to learn and improve.</p>		

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1. Background and Propose

The Academy's internal verification (IV) policy ensures that all assessors consistently apply fair, accurate, reliable, and valid assessment decisions when grading student assignments and providing feedback. This policy outlines the responsibilities of faculty members regarding internal verification, and details how assessment standards and quality are assessed and verified. It covers the IV process, roles of key faculty members with the IV process, sampling strategy, and its connection to external examination and certification. The policy has been created to align with the requirements set by the Pearson awarding organisation. If the Academy runs programmes in partnership with another organisation (e.g. a university or college) the internal verification or moderation policy of the partner organisation will take precedence over this policy.

Internal verification (IV) ensures that the assessment process and its outcomes are in line with expected standards and quality as set down by the Office for Students regulatory framework for higher education B4.1, as well as the UK Quality Code. IV enables the Academy to closely monitor the appropriateness of Assignment Briefs to ensure they meet their intended objectives. IV also ensures there is feedback to assessors regarding their assessment decisions across all units or modules being assessed. This process is crucial for identifying and rectifying errors early before students receive feedback and grades. Additionally, it provides assessors with support and guidance for ensuring that standards are met, and quality is enhanced through systematic peer reviews of assessment decisions and practices.

2. Aim and Objectives

Internal verification is critical to ensuring that assessment decisions are accurate, credible, and consistent with threshold standards and expectations of quality. IV also ensures that students are provided with encouraging and constructive feedback that enables them to improve and produce work of higher quality beyond threshold standards. This is achieved through the following:

- Assessment materials are up to date, with scenarios and instructions to students that are appropriately aligned to subject benchmark statements, and clear instructions on what students need to do to meet assessment criteria and achieve learning outcomes.
- A risk-based approach to sampling of assessed work by internal verifiers minimizes the possibility of inaccurate, inconsistent, unreliable, and unfair marking and feedback.

- Assessors reach valid, consistent, reliable, and fair assessment decisions for all students, which are comparable for all units or modules at each level of study.
- Formative and summative assessment feedback provide students with group and individual feedback on how students can obtain higher grades in their assessments, including upper second and first class in degree programmes or merit and distinction criteria in Pearson BTEC HND programmes.
- Assessments give students the opportunity to acquire and enhance employability competencies that will support their career success.
- Assessment processes are thorough and ensure that academic integrity is rigorously maintained, with careful monitoring of academic misconduct including plagiarism and the submission of work generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) software.
- Any recommendations or essential actions mandated by the Pearson External Examiner are discussed and implemented by faculty members and monitored as part of the internal verification process.
- The internal verification system is monitored and reviewed to ensure that appropriate sampling and verification is conducted consistently across all programmes and that effective measures are in place to store internally sampled and verified assessment materials securely.

3. Application

This policy and process applies to all assessments conducted by the Academy or its partner organisations, with the proviso that partner organisation internal verification and moderation policies will take precedence.

The internal verification of all assessments for Pearson (BTEC HNC/D) programmes is the responsibility of the Academy. The Academy prepares, verifies, and marks BTEC HNC/D assessments, while the Pearson External Examiner reviews and ratifies assessment and internal verification decisions, processes and practices.

4. The Pearson BTEC HND Internal Verification Process

It is essential that internal verification methods are consistent throughout the Academy, and that the following procedures are followed in their proper order.

4.1. IV and Assessment Plan

An assessment plan incorporating plans for internal verification must be created for every unit. The plan must include the following:

1. Start and end teaching dates for each unit or module.
2. Assignment brief internal verification date
3. Formative, summative, and resubmission deadlines,
4. Names of tutors, assessors, and IVs
5. Date when assessors should submit marks and feedback to the IV.
6. Date for the completion of first submission internal verification and publication of results to students.
7. Date for resubmission of assessments by students.
8. Date when assessors mark and give feedback on resubmissions ready for the internal verification.
9. Date for completion of resubmission internal verification and publication of results to students.

4.2. Internal Verification of Assignment Brief

- Preliminary papers and assessment materials are carefully examined to ensure they adhere to required learning outcomes and assessment criteria and are secure, valid, and reliable.
- The LCKA Tutor/Assessor creates a draft of the Assignment Brief and passes it to the Internal Verifier.
- The Internal Verifier reviews the Assignment Brief to make sure it is appropriate for its intended use and conforms with the requirements of the awarding organisation.
- The Assignment Brief is returned to the Tutor/Assessor by the Internal Verifier along with a completed IV Brief Form that specifies any changes required and offers recommendations and guidance on how Tutors/Assessors and Students should understand and respond to the instructions in the Assignment Brief.
- The Assignment Brief may be forwarded to Pearson for review at the discretions of the IV before being distributed to students.

4.3. Formative Assessments

Students will be given formative assignments and required to submit them at around the mid-point of the course. The Tutor/Assessor will give general feedback to all students on their formative submissions without providing a grade. Internal Verifiers will review formative submissions and discuss the standard of work submitted and the feedback provided with the Tutor/Assessor.

4.4. Interim IV Sampling for Summative Submissions

Before Assessors begin marking summative submissions, interim IV marking will be conducted. An Assessor may act as an Internal Verifier for another Assessor, but they cannot verify their own assessment decisions. Internal Verifiers hold standardization meetings with Tutors/Assessors, to review interim marking and ensure that all Tutors/Assessors understand the standard of work required for a pass, merit or distinction in each learning outcome. Potential misunderstandings with the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions are addressed.

4.5. Summative Assessments

Assessors mark and write feedback for all summative submissions using the LCKA marking template.

4.6. IV Sampling Strategy

- A sample size will be chosen by the IV for every unit undergoing Internal Verification. The sample is approximately the square root of the total number of assignments that need to be assessed. Therefore, four will be sampled if there are 12 in total submitted.
- A range of grades, including Pass, Merit, Distinction, and Referred, will be chosen by the IV for verification.
- When appropriate, the assessor will choose submissions from different students rather than the same student for each unit.
- Wherever possible, the assessor will choose work from different classes rather than the same class for each unit.

- When sampling is required, the IV will exercise discretion, utilize a risk-based strategy, and may sample up to 50% of the student population for a unit in the following circumstances:
 - a new unit has been taught.
 - a new delivery method has been used.
 - a new tutor/assessor as started.
 - there has been a comparatively high non-submission or referral rate, or a high distinction rate.
 - the qualification has been revised.
 - there are recognised concerns about a unit.
 - there are recognised concerns about Students.
 - there are recognised concerns about a Tutor/Assessor.

4.7. Feedback to Students and Assessors

The following process ensures timely and quality feedback to students by Assessors and to Assessors by the IV:

1. All student work is marked and graded by Assessors within two weeks of submission.
2. Samples of the assessed work are verified by the IV within five days after Assessors have completed their marking and grading.
3. IV forms are completed by the IV, who will provide developmental feedback to the Assessor.
4. Assessors will have two days to respond to IV feedback and adjust marks and feedback if necessary.
5. If the IV disagrees with the Assessor's decision, the Assessor can change their feedback and grades before giving it to the students. In these circumstances, the Assessor must review all related assessment judgments to ensure that they are consistent with the IV's recommended adjustments.
6. If the IV and Assessor cannot reach agreement, the Academy's Quality Nominee will be asked to decide. The Quality Nominee's decision shall be final.
7. The internally verified work should be signed by both the Assessor and the IV.
8. Students receive their verified feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline.
9. All documentation must be retained as evidence for External Examination and possible Appeals.
10. Following the student's departure from the Academy, all evidence should be securely stored for a minimum of three years following Pearson expectations.

5. Responsibilities

The following roles including all staff related to the internal verification processes.

5.1. Pearson/HND Quality Nominee

- Oversees the Assessment and Internal Verification Plan and Process
- Plans the training for Internal Verifiers and Assessors
- Develops and implements quality improvements and enhancements.
- Resolves disputes and acts as decision-maker when the Assessor and IV disagree.
- Ensures Assessors follow up on the IV's feedback and recommendations.
- Oversees Academic Appeals
- Is a point of contact for the Pearson awarding organisation?
- Is the main contact for the External Examiner?

5.2. HND Programme Leader

- Ensures that assessments are standardised, and all Assessors marks and feedback are sampled for each unit.
- Maintains the assessment records.
- Arranges meetings and support sessions with Assessors.
- Helps to create the Internal Verification and Assessment Plan.
- Attends meetings with partner organisations and External Examiners
- Provides documentation for Academic Appeals and Internal Verification records for external examinations.

5.3. Tutors/Assessors

- Participates in the creation and evaluation of assessment materials.
- Plans the assessment process with the Programme Leader
- Assesses formative and summative assignments submitted by students.
- Responds to the comments from the Internal Verifier
- Implements recommendations and essential actions from the Internal Verifier and External Examiner.

1.1. Internal Verifier (IV)

The IV is responsible for ensuring that assessors are handing out Assignment Briefs that meet Pearson (Edexcel) specifications. Before Assignment Briefs are handed out to students, the IV must ensure they are fit for purpose and that the Assessor and Students have been given appropriate guidance. If in doubt, the IV should send Assignment Briefs to the Pearson checking service.

Unit Assignment Briefs for BTEC HND must contain:

- The deadlines for assignments
- Grade descriptors with context where necessary.
- Assessment criteria for all learning outcomes
- Assignment task(s) created to get students to provide comprehensive evidence at the required level.
- A suitable example or case study

The Internal Verifier is also responsible for verifying assessment decisions and feedback to Students provided by Assessors with the following steps:

- Use the Academy's risk-based sampling technique to verify that the assessment decisions and feedback comments to all students are accurate, consistent, and fair for each Unit.
- Within five days of receiving the student work that has been assessed, provide the Tutor/Assessor with feedback and recommendations regarding the assessment results and the grading decisions.
- Submit reports on internal verification to the Assessment Committee, and Academic Board.

An Internal Verifier cannot verify an assignment brief they have produced themselves and they cannot verify any for own assessment of student work.

2. Claiming certification

Certificates can only be claimed after an Assessment Committee meeting. After certification is accepted, two members of the Academic team must be present to submit certification claims. One of the members submits the claim online, while the other member confirms the grades on the tracking sheet.