HE Student Assessment Policy 2023-24
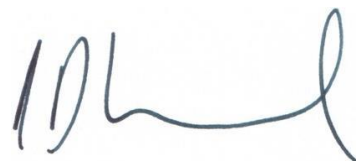
Overall responsibility:	Deputy Principal
Implementation:	Joanne Philpott
Date issued:	1st October 2024
Date for review:	1st September 2025

Endorsed and approved by Policy & Strategy Group   Date: October 2024

Jason Lancaster   Principal

Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

Northampton College is committed to the implementation of an assessment framework that meets the assessment needs of all HE students and supports the specific standards of our HE Awarding Organisations. It also complies with all regulatory requirements for the retention of students' work and associated records that are subject to internal/external monitoring and audit.

Assessment is a fundamental tool in supporting student development and the maintenance of academic standards. It consists of two definitive aspects:

- Assessment activities and performance
- Staff judgements on student achievement of learning outcomes

There is a focus on the demonstration of learning and the extent to which it has been demonstrated and on furthering the student's learning via formative feedback, ultimately leading to the grading of student performance.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

1. The College will ensure the equitable treatment of all students through the consistency and regularity of assessment practice, including keeping all auditable assessment, internal quality assurance/moderation, student registration and certification records in secure locations.

2. The College will ensure the requirements of contracting, funding, validating and examination bodies are met.

3. The College will conduct assessment practice in line with the requirements of the HE Awarding Organisations and the relevant Regulatory Body.

3. QUALITY STATEMENTS

At the start of each programme of study students will be provided at induction with written details, either in a course handbook or via their VLE platform, regarding assessment of the learning programme, incorporating the following:

- An Assessment Calendar/Plan, outlining when students will be issued with an assessment and their formative and summative deadlines for all units/learning outcomes for the whole academic year.

- Details of actions following failure to meet deadlines

- Details of the process for extensions to submission dates, including mitigating circumstances and how these will be recorded

- Arrangements for the provision of a receipt for all work submitted for both formative and summative formal assessment

- Details of where work is to be submitted, which should be through electronic portals, either Turnitin or Teams

- Details of procedures to deal with referred work

- Details of the Assessment Appeals Procedure

The exact nature of these details must be in line with the requirements of the relevant Awarding Organisations. All information must be issued to students at the start of the academic year.

All qualifications will adhere to the following requirements:

1. All students will have a clear statement of the assessment requirements for their programme.

2. The use of Recognition of Prior Learning will follow the relevant Awarding Organisation guidelines.

3. Assessment will be based on outcomes of learning and will be free from unnecessary barriers that might restrict access.

4. Assessment methods will be consistent with the requirements of specific qualifications/awards.

5. The wide range of assessment methods will relate to the differing needs of individual students and will be applied as appropriate. Students with declared additional support needs will be referred to *Additional Learning Support (SAVS)*

6. Assessment decisions on performance and progress will be communicated to students, all feedback to include positive comment and areas for improvement which will enable students to effectively improve their work.

7. Student registration and certification claims will be accurately maintained and made available for scrutiny. In addition, individual Awarding Organisation requirements will be met.

8. Internal Verification/Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)/moderation practice and records will comply with College and Awarding Body procedures.

9. Records of standardisation/moderation meetings will be maintained and made available for scrutiny.

10. Student progress tracking and internal verification/IQA moderation and student registration/certification records will be retained for a minimum of three years. In addition, individual Awarding Organisation requirements will be met.

11. Student evidence files or online portfolios will be retained intact until the next SV/EQA/EE sample/visit, for inspection purposes. Thereafter, students will be informed by letter to collect any portfolio evidence within three weeks. For all other students' work subject to external moderation, individual Awarding Body requirements will be strictly adhered to.

12. The College's assessment Appeals Procedure does not compromise an Awarding Organisation's procedure, where it applies, and is in addition to it.

13. Formal assessment will be returned to students, with appropriate feedback and required IV/IQA monitoring completed, within 15 working days. Any other work submitted by students for marking, e.g. classwork or homework, will be returned to students within 5 working days.

4. LINKED POLICIES/PROCEDURES

IQA Policy and Procedures 2024-25
Malpractice, Maladministration and Plagiarism Policy 2024-25
Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Policy 2024-25
University Level Courses Mitigating Circumstances Policy 2024-25
Student Behaviour and Intervention Policy 2024-25

5. MONITORING PROCEDURE

Periodic sampling by the Quality Office, Curriculum Managers, Assistant Principals (Curriculum), Quality Co-ordinators, Lead Internal Verifiers, IQAs

5. AWARDING BODY

The appropriate Awarding Body policy for assessment will be adhered to:

Pearson HNDs:

hn-assessment-feedback-guidance.pdf (highernationals.com)

Pearson Diploma in Education and Training:

Education and Training Learning and Development - Assessment Guide 2023 (pearson.com)

6. ASSESSMENT PLANNING

6.1 Assessment should be planned to provide a range of diverse and innovative assessment methods that reliably measure student attainment of the intended learning outcomes and effectively promote and enhance learning as well as measuring engagement. Where applicable, appropriate qualification units should be selected relevant to the students' needs and local context.

6.2 Assessment tasks will be designed to demonstrate identifiable links between learning outcomes and units, teaching and learning activities and the assessment schedule. There should be an increasing level of challenge and complexity evident in assessed activities as the programme progresses. There should be clear evidence of demonstration of progression in levels of skill and understanding.

6.3 Assessment design will be inclusive and reflect the diversity of student needs and the demands of the discipline being assessed. It will also consider resource planning e.g. when to use specialist staff if appropriate, planning assignment deadlines across the programme to ensure students are not overwhelmed at key points and external resources.

6.4 Students will receive an assessment schedule(s) or plan(s) covering all modules/units

If units are integrated, an assessment plan will be able to establish that all targeted criteria can be achieved.

As a minimum requirement, the assessment plan must include:

- Names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- Dates for assignment issue and submission
- Dates for formative and summative feedback
- Deadline for internal verification/moderation
- Resit dates (if applicable)

7. ASSIGNMENT BRIEFS

7.1 For each assignment a clear assignment brief must be produced using the appropriate Awarding Body templates. Key information required on an assignment brief:

- Course, module and assessment title are clearly identified
- Dates for handing out, submission and feedback are clearly identified and appropriate for the assignment and its complexity
- Assessment weighting matches those in the handbook and any other paperwork
- Learning outcomes to be assessed are clearly defined
- Tasks set are unambiguous and suitable for purpose
- Assessment criteria are clearly defined and relevant for the task(s) set
- The assessment method is appropriate, and tasks are achievable
- The products to be handed in for assessment are clearly identified
- Grading criteria are based on the grade descriptors, indicative characteristics and contextualised

7.2 Every assignment brief will be internally verified by a designated internal verifier (IV) **before** being handed out to students to ensure that it is fit for purpose and appropriately designed and structured. Internal verification will always be reported and recorded. If actions are identified by the IV, the assessor is required to complete all actions and return it to the IV for sign off. This needs to be recorded to ensure a transparent audit trail.

8. PRINCIPLES OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment is a fundamental tool in supporting student development and the maintenance of academic standards. It should be conducted on a regular basis and demonstrate the principles of:

- Reliability
- Openness
- Fairness
- Maintenance of standards

8.1 A variety of forms of assessment will be used where possible and each form will use specific assessment criteria that must be clearly identified to students in their assignment briefs.

8.2 The process of Internal Verification and External Moderation will inform changes to the assessment procedure where necessary, and the annual evaluation and self-assessment processes will include reference to the effectiveness of assessment and identify areas for improvement.

8.3 Assessment will be timely, balanced and suited to each student's programme of study.

8.4 Changes to assessment strategy must be in keeping with the AO's protocols and formally approved by the appropriate authorities.

Assessment support | Pearson qualifications

9. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

No assessment will take place until a student is both enrolled on the correct HE course and registered with the appropriate HE Awarding Body.

Formative Assessment

9.1 Formative assessment will involve both the assessor and the student in a conversation about their progress and takes place **prior** to summative assessment.   The feedback will be prompt so it has meaning and context for the student and time must be given following feedback for actions to be completed.

9.2 The role of feedback in motivating students should not be underestimated. Feedback should outline what can be done to move the unit grade forward.

Summative Assessment

9.3 Summative assessment is the final assessment decision on an assignment task in relation to the assessment criteria of each unit. It is the **definitive assessment** and recording of the student's achievement.

9.4 Grading and assessment processes must follow the appropriate Awarding Body policy.

9.5 All assessment/grading records will be available for auditing purposes.

9.6 Assessors should 'mark' spelling and grammar, i.e. correct mistakes on student work and expect the student to either correct them (at the formative feedback stage) or note them (at the summative feedback stage).
Mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless:

- the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of the student understanding or,

- specific assessment criteria require good communication, spelling and grammar and /or correct use of technical language.

If student work has consistently poor spelling, grammar or language it should not be accepted for marking but should be returned to the student to be corrected. The student must be given a deadline by which to correct the work. Awarding Body procedures for correction and grading of work must be adhered to.

9.7 Assessment of work submitted late (after a deadline) and without a Mitigating Circumstances form should be assessed and graded in accordance with the rules and regulations set by the Awarding Body. Where Awarding Bodies permit capping of grades in such circumstances, work submitted late without a Mitigating Circumstances form can be capped at a Pass, however, if this is not set out by the Awarding body, grades should be awarded based on quality of work.

10.   SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF ASSESSED WORK

10.1 Assignments must be submitted electronically, via Turnitin or MS Teams or as a paper copy if an electronic submission is not appropriate.

10.2 Confirmation of submission will be provided for the student. This will count as a receipt in any disputes about whether work was submitted or not.

10.3 Assessed assignments should be returned to students within 15 working days with full written individual feedback on the approved template for each Awarding Body.

10.4 The form of appropriate feedback to students should be determined by the task, the criteria and the subject of the assignment.

10.5 Final Major Project assignments and assignments submitted at the end of the final academic year will not normally be returned to students but may be collected by them within three months of the completion of the course, after which time they will not normally be retained by the institution.

10.6 Work set for students which is not part of formal or summative assessment e.g. homework or formative tasks and, therefore, is not part of an I.V. process, will be marked and returned to the student within 5 working days.

11. ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION OF ASSESSED WORK

11.1 All assignments that contribute towards a final module grade must be subject to internal and external moderation processes. These include:

- First marking
- Second marking
- Double marking (when appropriate)
- Moderation/internal verification
- Standardisation
- External Examiner scrutiny

11.2 Where more than one teacher is involved with the teaching and marking of a piece of assessed work, the work can be assessed by both teachers at one time (for example in the case of a performance) or by both teachers separately. In both cases, a decision about the grade should be reached before the feedback sheet is written with the agreed grade and comments included on it.

11.3 A sample of assessed work will be internally moderated/verified by a designated academic colleague within the 15 working days and before the work is returned to students. If the AO does not prescribe a template then Northampton College templates should be used for this process.

11.4 All teachers engaged in marking and grading work will be required to attend regular standardisation meeting at which samples of ungraded work from across a programme will be moderated and graded by teachers prior to discussion about the consistency of grading.

11.5 The processes of moderation/internal verification and standardisation are designed to ensure that markers are making consistent and accurate grading decisions, in accordance with published assessment criteria. These processes enable confidence in the reliability of remaining assessed work which has not been moderated. Therefore, all graded work within a total cohort is allowed, via inference, to be called moderated.

11.6 When the programme is being planned, internal verification of assessment decisions must also be planned. An internal verification schedule must be drawn up covering every unit, every assignment and every assessor, with proposed dates. Internal verification must be carried out in a timely way throughout the year. It should not be 'end-loaded' and saved until the end of the year.

11.7 In situations where assessment of practical work such as performance is taking place, every effort should be made to record the work in order that moderation can take place. Where this is not able to happen, there should be two markers present, marking separately for later moderation and agreement about the grade to be given before formal moderation/verification takes place.

11.8 If two markers fail to agree a grade, the work should be referred to the Curriculum Manager of the Course Team in which the Programme is delivered.

11.9 If any marker suspects that a piece of assessed work demonstrates any element of academic misconduct, it must be referred to the Head of H.E who will implement the college's Malpractice-Maladministration-Plagiarism policy.

12. EXTERNAL MODERATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

12.1 External Examiner scrutiny forms part of the College Quality Assurance process and HE programmes will follow the procedures identified in Awarding Body's assessment policies.

12.2 Staff at Northampton College will prepare samples of work for scrutiny by External Examiners or the Internal Quality team, as and when requested by them.

BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to External Examination UK (2023-2024) (pearson.com)

13. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

13.1 Students must ensure that all general and any specific submission instructions are followed. Failure to do so may result in work not being marked. It is the students' responsibility to contact their module team, to clarify anything they are unsure about, prior to the deadline.

13.2 Students must submit work before the assessment deadline. Any submissions made after the deadline will be clearly marked as late and subject to penalty unless an extension has been granted in line with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

13.3 Students must ensure that the correct work is submitted. The file(s) submitted by the deadline will be taken as final and complete. No amendments or additions will be accepted after the deadline unless an extension has been in line with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy.

13.4 Students must ensure that submitted electronic files are valid and not corrupted. Files can be opened and checked within Teams. Instructions for doing so are available in each module alongside the assignment submission point.

If a submission consists of multiple documents, students must ensure that all components have been included in the upload and submitted together.

13.5   Students must leave sufficient time in advance of a deadline to both submit an assessment and ensure that the submission process has completed successfully and without error. The respective Course Leader should be contacted immediately in the event of a problem with submission.

14 STUDENTS WITH DECLARED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

14.1 A student who declares a disability or additional support needs will be contacted and signposted to the relevant assessment process and the Disabled Student Allowance. All reasonable adjustments will be made to enable students to successfully achieve on their chosen course.

14.2 Alternative means of assessment may be made available in consultation with the appropriate AO for students who, for reasons of additional needs or disability, will be disadvantaged by the means of assessment in the assignment.

15 RECORDING OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

15.1 All assessment grades will be recorded by the Course Leader, in a secure location. At the end of the academic year, results will be formally recorded at an Assessment Board and results will be sent, with minutes of the meeting, to the external examiner and the Awarding Body. Students will be notified of final results by Northampton College within 10 working days of the Assessment Board.

16 ACADEMIC APPEALS

16.1 A student appeal is a request to review decisions made by the centre on their progression, assessment or awards and will be dealt with by the College in the first instance, followed by the appropriate AO's procedure, if this does not resolve the issue.

16.2 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) will consider appeals from students who remain dissatisfied at the end of the College's and AOs procedures.

16.3 The appropriate AO Appeals Procedure will be disseminated to students during induction

Procedure to be given to students:

If you are not happy with a decision made about your assessed work:

Stage 1	Speak to the person who assessed your work - the assessor/teacher. This must be within **ONE** week of the decision being made.	Following this discussion, if you are still not happy with the assessment decision, please complete the Assessment Appeal Form and then hand it to the assessor.
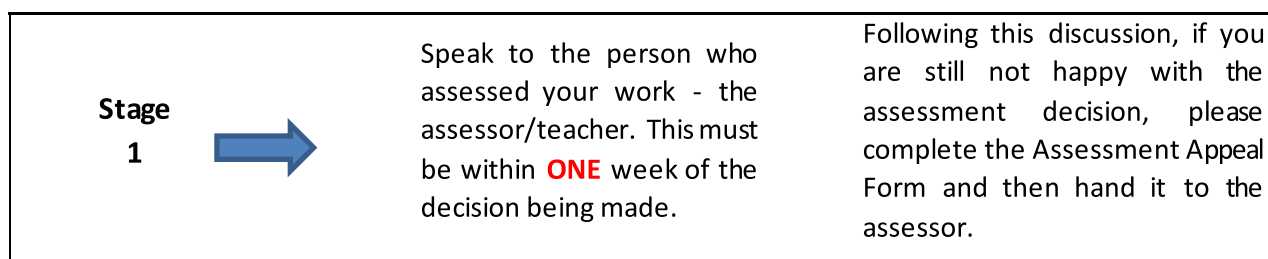
Stage 2	→	Within **ONE** week the assessor and IQA will discuss the completed Assessment Appeal Form.	If the appeal is still not resolved, the assessor/teacher will feedback to you and the IQA will forward the appeal to the next stage.

Stage 3	→	The appeal will now be dealt with, within **ONE** week, by the Curriculum Manager.	If still not resolved, the Curriculum Manager or the Head of Apprentices will refer the appeal to the Quality Improvement Lead.

Stage 4	→	The appeal will now be dealt with, within **TEN** days, by the Quality Improvement Lead	The decision of the Quality Improvement Lead is final.

Stage 5	→	If you are still not satisfied with the Quality Improvement Lead 's final decision, you should use the Awarding Body appeals procedure for the qualification and, thereafter, the Office for Independent Adjudication (OIA).

Awarding Organisation Appeals Procedures can be found in the following documents:

Pearson HND:

[Post-Results Services (PRS): Appeals (pearson.com)](#)

[Pearson Diploma in Education and Training:](#)

[BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment (2023-2024) (pearson.com)](#)

At all stages a copy of the completed Assessment Appeals Form must be sent to the Quality Improvement Lead

Note:

- Any work, subject to appeal, will be checked against national standards.
- The College Appeals Procedure does not compromise an Awarding Organisations procedure, where it applies, and is in addition to it.
- If there is a change in assessment after an appeal, the College will inform the appropriate Awarding

Organisation.

17 ASSESSMENT APPEALS FORM

Student name:		School:	
Qualification:		Awarding Organisation:	
Unit/Module title:			
Assignment/Assessment title:			

Stage 1	Assessor name:		Date:	

Reason for the appeal (please give as much information as possible)

Resolved?	Y	N	Assessor signature:	

Stage 2	IQA name:		Date:	

Outcome of discussion (please give as much information as possible*)

Resolved?	Y	N	IQA signature:	

Stage 3	Curriculum Manager name:		Date:	

Outcome of appeals review (please give as much information as possible*):

Resolved?	Y	N	Curriculum Manager signature:	

Stage 4	QA Manager:		Date:		Upheld?	Y	N
	Outcome of appeals review (please give as much information as possible*):						
	Recommendation(s) to Curriculum Manager:						
	QA Manager signature:						

*If necessary, please continue on a separate sheet of paper and attach to this form.

18 APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This template has been designed to help you take action to improve services and practices which affect staff, students and other service users at Northampton College. By completing this template, you would have considered the impact that your policy, practice or service might have on particular social groups within the college community. The exercise will also provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate, where possible, that the College promotes equity, diversity and inclusion.

Once this Equality Impact Assessment has been created, please include on the last page of your policy document.

Policy Details	
What is the policy?	HE Student Assessment Policy
Is it new or existing?	Existing
Department	Quality
Policy Author (postholder title, name)	Joanne Philpott, Deputy Principal
Author of Equality Analysis	
Date of completion	

Aim and Objectives
Briefly describe the aims and objectives of the policy

Policy Assessment

Consider whether your policy might have an impact on various groups identified within the categories listed below and explain why you have reached this conclusion.
Please tick (√) the identified level of impact (positive, negative, or no impact) and provide details of your findings.

	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Findings
Race				
Religion and/or belief				
Sex (Gender)				
Gender Identity				
Disability				
Age				
Sexual orientation				
Marriage and/or civil partnership				
Pregnancy and/or maternity (including surrogacy and adoption)				
Other identified group (e.g. carers)				

Action Planning

How do you intend to mitigate or eliminate any negative impact identified?	If a positive impact is identified, how do you intend to promote or develop this opportunity?	Where negative impact has been identified, can it be justified? If so, explain how.

Monitor and Review

How will you monitor the impact of your policy once it has been put into effect?

The policy will be monitored through feedback from services users gathered via:

Names and position of Impact Assessment Team (min of 3 preferably from areas across the College):

Name	
Mark Owen	
Jan Hutt	
Ashok Dave	

Equality Analysis Sign-Off Signature and Date:	
Review Date:	

Appendix 2: DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Data Protection Impact Assessment

Does this Policy
- require the collection and use of data in addition that normally collected by the College?

Yes / No (if Yes complete Assessment point number 1)
- require the sharing of data with partners?

Yes / No (if Yes complete Assessment point number 2)

1. Is additional data being collected? If so please detail:

    Is data collected personal and/or sensitive?

    How will you collect, use, store and delete data?

2. Will you be sharing data with anyone? Please detail what data, with who and confirm a **Data Sharing Agreement** is in place

    Describe the purposes of the processing / sharing: What are the benefits of the processing/ sharing – for you, and more broadly?

    Consider how to consult with relevant stakeholders: describe when and how you will seek individuals' views – or justify why it's not appropriate to do so.

    Describe compliance and proportionality measures, in particular:
What is your lawful basis for processing?

How will you ensure data quality and data minimisation?

| |
| |

What information will you give individuals?

| |
| |

Please attach a Risk Assessment if there are significant risks to data protection

Signed by Data Protection Officer

Name:

Date:

Appendix 3: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

TITLE OF COLLEGE POLICY: HE Student Assessment Policy 2024-2025	**DATE APPROVED BY** Date:

AUDIENCE (select appropriate with √)					
Managers		Curriculum teams		Business Support teams	
All staff		Suppliers		Partners	
Other - Students					

CHANNEL (select appropriate with √)					
Policy & Strategy Team (PST) Meeting		Quality Improvement Network (QIN) Meeting		Marketing team NC Update Intranet Website	
Individual team		Suppliers		Partners	
Document Library Noticeboards Team meeting Email		e.g. Letter or email Meeting		e.g. Letter or email Meeting	
College Management Team (CMT) Meeting		JCNC e.g. Meeting Email		CORPORATION e.g. Meeting Email	

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN ACTIVATED BY:		
Name: Department	Job title:	Date: