

Craven College

Higher Education Assessment and Progression Regulations

for Higher National courses awarded by

Pearson (Edexcel)

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Context

The Pearson BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC) is a Level 4 qualification made up of 120 credits. It is usually studied full-time over one year, or part-time over two years.

The Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) is a Level 5 qualification made up of 240 credits. It is usually studied full-time over two years, or part-time over four years.

It is not the College's policy to issue unit accreditation unless a student withdraws from the course of study for which he or she is enrolled.

1. Recruitment and Enrolment

See [Higher Education Admissions Policy](#) available on the College website

2. Course Structure

Unit: Unit of teaching, learning and assessment within a higher national level course structure.

Units are allocated credit points; with a usual value of 15 credits, although 5, 10 and 20 credit units are also used. Units will either be compulsory within a course of study (Core Units) or classed as options. Each unit is ascribed to either level 4 or level 5.

Levels 4 & 5: The distinctive levels of study within a degree level course structure. In higher national undergraduate study, units are rated at Levels 4 or 5.

Semesters: The academic year is divided into half-year units called semesters.

Many units are delivered and assessed within a semester. Some units, however, may be delivered and assessed across a whole academic year or within another period such as a term.

Time limits: The normal maximum time limits for the completion of an award.

This is generally two years longer than the normal period of study. (N.B. Student Finance England rules may differ.) This would be four years for a typical HND, of two years full-time duration. Part-time courses are increased *pro rata*. The maximum time limit includes all periods of re-assessment.

3. Assessment

One or more tasks which address one or more specific learning outcomes.

The grading criteria (Pass, Merit, Distinction) will be listed on each task and these will be used to calculate the final mark. The final assessment mark will be reported to the HE Board of Examiners. Units may have one or more assessments.

Approval of Assessments

All assessments are internally verified and recorded at the Assessment Approvals Committee for approval prior to issue to students. External Examiners are invited to comment on assessment briefs.

Formative Assessment

Students working at higher levels should be capable of undertaking independent study and research, developing strategies to improve their own performance, supported by teaching staff. Formative assessment takes place prior to summative assessment. It involves the Assessor and student in discussions about progress and focuses on helping students to reflect on their learning and improve performance. Feedback on formative assessment must be constructive and provide clear guidance and actions for improvement.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is a 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 achievement. Students should be familiar with the assessment criteria to be able to understand the quality of what is required. They should be informed of the differences between grading criteria so that higher skills can be achieved.

Summative assessment will be marked by the Unit Tutor. Following the marking, sample work will be internally verified to ensure that the work meets the national standards and that all students have been judged fairly and consistently. An Internal Verifier can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme that is able to give an expert "second opinion".

Plagiarism

There are many definitions of what constitutes as plagiarism. All of them agree that plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct or, put more simply, a form of cheating. Plagiarism is much more than simple copying from another student, or from books or the Internet, and can be taken to include paraphrasing, sub-contracting the work to someone else, submitting the same piece of work for two different purposes, etc. Ultimately, plagiarism is attempting to pass off other people's work and ideas as your own. Please see the College's [Academic Misconduct Guidance](#) for more information.

Plagiarism is fundamentally wrong and provides students with an unfair advantage. Assessment procedures are compromised if the work submitted is not the student's own and the External Examiner (EE) will set the programme's status to Certification Pending – Centre Action Required if they find evidence of student plagiarism that has not been detected by the centre.

Where centres identify staff or student malpractice concerns the JCQ process for reporting it to the Awarding Body should be followed. In the event of malpractice being suspected or proven, Pearson will be required to complete additional quality assurance checks before certification can take place

External Examiner

External Examiners ensure that providers are meeting national standards. They are appointed by Pearson and are not members of the programme and assessment team. Their role is essentially that of a moderator, they do not mark work but moderate the decisions made by internal verifiers. They sample students' work at various levels of achievement and look for evidence of fairness, consistency and that assessment decisions are based on the qualification criteria for achievement.

They have the right to attend Board of Examiner meetings and are also able to act in an advisory capacity.

The internal assessment outcomes reached for all Pearson BTEC Higher National programmes benchmarked to Level 4 and Level 5 of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), are subject to a visit from a Pearson appointed External Examiner. The outcomes of this process will be:

- To confirm that internal assessment is to national standards and allow certification, or
- To make recommendations to improve the quality of assessment outcomes before certification is released.

4. Assessment Submission Deadlines

The course/semester week of the deadline will be approved by the Assessment Approvals Committee and the actual dates will be set by the Unit Tutors at the beginning of each academic year. Students are expected to meet all set deadlines (see section on exceptions).

- Each student will be allowed one draft submission. Students can then receive guidance as to how to improve their work
- Work must be submitted on the original due date

- If summative assessment work fails to meet the pass criteria, the student will be expected to undertake a reassessment. The release of marks to students will trigger the resubmission period that will remain open for four weeks.

Exceptions to meeting an assessment deadline:

If a student fails to submit an assignment by the published deadline date without prior permission (see application for extension / mitigation information below), this will be recorded as a fail at the first attempt. Students are normally permitted one resubmission opportunity per failed unit; however, the grade for that unit will be capped at a Pass.

Application for Extension

An application for extension of up to one week may be granted if, due to personal circumstances, students are unable to complete unit assessments by the submission date. The Application for Extension form can be found on the College website. **An extension request must be submitted 24 hours before the assessment deadline.** Requests submitted after the deadline will not be considered. When completed the form should be emailed to HE@craven-college.ac.uk . Students may call the HE Team on 01756 243506 if they have any questions.

Extensions will not be granted for practical assessments, group assessments, exams or presentations.

Requests for Additional Consideration

In exceptional circumstances students may apply for additional consideration. The Application for Additional Consideration form can be found on the [College website](#) and may be submitted when, due to personal circumstances, students are unable to complete unit assessments or where they are unable to attend a presentation, exam or group assessment. Applications for additional consideration must be supported by independent documentary evidence, such as a medical certificate, letter from an employer, statement from a member of academic staff, statement of attendance from a counsellor, etc.

STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENT SUBMISSION DATE. **In exceptional circumstances completed forms may be accepted up to 14 days after the submission date. Any information received outside of this time period will not be considered, unless the student can provide evidence that they were prevented from meeting the deadline by circumstances outside their control.**

The College will endeavour to consider applications for additional consideration within three working days of receipt. Both the student and Course Tutor/Module Tutor will be made aware of the decision. **It is the student's responsibility** to follow up the decision with the HE Team.

5. Grading Pearson BTEC Higher National Units

Assessment decisions for BTEC Higher Nationals are based on the specific criteria given in each unit and set at each grade level. The criteria for each unit have been defined according to a framework to ensure that standards are consistent in the qualification and across the suite as a whole. The way in which individual units are written provides a balance of assessment of understanding, practical skills and vocational attributes appropriate to the purpose of the qualifications. The assessment criteria for a unit are hierarchical and holistic. For example, if an M criterion requires the student to show 'analysis' and the related P criterion requires the student to 'explain', then to satisfy the M criterion a student will need to cover both 'explain' and 'analyse'. The unit assessment grid shows the relationships among the criteria so that assessors can apply all the criteria to the student's evidence at the same time.

Assessors must show how they have reached their decisions using the criteria in the assessment records. When a student has completed all the assessment for a unit then the assessment team will give a grade for the unit. This is given simply according to the highest level for which the student is judged to have met all the criteria. Therefore:

- **To achieve a Pass**, a student must have satisfied all the Pass criteria for the learning outcomes, showing coverage of the unit content and therefore attainment at Level 4 or 5 of the national framework.
- **To achieve a Merit**, a student must have satisfied all the Merit criteria (and therefore the Pass criteria) through high performance in each learning outcome.
- **To achieve a Distinction**, a student must have satisfied all the Distinction criteria (and therefore the Pass and Merit criteria), and these define outstanding performance across the unit as a whole.

The award of a Pass is a defined level of performance and cannot be given solely on the basis of a student completing assignments. Students who do not satisfy the Pass criteria should be reported as Unclassified.

In order to achieve a pass in a unit	all learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria have been met
In order to achieve a merit in a unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria have been met • all merit grade descriptors are achieved
In order to achieve a distinction in a unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all learning outcomes and associated assessment criteria have been met • all merit and all distinction grade descriptors are achieved

Internal Verification

Internal Verification of assessments enables marked work and feedback to be critically appraised to ensure that the marking criteria have been correctly applied and that feedback to students is constructive, and will be applied to higher education assessments except where the awarding organisation has other requirements.

Board of Examiners

The main purpose of Board of Examiners for Higher National courses is to make recommendations on:

- The grades achieved by students on the individual units
- Recording the opportunity for resubmission
- Extenuating circumstances
- Cases of cheating and plagiarism
- Progression of students on to the next stage of the programme
- The awards to be made to students

The Board of Examiners may also monitor academic standards.

It is only when the unit results of students' achievement have been considered by the Board of Examiners that certification can be awarded. Prior to this the External Examiner will have sampled work and the report will be received by the Board of Examiners.

Approved marks will be issued within four weeks of the Board of Examiners. Students are entitled to receive indicative feedback on performance in assessed work within four weeks of the assessment deadline. It has been agreed that it is not necessary to wait until the Board of Examiners to release provisional grades.

N.B. The decision of the Board of Examiners will not be released for students until all debts are cleared in each academic year. Students may not progress to the next level or receive an award if tuition fees are outstanding.

Fails and resubmissions

Students must achieve at least a Pass overall to pass the 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 provider's discretion and Board of Examiners, decisions can be made to permitted to repeat a unit.
- The student must study the unit again with full attendance and 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.

6. Conditions for the Award

To achieve a Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma qualification a student must have:

- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at level 5;
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at level 5;
- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at level 4;
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at level 4.

To achieve a Pearson BTEC Higher National Certificate qualification a student must have:

- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at level 4;
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at level 4.

Compensation Provisions Compensation Provisions for the HND

A student can still be awarded a HND if they have not achieved a minimum of a Pass in one of the 15 credit units at Level 4 and one of the 15 credit units at Level 5 but they have otherwise fulfilled all the above conditions.

Compensation Provisions HNC

A student can still be awarded a HNC if they have not achieved a minimum of a Pass in one of the 15 credit units but they have otherwise fulfilled all the above conditions.

The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance in all units to the value of 120 credits. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC or Level 5 for the HND, based on unit achievement.

- All units in valid combination must be attempted (120 credits)
- At least 105 credits must be Pass or above
- All 120 credits count in calculating the grade

- The overall qualification grade is calculated in the same way for the HNC and for the HND
- The overall qualification grade for the HND will be calculated based on student performance in Level 5 units only.

7. Calculation of the overall qualification grade

The calculation of the overall qualification grade is undertaken by Pearson and is based on the student's performance in all units. Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade, using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC or Level 5 for the HND, based on unit achievement. The overall qualification grade is calculated in the same way for the HNC and for the HND.

All units in valid combination must have been attempted for each qualification. The conditions of award and the compensation provisions will apply as outlined above.

All 120 credits count in calculating the grade (at each level, as applicable). The overall qualification grade for the HNC is calculated based on student performance in Level 4 units only and the HND will be calculated based on student performance in Level 5 units only.

Units that have been attempted but not achieved, and subsequently granted compensation, will appear as 'Unclassified', i.e. a 'U' grade, on the student's Notification of Performance, that is issued with the student certificate.

Points per credit

Pass	4
Merit	6
Distinction	8

Points boundaries

Pass	420-599
Merit	600-839
Distinction	840 +

See page 71 of the [Higher Nationals Animal Management specification](#) for modelled student outcomes.

8. Appeals, Complaints and Withdrawals

Appeals

See [Higher Education Appeals Policy and Procedure](#) available on the College website

Complaints

See the [Complaints Policy](#) available on the College website

Withdrawal

If a student is experiencing difficulties continuing on their course, the College can offer a range of support for academic, financial, and personal issues. Students are strongly advised to seek support from the Programme Leader Tutor or Student Services as appropriate, before making a decision to withdraw. Once that decision is made it is important to formally confirm or inform the College in writing by email to withdrawals@craven-college.ac.uk as tuition fees and other charges will continue to accumulate. Students cannot be withdrawn; they must withdraw themselves. See Student Handbook for further details.