



ASSESSMENT & VERIFICATION POLICY & PROCEDURES

The UK Quality Code for Higher Education sets out the following Expectations and Practices for assessment that higher education providers are required to meet.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS

The academic standards of courses meet the requirements of the relevant national qualifications framework.

The value of qualifications awarded to students at the point of qualification and over time is in line with sector-recognised standards.

EXPECTATIONS FOR QUALITY

Courses are well-designed, provide a high-quality academic experience for all students and enable a student's achievement to be reliably assessed.

From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

CORE PRACTICES FOR STANDARDS

The provider ensures that the threshold standards for its qualifications are consistent with the relevant national qualifications frameworks.

The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the standards of its awards are credible and secure irrespective of where or how courses are delivered or who delivers them.

The provider uses external expertise, assessment and classification processes that are reliable, fair and transparent.

COMMON PRACTICE FOR STANDARDS

The provider reviews its core practices for standards regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

CORE PRACTICES FOR QUALITY

The provider designs and/or delivers high-quality courses.

The provider has sufficient appropriately qualified and skilled staff to deliver a high-quality academic experience.

COMMON PRACTICES FOR QUALITY

The provider reviews its core practices for quality regularly and uses the outcomes to drive improvement and enhancement.

The provider's approach to managing quality takes account of external expertise.

The provider engages students individually and collectively in the development, assurance and enhancement of the quality of their educational experience.

Aims

LSCI is committed to ensuring that standards of assessment are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of our awarding organisations. Students' work must be assessed to achieve the stated learning objectives of the programmes we offer and facilitate the achievement of our students' qualification and their wider development.

Objectives

To assess students' work with integrity by being consistent and transparent in our assessment judgments and processes so that the outcomes are fair, reliable and valid.

To ensure that assessment standards and specifications are implemented fully so that no risk is posed to the reputation of the awarding organisations or the qualifications we offer.

To establish quality control and recording mechanisms for assignments and their assessment through a system of sampling, internal verification as appropriate to the requirements of the programmes.

Assessment

Internal Assessment is defined as the process where staff makes judgments on evidence produced by students against required criteria for the BTEC qualifications. All assessment materials must be internally verified before being issued to students.

Completed assignments will be assessed and internally verified. External verification takes place once in a year by the awarding respective awarding organisations. Any grade awarded will be subject to internal and/or external verification and the release of certification rests with the awarding organisation subject to a successful EV report.

The Assessor is responsible for ensuring that assessment processes are consistent and transparent, that evidence is valid, sufficient and authentic and that judgment of evidence is valid and reliable.

Formative feedback is given on the sample work of students. This helps student to be confident that they can produce their work at the right level or make an improvement if the formative feedback identifies some weaknesses or not at the level of achieving at least a pass grade.

Students submit their assignments to the College by the deadlines set at the start of the course. Anybody failing to submit their assignment on time they must follow the late submission guidelines to avoid any disappointment of their work is not assessed. Each student signs the declaration form to confirm that the work is their own.

Responsibility of teachers/assessors

- Set tasks which allow students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Give students opportunities to achieve the highest possible grades on their courses.
- Perform assessments and provide constructive feedback to students that they meet the requirements of the assessment criteria and learning outcomes of the assessed module;
- Provide accurate, timely and informative assessment feedback to inform students of what was evidenced that they met the assessment criteria and also notify what they need to do to improve further in particular areas of weakness.
- Use learning/command verbs in their assessment feedback appropriately to notify that the students have achieved the assessment criteria correctly.
- Record assessment decisions correctly and systematically using an agreed template of feedback sheet.
- Be aware of and keep up-to-date with awarding organisation guidance in respect of assessment, standardisation and verification
- Ensure that the quality of assessment is assured by following the guidance in the College assessment and internal verification policy.

Internal Verification

The Internal Verification is at the heart of the quality assurance. This is to ensure that the assessment is done consistently to meet the academic standards and can also lead to staff development and quality improvement.

Each course will have an identified Internal Verifier (IV) who is not otherwise involved in the assessing or setting of work for the course.

Internal Verifiers will have the knowledge and expertise for which they are responsible to enable accurate judgments to be made with regard to the assignment brief and the student performance in relation to the assessment guidelines.

Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifiers verify all sampled assignments, record their comments and passed onto the assessors. The Internal Verifiers including the Lead Internal Verifier sit in the exam board and share any concerns or training needs and make recommendation to the Academic and Quality Enhancement Committee.

The College has developed internal pro-forma for assessment and feedback. The effectiveness of the feedback must meet the needs of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. For the internal verification, the marked assessments, along with a copy of the assessment guidelines and the assessment pro-forma are submitted to the internal verifier. Internal Verifiers are given criteria for verification based upon the awarding organisations' requirements and the College's assessment and internal verification policy.

The internal verifier checks that the assessors have used the appropriate assessment criteria and methodology as required by the College and awarding organisation. The internal verifier samples the assessments for compliance and also checks for any discrepancies in the awarding of marks for individual assessments between assessors. In the event that there are discrepancies or non-compliance with guidelines, the Internal Verifier will seek to resolve the issues with the assessors. The Internal Verifiers report to the Lead Internal Verifier (if applicable), and refer any unresolved matters to them as part of the Internal Verification report.

Once the assessments have been internally verified, they are presented to the Exam Board for approval. Once it is approved, they are then recorded on the progress report spreadsheet. The

final assessments are then submitted for external verification by the awarding organisation, in the required formats.

Role of Internal Verifier

- Monitor that the IV schedule covers all units and all assessors on a programme
- Co-ordinate assessment arrangements.
- Verifying assignment briefs prior to the distribution to students
- Ensure appropriate corrective action is taken when assignment briefs are not fit for purpose or when assessment decisions are not accurate.
- Developing the skills of assessors, especially those are new to assessment
- Maintaining consistency of assessment decisions by holding standardisation meetings
- Ensure an effective system of recording learner achievement is in place.
- Provide support and guidance to assessors and advise any training needs.
- Use assessment guidelines to verify assessors' judgments and the quality of the feedback to ensure that it is consistent, fair and reliable.
- Liaise with external verifiers.
- Take part in the formal stages of any appeal.

Lead Internal Verifier (LIV)

The lead Internal Verifier will act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of all assignment-based programmes. The LIV will be responsible for leading a team of internal quality assurers to support the development and implementation of the learner journey and ensure consistent assessment judgments and internal verifications.

The Lead Internal Verifier has the responsibility for ensuring that the assignment briefs are distributed to the students in accordance with the agreed timetable. It is also the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier, to act as a conduit for information from awarding organisations to course teams to ensure standardisation of processes and documentation across the programmes.

Lead Internal Verifiers' Responsibility

The Lead Internal Verifier will:

- Be responsible for authorising the final version, and in case of Pearson, sending briefs to the Pearson Assignment Checking Service for review;
- Be responsible for ensuring that the tutor/assessor receives feedback and actions and that assignment briefs are amended as advised;
- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes are fit for purpose and meet awarding organisation requirements;
- Support the development of internal verifiers to ensure that they have current occupational competency and that they meet audit and compliance requirements
- Monitor the internal quality assurance of all qualifications;
- Facilitate standardisation activities to ensure accuracy and consistency of decisions and feedback between internal verifiers to enhance the continuous improvement of programme delivery;
- Develop and follow internal policies, procedures and documentation for the carrying out and maintenance full compliance with awarding organisations;
- Co-ordinate the timely registration and certification claims for students and maintain appropriate records of quality assurance, assessment, registration and certification activities;
- Ensure all assessment documentation, maintained by internal verifiers and assessors, is complete, up-to-date and legible;
- Conduct observations of Assessors conducting the assessment process;
- Conduct observation of internal verifiers conducting the quality assurance process;
- Ensure that records of assessment and samples of student work are being retained for use during External Verifications;
- Liaise with External Verifiers to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place.

Sampling

The College performs quality check samples of marking from each tutor. The College usually samples at least 25% of the assessed assignments taking into consideration that each student, each module and each assessor is covered. On top about 80% extra samples are taken from the higher grades of merits and distinction if they are not covered already within the sampled assignments.

The internal verifiers need to ensure that they implement the following requirements

- every student is the subject of sampling;
- every assessor is sampled for every unit/module;
- for new or inexperienced assessors, sample size should be increased.

Internal verification of assessment decisions

A sample of assessed work from every unit, every student and every assessor must be internally verified to check the accuracy of assessment.

A Pearson internal verification template is used showing an accurate record of programme, unit and assignment title, assessor and learner names, and includes the following questions:

- Which assessment and grading criteria has the assessor awarded?
- Have the learner and assessor confirmed the authenticity of the evidence?
- Do the assessment criteria awarded match those targeted by the brief?
- Has the work been assessed accurately?
- Does the assessment feedback to the learner:
 - Link to relevant assessment criteria?
 - Justify each assessment criterion awarded?
- Does the assessment decision need amending?

The internal verification of assessment decision template is enclosed as **Appendix 2**.

Standardisation

Standardisation of assessment must take place when there is more than one assessor engaged in assessing assignments of one unit.

Standardisation meetings take place at the beginning of each semester where the standards and processes are discussed to maximise consistency between courses and their assessments. The objective of the standardisation of the marking of assessments is to determine standards associated with designated criteria.

Standardisation meetings are used to develop quality and consistency of assessment across assessors involved in different units across a programme or different programmes. Provisions are made available to share examples of 'best practice' and areas of concern.

Assignment Briefs

The Course tutors will draft initial assignment briefs for relevant modules and submitted to the Internal Verifier and/or Lead Internal Verifier for approval. Internal Verifier may refer initial briefs back to tutors for clarification and/or amendment where appropriate.

An assignment brief is produced based on the content and the defined learning outcomes of the module. This is then internally verified by the named internal verifier to check if this is developed in line with the learning outcome and assessment criteria and therefore the brief is fit for purpose. In case of Pearson this can be sent to Pearson's assignment checking service for their comments.

This is then distributed to the students and explained to them in the class to ensure that they are clear about the criteria they are expected to meet and that they are fully briefed on the skills which need to be demonstrated in their assignments.

College records the outcomes of assessment on a progress record sheet. Assignments, assessments and the associated records will be held secure for the minimum period stipulated by the awarding /regulatory organisation. Associated IV records should also be kept, to support and verify the decisions that were made for the cohort. The assessment decisions are discussed at the Exam Board meetings for necessary action and/or approval. After this they the successful results are uploaded to the Pearson gateway for the release of the certificate and transcripts, as appropriate.

All assignment briefs must conform to the requirements of the awarding body and College procedures. This process will ensure each brief is fit for purpose and that:

- the tasks and evidence will allow the learner to address the targeted criteria;
- it is written in clear and accessible language;
- the learner's role and tasks are vocationally relevant and appropriate to the level of the qualification;
- equal opportunities are incorporated.

Internal verification of assignment briefs

This is to verify the brief is fit for purpose by ensuring:

- The tasks and evidence will allow the learner to address the targeted criteria.
- It is written in a clear and accessible language.

- The tasks are relevant to the learning outcomes and appropriate to the level of the qualification.
- Equal opportunities are incorporated.

The Internal Verifier should check that the assignment brief:

- has accurate programme and unit details
- has clear deadlines for assessment
- shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit(s) covered in the assignment
- indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted against each task
- clearly states what evidence the learner needs to provide
- is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient
- is set at the appropriate level
- has a time period of appropriate duration
- uses suitable vocational language
- has a clear presentation format.

The template of the internal verification of assignment brief is enclosed as **Appendix 1**.

The outcome of internal verification should be recorded on the form and if any action is identified by the internal verifier, the assessor should complete this and return it to the internal verifier for sign off. Once the assignment is verified as fit for purpose, it is issued to the students.

Assignment Checking Service

The College will, at every opportunity, use the assignment checking service to solicit feedback on its assignment briefs. Assignments submitted to this service will be modified in accordance with the advice received. All versions of the assignment brief and checking service advices will be retained and made available to the External Verifier.

External Verification Process and Dealing with the EV Reports

Students submit their assignments at the specified window to e-learning portal/Turn-It-In at the end the semester. These assignments are then assessed by our assessors/teachers based on the marking scheme as set up by the awarding organisations. Assignments are then sampled for internal verification to ensure that the assessments are correct reflecting the learning outcomes. The results will be recorded in a database to track student progression.

The nominated external verifiers from the awarding organisations are invited to make a visit to conduct the external verification process. This is to make sure that the centre complies with the awarding organisation requirements on assessment. After the visit, the External Verifier (EV) produces a report for the centre.

The report is discussed in detail with the assessors and at the Academic Quality Enhancement Committee (AQEC). An Action plan is developed to deal with the issues raised by the EV and the actions are implemented according to the plan. This is then reported back to the AQEC and the EV at the following visit.

Storage and retention of student work

The College keeps record of student work, assessment and verification for at least 3 years after certification or in line with the relevant awarding organisation guidelines. For an example, in case of NOCN this will be kept securely for up to seven years, in line with NOCN requirement. The record includes IV sampling plan which shows the names and candidate registration numbers. We also undertake steps to protect any work stored electronically from corruption and have a back-up procedure in place.

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Assessment & Verification Policy & Procedures
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