

## Bury College Policy and Procedures

# Assessment Regulations for Pearson HNC and HND Awards

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## 1. Introduction & Purpose

1.1. These regulations apply to BTEC HNC/HND awards offered by Bury College. It is the College's responsibility to ensure that students have access to the HNC/HND regulations and assessment policies and procedures including:

- Academic Malpractice
- Mitigating circumstances
- Extension policy as detailed in this document
- Complaints procedures
- Student handbooks, programme specifications and assessment schedules
- Learning outcomes, assessment criteria and modes of assessment
- Criteria relating to grading and marking schemes

## 2. Implementation

### 2. Duration of the Award

Mode of attendance	Duration of programme	Credits per year	Total number of credits per award	Framework for Higher Education Level
Part-time HNC	2 years	60 credits	120	4
Full-time HNC	1 year	120 credits	120	4
Full-time HND	2 years	120 credits	240	5

### 3. Combination of Credits

3.1. The total number of credits normally required for a BTEC HNC Diploma is 120 credits. The credits are a combination of mandatory core units and selected units. The BTEC HNC programme must contain a minimum of 65 credits at level 4

3.2 The total number of credits normally required for a BTEC HND Diploma is 240 credits. The credits are made up of mandatory core units and selected units. The BTEC HND programme must contain a minimum of 65 credits at level 4 and 125 credits at level 5

### 4.0. Calculation of Final Award

4.1. The calculation of the HNC qualification grade is based on the student's best performance in units at or above the level of the qualification to the value of 75 credits.

- 4.2. The best 75 credits must come from a maximum of 120 credits as a valid rule of combination
- 4.3. The units from which the 75 credits are selected come from the whole qualification including core credit
- 4.4. The calculation of the HND qualification grade is based on the student's best performance at or above the level of the qualification. This means that only units at level 5 can be counted towards the value of 75 credits
- 4.5. The best 75 credits must come from a maximum of 240 credits as a valid rule of combination
- 4.6. The units from which the 75 best credits are selected come from the whole qualification, including core units, but must be level 5 units
- 4.7. Units points per credit for both HNC and HND are calculated as follows:
  - Pass = 0
  - Merit = 1
  - Distinction= 2
- 4.8. The point range for each grade at Pass, Merit and Distinction for HNC and HND programmes is as follows:
  - 0-74 = Pass
  - 75 -149= Merit
  - 150 = Distinction

## 5. Withdrawal from a programme

- 5.1. A break in study or permanent withdrawal from the programme may be necessary if circumstances prevent the student from continuing their studies. This must be discussed as soon as possible with the student and the programme leader so that the correct procedures are followed

## 6. Passing a Unit and the Award of Credit

- 6.1. Unit assessment is made up of one or more assessment tasks. Where there is more than one assessment task, weightings and rules for passing the unit will be defined and published in the programme specification and module guides. The grades for BTEC units are as follows:

Grade	Other outcomes
<b>Pass</b> –awarded when all Pass criteria have been achieved	<b>Refer-</b> see section 10 of this document
<b>Merit</b> – awarded when all Pass and Merit criteria have been achieved	<b>Fail-</b> see section 16 of this document
<b>Distinction</b> – awarded when all Pass, Merit and Distinction criteria have been achieved	<b>Defer-</b> see section 14 of this document

6.2. Curriculum teams will be responsible for recommending overall grades for each unit. For a unit involving one assessment, the overall grade will be the grade obtained in that assessment. For a unit involving more than one assessment, each student's profile of grades and weightings of the assessment components will be considered when recommending overall grades

6.3. The minimum pass criteria to pass a unit is to:

- Achieve an overall pass grade and
- Make a valid attempt at all unit assessment tasks
- When the student achieves or exceeds the minimum pass criteria for a unit, credit for the unit will be awarded
- When the student has passed a unit and the outcome of summative assessment is recorded on the student profile, further opportunities to improve the original grade are not allowed
- If a student does not submit an assessment for a unit this will be considered a fail

## **7.0. Methods of Assessment**

7.1. The method of assessment for each module, including the weighting for each element of the assessment, shall be notified to students in the module guide. Registration onto a unit entitles the student to:

- One delivery of the unit
- Access to learning and teaching resources
- An initial opportunity to attempt the assessment tasks
- One referral opportunity if required

## **8.0. Formative and Summative Assessment**

8.1. One formal opportunity to provide final formative assessment feedback will be included in each assessment plan at a point when students will have had the opportunity to provide evidence towards all the assessment criteria targeted. The assessment will be formally recorded

8.2. Normally, further formal opportunities for formative feedback should not be necessary. However, if it is clear at the formative assessment stage that students have misinterpreted or have been misdirected by the assignment brief, there may be need for another formative assessment and feedback once issues have been addressed

8.3. Following formative assessment and feedback, students are able to:

- Revisit work to add to the original evidence produced to consolidate a pass grade or to enhance their work to achieve a higher grade
- Submit evidence for summative assessment and final unit grade

8.4. 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 recorded on the student's profile. Should the student not

achieve at least a pass grade after both formative and summative assessment, the submitted work will be recorded as a Refer

- 8.5. If the student does not achieve the minimum pass criteria for the unit overall, they may be entitled to a referral at the end of the unit subject to approval from the Programme Leader

### **9.0. Assessment of Students with Additional Needs**

- 9.1. In certain circumstances, with the approval of the Chair of the Assessment Board, an alternate form of assessment to that outlined in the approved programme documentation, which covers the same Learning Outcomes, may be approved for students with individual needs, where this is supported by appropriate evidence and where such adjustments are deemed to be reasonable and can be made without endangering the safety of the award or unduly providing any student with an advantage or disadvantage.

### **10.0 Resubmission of Referred Student Work**

- 10.1. If the student does not achieve the minimum pass criteria for the unit overall, they may be entitled to a referral at the end of the unit subject to the approval from the Programme Leader. A student shall normally be permitted one attempt to redeem unsatisfactory performance in an assignment providing a student has met the initial submission deadline.
- 10.2. Referral assessments will be on a task by task basis and will usually be the same form as the initial assessment but would normally be a different piece of work from the original. However an alternative form of assessment task may be set if it is not appropriate for the student to be assessed by exactly the same method as at the first attempt, for example group work

### **11.0 Passing a Unit Following Referral**

- 11.1 The minimum pass criteria to pass a unit are that the student:
- Achieves an overall pass grade and
  - Makes a valid attempt at all unit assessment tasks
  - Merit and distinction criteria are not included in the referral assessment brief, therefore the maximum grade is a Pass for the resubmitted assessment. However, students must have at least one opportunity to achieve the Merit and Distinction criteria in the original or other assessments for the unit
  - If the student does not submit an assessment for a unit, this will be considered as a fail

### **12.0. Extensions at Programme Level**

- 12.1. In the case of unit assessments, programme leaders have, in cases of proven illness or other circumstances found valid on production of convincing evidence by the student, discretion to allow the assessments to be submitted late and for them to be marked as if submitted on time. The cases shall then be submitted to the Programme Leader who shall monitor and regulate the circumstances in which short term extensions are granted. The maximum extension to be granted under these circumstances is seven calendar days. Any request for an extension to a submission deadline must normally be made by the student, and decided upon by the programme leader, before the original submission date.
- 12.2. If an authorised extension has not been granted by the programme leader in advance and the assessment is submitted 1-7 days after the published deadline, the assessment may be marked at the discretion of the programme leader. Capping and downgrading grades to a Pass is not allowed unless the assessment criteria in the Merit/Distinction grade descriptors require evidence of:
- Meeting agreed deadlines
  - The ability to plan/organise effectively
  - The ability to work to industrial/commercial practices that include implicit timelines
- 12.3. Students submitting assessments later than 7 calendar days without agreement by the programme leader will be recorded as Did Not Submit. Students will be offered a single reassessment at the next available opportunity. Merit and Distinction criteria will not be included in the reassessment

### **13.0. Mitigating Circumstances**

- 13.1 Students may submit requests for consideration of mitigating circumstances in respect of their summative assessment if:
- They are unable to submit assessment by the published deadline
  - They are unable to attend examinations or other scheduled assessments
  - They feel that their performance has suffered as a result of circumstances beyond their control
- 13.2. If a student fails to seek consideration of their mitigating circumstances in accordance with Mitigating Circumstances Policy normally any request for an appeal hearing on the grounds of these extenuating circumstances will be rejected. Students are advised to read the Mitigating Circumstances Policy which can be downloaded via the following link:  
<http://www.burycollegeunicentre.co.uk/about/policies.aspx>

### **14.0. Deferral in a Unit or an Assessment Task**

- 14.1. A deferral in an assessment task or an overall unit means that, due to mitigating circumstances accepted by the mitigating circumstances panel, the student has a further opportunity to take the assessment task that was affected. The grade is not capped unless the task is already Referred
- 14.2. Deferred assessments will be on a task for task basis and will usually be of the same form as the initial task, but would normally be a different piece of work from the original assessment. However, an alternative form of assessment may be set if it is not appropriate for the student to be assessed by exactly the same method as the initial task.

#### **15.0. Assessment and Reassessment Periods**

- 15.1 All assessment and reassessments for HNC/HND programmes will take place within a specified period
- 15.2 Each programme will publish in the programme handbook a calendar for assessment deadlines
- 15.3 The Assessment Board will agree the date for reassessment to be completed

#### **16.0. Failure of a unit**

- 16.1. There are four circumstances in which a student can fail a unit:
- Non submission of one or more assessments 7 calendar days after the published submission dates without prior acceptance of mitigating circumstances by the mitigating panel
  - Following first attempt and referral, the student has not made any valid attempt in one or more assessments tasks i.e. non submission
  - Following referral, the student does not achieve the minimum overall pass criteria in a unit, which may include the requirement to pass an individual assessment task
  - Where failure in a unit is due to proven academic misconduct
- 16.2. If a student fails a unit they can retake the same unit on one occasion only. If a failed unit is due to academic misconduct, a student may be given a sanction that means they are not allowed to retake the unit

#### **17.0. Retaking a Failed Unit**

- 17.1. If a student fails a unit, they will be allowed to retake the unit on one occasion only, unless prevented to do so due to:
- An academic misconduct sanction
  - Availability of the unit concerned
- 17.2. Retaking a unit means that:

- The student may be charged a fee, published by Bury College
  - The student must take all the assessment tasks in the unit with attendance
  - The student must have the same reassessment opportunities as at the first registration as indicated in Section 7 of this document
- 17.3. If the unit is no longer available, a replacement unit may be studied as directed by Bury College. This will be treated as a retake and will be subjected to all regulations relating to retake units (Section 18.3). If a replacement unit cannot be studied, the student will need to renegotiate their programme of study. Decisions about taking a replacement unit or renegotiating a programme require discussion and agreement from the Director of Higher Education
- 17.4. If a student fails a unit after retaking this would normally mean that they will have to withdraw from the programme
- 18.0. Progression to the Next Stage or Level**
- 18.1. If a student passes all the units at any given stage or level of the programme, they can normally progress to the next stage or level
- 18.2. If a student has not passed all the units but has mitigating circumstances accepted at either the first assessment or a reassessment point, then they will be allowed to progress with a further opportunity of reassessment at the discretion of the Assessment Board
- 18.3. If the student has failed a unit(s) then normally they will be provided with the opportunity to re-take the unit(s) as if for the first time, and not be allowed to progress until these units have been passed
- 18.4. Exceptionally, at the discretion of the Assessment Board a student may be allowed to progress with one failed unit. Opportunities must be provided for the student to retake or substitute the unit in the following stage. Students will be charged an additional fee for the additional unit
- 19.0. Academic Malpractice**
- 19.1. The College operates an Academic Malpractice policy which determines what constitutes academic malpractice, the procedures that will be undertaken to investigate the allegation and the sanction that are available. Students are advised to make read the Bury College Academic Malpractice Policy which can be downloaded via <http://www.burycollegeunicentre.co.uk/about/policies.aspx>
- 20.0. Operation of Assessment Boards**
- 20.1. Assessment Boards for HNC and HND programmes will take place at the end Semester 1 and at the end of Semester 2. Dates for the Assessment Boards will be arranged at the beginning of each academic year.



20.2. Membership of the Assessment Board will consist of:

- The Director of Higher Education – Chair
- The Head of Standards
- The Higher Education Co-ordinator
- The Programme Leader or their nominee
- A Representative from Examinations
- The External Examiner (invited)

A full list of members of the Assessment Board must be signed by all members present

20.3. The Assessment Board is authorised to:

- Make recommendations of the grades achieved in individual units
- Note any instances of misconduct
- Note any accepted claims of mitigation
- Confirm unit grades
- Identify referral/deferral opportunities
- Make recommendations on progression of students onto the next stage of their programme
- Confirm the classification of the final award to be made based on the formula indicated in Section 4 of this document

#### **21.0. Determination of results and actions to be taken**

21.1. The following confidential information will be provided to the Assessment Board:

- A spreadsheet of grades arrived at by internal examiners
- Where there is a discrepancy in grades awarded by the internal examiner and the internal moderator, the grade moderated by the External Examiner will be tabled together with the original grades
- The spreadsheet of grades and decisions will be collected in at the end of the Assessment Board

#### **22.0. Assessment Board Decisions**

22.1. The Chair should identify the course of actions open to the Assessment Board.

22.2. The **unit assessment outcomes** for each student will be conducted as follows:

- The grades for each student
- Any amendment to the grades will be agreed and the spreadsheet amended
- The overall unit assessment outcomes for the student will be agreed

22.3. Consideration of **individual results** should be considered as follows:

- The grades of each student should be considered
  - The consideration of mitigating circumstances in accordance with the Mitigating Circumstances Policy
  - Any amendments to the grades will be agreed and recorded on the spreadsheet
  - The opportunity of each student to 'Pass and Proceed' or retake in accordance with Section 18 of this document
  - The overall unit results for the student will be agreed
- 22.4 The award of Pass, Merit or Distinction will be confirmed in accordance with the formula indicated in Section 4 of this document
- 22.5. The decisions of the Assessment Board will be formally recorded in the minutes. The Chair of the Assessment Board will confirm the minutes as correct.
- 22.6 .Academic staff must not disclose the confidential proceedings of the Assessment Board. Only designated staff are authorised to disclose results to students

### **23.0. Appeals against Academic Board Decisions**

- 23.1. Students may submit an Academic Appeal regarding the decision on the Assessment Board on the following grounds:
- That circumstances affected the student's performance which the Assessment board had not been aware of when the decision was taken and which might have material effect on the decision
  - That there was an administrative error or procedural irregularity in the assessment process
  - That there was evidence of prejudice or bias or proper assessment on the part of the examiners.
- 23.2. Procedures for making an Academic Board Appeal are contained within the Complaints and Appeals Policy. Student should make themselves aware of the Complaints and Appeals Policy by using the following link:

<http://www.burycollegeuniversity.co.uk/about/policies.aspx>

