

Issue No.	11
Issue Date:	August 2023
Originator:	Higher Education Quality, Standards and Enhancement Committee
Responsibility:	Vice Principal 14-19, Adult and Higher Education



Leicester College Higher Education Academic Regulations

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1. Aim of the Regulations

1.1 The aims of these regulations are to:

- meet the requirements of the Office for Students (OfS) regulatory framework
- ensure that programmes are managed in line with awarding organisation regulation and guidance.
- support fairness and consistency in the operation of our Higher Education programmes

2. Scope of these Regulations

2.1 These regulations are relevant to the following awards taught by Leicester College which are awarded by Pearson Edexcel and other awarding organisations pertinent to programmes at level 4 and above.

Table 1: Range of Awards Covered by These Regulations

Title of Award	Awarded By
L4+ Non-prescribed HE (NPHE) qualifications (NPHE)	Various
Higher National Certificate	Pearson Edexcel
Higher National Diploma	Pearson Edexcel

2.2 All programmes delivered at the College that are validated and awarded by De Montfort University (DMU) operate subject to the [academic regulations and additional programme specific regulations for taught programmes](#) as published by the University.

3. The design and development of the HE Curriculum

Programme Approval

3.1 In order to ensure that programme proposals respond to college strategies and to assure the setting and maintenance of appropriate academic standards, all HE programme proposals (inclusive of L4+ NPHE) will be subject to a process of approval.

3.2 Programmes awarded through a University must meet the validation requirements of that institution.

Module/Unit Credit Framework

3.3 With the exception of short courses and non-prescribed HE, all courses leading to a named award are designed on a framework of 120 credits per full-time year (part-time and accelerated models pro rata). Units/Modules are commonly structured into 15 or 30 credits of content and assessment.

Module and Programme Levels

3.4 All modules/units will be set at one of three levels:

Level 4	Broadly equates to the first year of an Honours degree programme
Level 5	Broadly equates to the second year of an Honours degree programme
Level 6	Broadly equates to the third year of an Honours degree programme

At each of these levels, the intellectual rigour, academic challenge, and student autonomy should increase. Both the QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) and QAA Subject Benchmarks provide descriptors for typical attainment to inform module/unit content, delivery, and assessment strategy at each level.

4. Credit Requirements for Awards

4.1 The minimum credits required to be passed for each award is detailed in the following table.

Award	Minimum credits to be passed			
	Total credits	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Honours Top-Up	360	120	120	120
Edexcel HND	240	120	120	
Edexcel HNC	120	120		

4.2 Where a student has failed to satisfy the criteria for the full award for which they are registered, an Assessment board should consider conferring any

available interim/exit award, where recognised awarding organisation unit/module threshold credit has been achieved (see section 14).

5. College and Awarding organisations' Responsibilities for Assessment

5.1 Curriculum managers and programme teams should be aware of awarding organisation and the College's responsibilities for assessment. Where the awarding organisation has retained full responsibility, staff should be familiar with these arrangements and how they could affect students. Table 1 provides an overview of the responsibilities.

Table 1: College and Awarding Bodies' Responsibilities for Assessment

Activity	Pearson Edexcel	NPHE
Assessment Strategy	LC	In line with regulations
Setting of assessments	LC/Pearson	
Verification of assessment briefs	LC	
Verification of assessment decisions	LC	
Appeals	LC/Pearson	
Convening and Management of Assessment boards	LC	
Appointment of External Examiner/Standards Verifier	Pearson	
Academic offences	LC	
Recognition of Prior Learning	LC/Pearson	

6. Assessment Strategy

6.1. ^[OBJ] The purpose of assessment must be to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the intended learning outcomes of their course and that they have achieved the standards required for the awards they seek.

6.2 Students in higher education are expected to demonstrate technical proficiency in English language at the appropriate level. Assessments should require skills such as concise expression, synthesis, and analysis.

6.3 In order to support the improvement of English language, feedback will reference spelling, punctuation, and grammar in line with the College [Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Policy \(CR007\)](#).

6.4 The needs of disabled students should be anticipated when learning outcomes and assessment methods are being designed. Where a student cannot be fairly assessed by the methods prescribed for the module/unit concerned, because of a recognised disability*, the Higher Education Programme Lead should seek to adapt the assessment method as they deem appropriate, bearing in mind the intended learning outcomes and the need to assess each student on equal terms with other students. In all cases, adaptations should not lessen the value of the qualification. If the alternative assessment method only applies to the student(s) with disability, the variation must be approved by a member of the Curriculum Area's management team. Further advice can be sought from College [Assessment Policy \(Q006\)](#) and Student Services.

** disability includes sensory or physical impairments, learning difficulties including dyslexia, emotional, social and behavioural issues such as ASD and ADHD and long-term medical conditions.*

6.5 Formal Recognition of Prior Learning against module or unit attainment requires full liaison with the relevant awarding organisation and External Examiner approval is required to assure academic standards are met. The College 'Assessment Policy (Q006)' provides further guidance about College processes.

6.6 In order to further secure academic standards, students will be supported to develop and apply good study skills. Good academic practice workshops are available from College Library services and all students new to HE are required to participate in the GAP workshops provided. In addition, support for research, citation, referencing and the presentation of academic work must be embedded into all programmes. Where the needs of students exceed the provision embedded within the course, the College will facilitate further individualised support. All written academic work for summative assessment must be submitted through similarity detection software such as 'Turnitin'.

6.7 Instances of student coursework/assessment that raise concerns relating to safeguarding, security or potential inappropriate content should be reported to the Curriculum Director immediately and formal College procedures followed. Where coursework/assessment is deemed politically, morally or ethically sensitive or where taste and decency are brought into question an advisory panel should be convened to explore the motivation, impact and distribution of the student work. This advisory panel should consist of: Module/Unit Leader or HE PL, Curriculum Director, Head of Higher Education, the Director of Marketing and a HE Student Representative. Any student called to investigation should be made aware in advance of the nature of the meeting and can be accompanied by a member of the course, member of the Student Union or other suitable representative. Whilst protecting academic integrity and [freedom of expression](#), the panel will advise on the content, submission and distribution of coursework/assessment to avoid behaviour which could

bring the College (or awarding organisation) into disrepute and/or represent a safeguarding risk. The student should be notified of the outcome of the panel meeting in writing.

7. Assessment, Grading and Feedback

7.1 All assessment submission dates should be scheduled to allow for marking/grading, internal verification/moderation and the collation of results to take place prior to the Assessment board. Schedules will also allow teams to plan assessment requirements paying due regard to student workload and deadline bunching.

7.2 Every student will receive a Course Handbook and/or VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) resource during induction at the beginning of the programme. The handbooks, which are approved by the HE Office, must outline assessment schedules, how qualifications are graded and management of assessment procedures.

7.3 HE Programme Leads are responsible for assuring that all artefacts submitted by students for the purpose of summative assessment, and related assessment records, are uploaded to a central archive. The College is required to keep these records of assessment for a period of five years.

7.4 Assessment feedback and provisional grades will be returned to the student within a maximum of 4 weeks (20 working days) from the hand-in date. If in exceptional cases this cannot be achieved, it is essential that changes to the schedule are effectively communicated to students.

7.5 Assessment components submitted by the deadline that do not achieve pass threshold, or assessment components not submitted at all, will be subject to reassessment opportunity. The subsequent Assessment board will decide whether:

- resubmitted coursework in response to the original assessment will be accepted and capped at Pass threshold. Where necessary a new assessment brief that demonstrates the Learning Outcomes can be issued.

or

- the unit is repeated with/or without attendance and the grade capped at a Pass. This may impact on progression opportunities.

7.6 Any assessor/verifier who has a potential conflict of interest must declare that interest to the Chair of the appropriate assessment board(s) as

soon as the possibility arises and should not normally be expected to be the sole examiner for the student concerned on any individual module/unit.

8. Management of Assessment Deadlines

- 8.1 Prior to the date for final submission of an assessment component, it is acceptable to offer normal levels of formative feedback to support students in improving their performance. However, after the date of submission has passed, formative feedback must stop and no alteration or improvements to the coursework can be made.
- 8.2 Assessment components submitted up to 14 days after the set deadline, without formal approval through the extension and/or deferral process (see section 9), will be accepted and capped at Pass threshold.
- 8.3 If an assessment is submitted beyond 14 days without formal approval through the extension and/or deferral process (see section 9), the work will receive a mark of *ungraded* (Pearson Edexcel) and will be processed for instruction at the subsequent assessment board.

9. Requests for Extension and Deferral

- 9.1 Any student has the right to draw to the attention of the College any personal extenuating circumstances which impair their ability to undertake an assessment, and request either an extension (short term) or deferral (longer term) of the assessment. Requests for extension or deferral on grounds of extenuating circumstances may only be made using the procedure notified. No request for extension or deferral shall be considered after the deadline for submission or examination date has passed unless there are valid and exceptional reasons (such as physical incapacity due to a serious accident).
- 9.2 Where sufficient reason is demonstrated, a short-term extension of up to 14 calendar days can be requested. Prior to the deadline, an application should be made on a "[LC HE Coursework Extension](#)" form and sent to the HE Programme Lead for approval. Upon approval a submission date prior to end of the 14-calendar day period would be sanctioned. A copy of the "LC HE Coursework Extension" form must be kept by the student and one copy should be held by the Programme Leader.
- 9.3 Where an extension request is not approved, a meeting between the HE Programme Lead, module/unit leader and student will be called to

explain the decision. Where the HE Programme Lead is the module leader, a Programme Area Manager should be present. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation, the HE Programme Lead should refer the issue to the relevant Curriculum Director. If still unsatisfied, the student must be provided with a copy of the LC "[Complaints Policy and Procedure \(Q003\)](#)" to engage with the complaints procedure as identified in this policy.

- 9.4 Extensions beyond 14 days based on extenuating circumstances are classed as deferrals and an "[LC HE Deferral of Coursework Form](#) - should be completed and signed by both the student and the HE Programme Lead. The deferral request form is sent to the Programme Area Manager for approval. This alongside any verifiable third-party evidence should be archived by the HE PL. Upon approval a submission date prior to next Assessment board would be sanctioned and a copy sent to the HE Office and recorded at the subsequent HE Programme Management Board. Requests for deferrals are constrained by the maximum period of registration set by funding and awarding organisations. Deferral forms and third-party evidence must be made available at Assessment boards and copies recorded by the Leicester College HE Office.
- 9.5 For a break in learning/interruption of study based on serious circumstance (long term illness, accident, maternity), an "[LC HE Change of Circumstance](#)" form should be completed with an *'Interrupt year Agreement'* made in accordance with the HE Programme Lead. This alongside any verifiable third-party evidence should be presented to programme lead/curriculum manager for them to process through the HE Office. A Break in learning/interruption of study will only be agreed for a maximum of 1 academic year at a time. A separate application should be made for further interruption. Upon approval a return date will be agreed which is generally 1 year from the point of interruption. Requests for breaks in learning/interruptions are constrained by the maximum period of registration set by funding and awarding bodies.
- 9.6 Where a request for deferral or break in learning is not approved a meeting between the HE Programme Lead and student will be called to explain the decision. If the student is not satisfied with the explanation, the HE Programme Lead should refer the issue to the relevant Curriculum Director. The student must be provided with a copy of the College "[Complaints Procedure \(Q003\)](#)" policy document to engage with the complaints procedure from Stage 1 as identified in this policy.

10. Internal Verification and External Examination of Assessment

10.1 All summative assessment setting, grading and feedback will be subject to a process of internal verification (IV) or moderation to ensure

marking is consistent and fair. The College Internal Quality Assurance Policy (Q013) is well-established and is relevant to FE and HE courses. Specific pro-forma for internally verifying assessments for HE have been added to the Policy and it is a requirement for Programme Leads to ensure these are completed.

- 10.2 The College cannot make any awards without an external examiner (EE) participating in the assessment process. Their role is to ensure that our awards are comparable in standard to awards granted by other universities and colleges. They confirm that awards comply with national threshold standards and check that assessment is fair.
- 10.3 The College will make external examiners' annual reports available in full to students through the Virtual Learning Environment, except for any confidential report made directly, and separately, to the Principal or any content that identifies individual students.
- 10.4 All summative assessment grades issued are indicative until they have been internally verified, externally examined and ratified at an assessment board. Students must be made fully aware of this at the point of receiving any provisional feedback and/or grades.

11. Appeals against Assessment Decisions

- 11.1 In order to facilitate early resolution a student wishing for a review of an assessment decision should, in the first instance, speak to the module/unit leader who should give a full explanation of the assessment process and how grades are determined. This formative process should give the reasons for the grade and how the student could more fully have met the learning outcomes and grading/markings criteria.
- 11.2 If the student is still not satisfied with the explanation the module/unit leader should refer the issue to the HE Programme Lead. Where the HE Programme Lead is the module leader, the issue should be referred to a Curriculum Manager. The student must be provided with a copy of the Leicester College Assessment Policy (Q006) and referred to the 'Student Assessment Appeal Pro Forma'.

12 Assessment Boards and their Authority

- 12.1 All level 4+ programmes must have an assessment board, in order to:
 - ensure that arrangements for assessment are consistent and fair
 - reach conclusions on the progress of students
 - confirm certification

- consider and advise on cases where students fail to either progress or achieve certification
- 12.2 To be quorate, those attending assessment board must include:
- the HE Programme Lead
 - unit staff (see 11.3)
 - Chair - a Manager from the HE Office, Quality Improvement, or a Director of Curriculum • Servicing Officer
- 12.3 All unit staff involved in summative assessment should attend the assessment board. Where a valid reason prevents attendance all unit results should be signed off by unit staff and presented to the HE Programme Lead and notification of non-attendance recorded.
- 12.4 No student may be a member of an assessment board. If, however, a person who is otherwise qualified to be an examiner for a course, such as a member of staff or an approved External Examiner, is also registered as a student on another course, that shall not in itself disqualify that person from carrying out normal examining commitments unless there should be a conflict of interests.
- 12.5 If a member of an assessment board is aware of any potential conflict of interest, for example being a relative/friend of a student under consideration, this must be declared and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The person involved shall not take part in any further discussion covering the areas or students concerned. At the discretion of the Chair the member concerned may be permitted to remain in attendance for the duration of these discussions and invited to respond to queries of a factual nature relating to them.
- 12.6 Programme Leads should formally invite external examiners to attend the end of academic cycle Student Programme Results Assessment Board. Where an external examiner is unable to attend, the HE PL or curriculum manager should confirm that an EE visit has taken place, grades approved and identify any significant items of good practice or areas for improvement for the purpose of the minutes.

13. Operation of Leicester College Assessment Boards

- 13.1 Each Curriculum Director is responsible for ensuring that all Level 4+ programmes engage with the assessment board process. The HE Office has overall responsibility for Leicester College non-University based assessment boards.
- 13.2 There should be a minimum of two assessment boards per year – one

to confirm student programme results (normally June/July), another to deal with reassessment (normally Sept/Oct). In addition, all Pearson HN programmes are required to attend a supplementary interim midyear assessment board to facilitate early reassessment opportunities.

- 13.3 All unit staff within the team should forward assessment results to the HE Programme Lead to allow for collation and presentation to assessment board using either the LC HE Student Tracker for assessment board (STAB) or Pro Monitor (Markbook) records of student results by unit.
- 13.4 Unit staff will be expected to confirm the accuracy of the results and that the results have been internally verified and externally examined. By exception, students presenting assessment outcomes that prevent progression or award will be discussed, and decisions reached by the Board, including recommendations on progression, award, reassessment and repeat units will be recorded in minutes of the meeting.
- 13.5 If in attendance, there should be an opportunity for the External Examiner to make comments on the process at the end of the meeting. Where the External Examiner does not attend the board and requests a copy of the minutes, these should be provided.

14. Leicester College Assessment board – Procedures for Re-Assessment

The following reflect the requirements outlined in the BTEC Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment (Levels 4-7). Where short, modular or NPHE courses cannot follow the guidance below, Awarding organisations regulations must be applied.

- 14.1 Decisions regarding unit reassessments can only be made by the relevant Assessment board.
- 14.2 No reassessment of a unit or component shall be allowed for a student to improve upon a grade where the overall pass level has been achieved.
- 14.3 A student who submits coursework for assessment within the deadline but who fails to achieve pass threshold levels for the unit, will have the opportunity to undertake one reassessment(s) opportunity capped at a pass (see 13.3). This will normally involve reworking the original task or where necessary completion of a new task. A clear and realistic deadline of up to 45 calendar days and prior to the subsequent assessment board should be established. Students seeking examination resits may have to wait for the next “exam window” in the following academic year. Resit

assessment must normally be completed at the next available opportunity and within two academic years.

- 14.4 Students will be required to achieve the minimum pass threshold on any reassessment and the subsequent grade will be capped at pass. Students will have a maximum of one reassessment opportunity to redeem initial failure in a unit. Students who fail to meet the pass threshold criteria on their reassessment will be required to repeat the complete unit and all of its assessment components, which may require the student to pay additional fees. The overall unit grade for a repeat unit will be capped at pass. Should a student fail to meet the pass criteria in more than one unit, opportunity to repeat units will be at the discretion of the Assessment board (see 14.2). Units can only be repeated once. Where a student fails to pass a repeat unit, they can be offered the opportunity to complete an alternative unit that meets Pearson HN rules of combination or take the failed unit as compensation (see 13.4).
- 14.5 Pearson Edexcel compensation provision allows students to be awarded a HNC if they have attempted but not achieved a Pass in one of the 15 credit units completed; but have completed and passed the remaining units.

At HND level, students can still be awarded a HND if they have attempted but not achieved a Pass in one of the 15 credit units completed at Level 4 and similarly at Level 5. Any unit confirmed for compensation will appear as U grade on the student's notification of performance that is issued with the certificate.

15. Leicester College Assessment board – Procedures for Progression

The following reflect the requirement outlined in the BTEC Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment (Levels 4-7). Where short, modular or NPHE courses cannot follow the guidance below, Awarding organisations regulations must be applied.

- 15.1 To be eligible for award a student must meet the following minimum requirements:

HND – a student must have completed units equivalent to 120 credits at Level 5 and achieved at least a Pass in 105 of those credits. Plus, have completed 120 credits at Level 4 and achieved at least a Pass in 105 of those credits.

HNC – Have completed 120 credits at Level 4 and achieved at least a Pass in 105 of those credits.

- 15.2 To progress from a stage of study (i.e., Level 4 to Level 5 or from one academic year to the next), a student must normally have achieved Pass threshold across all scheduled units applying where necessary compensation available at Level 4 or Level 5. In exceptional cases, where this benchmark is not reached, the assessment board will consider case by case the potential for a student to progress to the next stage. To ensure that the trailing of workload does not impede performance at the next stage of study, students who have achieved less than 50% of the credits required at any one stage will not be approved for progression to the next stage. Progression options for students presenting outcomes between 50% and 75% of credits required will be considered by the assessment board on a case-by-case basis.
- 15.3 Where students fail to achieve enough credit for certification at the intended level, HE Programme Leads should make every effort to ensure that alternative accreditation can be claimed (e.g., Units of Certification instead of HNC, HNC instead of HND).

16. Bad Academic Practice and Academic Offence

- 16.1 Bad academic practice is the passing off of ideas, data and or other information as if such materials were originally discovered by the student. Additionally, it is the word for word duplication of short phrases (e.g. quotation) in written work, in oral presentation, or equivalent duplication in non-written forms, where the source is not mentioned, and where such duplication is minor in scale. Continued and repeated Bad Academic Practice may become an Academic Offence.
- 16.2 When submitting work for assessment, it is an academic offence for a student to commit any act which advantages them by unfair means. The following are examples of academic offence but do not represent an exhaustive definition:
- Cheating in examinations
 - Plagiarism
 - Fabrication of Results
 - Collusion
 - Contract Cheating – the Use of Third-Party Services (e.g., AI sites and Essay Mills)
- 16.3 Academic offences sit at Level C or above on the 'Normal Tariff for Dealing with Academic Offences' (appendix 1).

16. Dealing with Academic Malpractice

16.1 To oversee Bad Academic Practice (BAP) and Academic Offence (AO) across the College, a “tariff” system (see appendix 1) is applied which categorises academic malpractice according to:

- First or repeated instance
- Level of course
- The type of academic offence

16.2 Following suspicion of Bad Academic Practice or Academic Offence, the student will be invited to an Academic Practice investigation meeting to consider the evidence. Curriculum must assure itself that all efforts have been made to inform the student of requirement to attend this meeting. For an investigation meeting to be quorate the following should be in attendance: Unit/Module leader or HE Programme Lead, and a representative of the HE office. Where a student does not attend, the panel will reach a decision in their absence. Where an allegation is upheld by the panel, a record of the offence must be kept in the student folder and the outcome reported through the next HE PMB. A report on academic malpractice is submitted annually to the HE Quality and Standards, and Enhancement Committee (HEQSEC).

17. Monitoring and Review of these Regulations

17.1 Changes to these Regulations need the approval of HE Quality, Standards and Enhancement Committee. Revised regulations will be issued for new students from August of each academic year.

Appendix 1: Normal Tariff for Dealing with Bad Academic Practice and Academic Offence on non DMU awards

Once you have identified a potential case of academic malpractice, contact the HE Office who will support the procedure outlined published in the HE Staff Handbook. A record of admitted or found offences will remain on the student's file for the duration of their study in the College.

Activity	Instance	Student Level	Action
<p>Bad Academic Practice</p> <p>Low level duplication without citation, for example unintentionally passing off ideas, data or other information as if originally discovered by the student.</p>	First instance	All Levels	<p>Grade awarded to reflect proportion of work that is original content. Where this results in the component not reaching pass threshold, a fail/referral grade recorded and submitted to the subsequent assessment board, where standard procedures for reassessment are applied.</p> <p>Discussion and outcome recorded as part of investigation meeting process.</p>
	Second instance	All Levels	<p>Investigation panel assign a 'fail/referral' grade to the component. This grade submitted to subsequent assessment board where standard procedures for reassessment are applied. Re-assessed work capped at 'pass' grade.</p> <p>Discussion and outcome recorded as part of investigation meeting process.</p>

<p>Academic Offence</p> <p>a) Multiple concurrent instances of Bad Academic Practice</p> <p>b) Cheating in examinations or any form of assessment or similar, e.g. phased tests</p> <p>c) Plagiarism</p> <p>d) Acquiring and submitting an assessment not written by the student</p> <p>e) Fabrication and/or falsification of results</p> <p>f) Collusion</p> <p>g) Reuse of assessed material</p> <p>h) The use of translation software</p> <p>i) Contract cheating</p> <p>j) Breaches of ethics requirements</p>	<p>Any instance</p>	<p>All Levels</p>	<p>Panel investigates and using precedents makes judgement.</p> <p>Outcomes can include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student fails component. Failed component subject to standard procedures for reassessment. 2. Student fails component is subject to standard reassessment procedures and the unit mark capped at pass. 3. Student fails unit. Failed unit subject to standard procedures for repeat units. 4. The panel will refer cases of repeated academic offence and any suspected cases of contract cheating to the awarding organisation and SLT to determine the penalty. This may include that the student has failed the level and/or required to withdraw from the programme of study. <p>Discussion and outcome recorded as part of investigation meeting process.</p>
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k) Any other academic offence			
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