

RCL Mumbai

Pearson HN Assessment Regulations

Owner	Head of Centre		
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Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a new document. 		
Approval date	May 2026	Approved by	Academic Council
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Related internal policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appeals Procedure Academic Misconduct Procedure Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments 		
Related external policies and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pearson Centre Handbook - Higher Nationals (Global) UGC (University Grants Commission) - Redressal of Grievances of Students Regulations, 2023 - Core Practices (Concerns, Complaints, and Appeals) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RPwD Act 2016 (disability rights)• POSH Act 2013• Constitution of India: Articles 14 - 17• Consumer Protection Act 2019• DPDP Act 2023
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Introduction

1. This document describes how RCL Mumbai regulates, manages and administers the assessment of the Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) we provide on behalf of Pearson in the subject areas of Business and Computing.
2. The document is organised in chronological order of the assessment process. For each part of the process, there is:
 - a summary of what that part of the process is or involves;
 - a summary of what Pearson's requirements are;
 - RCL Mumbai's regulations (if any);
 - a description of other ways in which RCL Mumbai meets Pearson's requirements;
 - details of who in RCL Mumbai is responsible for carrying out that part of the process.
3. For ease of reference, RCL Mumbai's assessment regulations are presented in grey boxes and its policies and procedures are in white boxes.
4. The primary audience for this document is RCL Mumbai staff who are responsible for teaching and assessing HNDs, supporting students, and administering assessment. It may also be of interest to students who wish to know more about how assessment works.
5. For more information about Pearson's requirements, please see:
 - [BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment](#) (version 1.7, 2025–2026) (hereafter the 'Centre Guide'); and
 - Pearson's programme specifications for [Business](#) and [Computing](#) (hereafter the 'programme specifications').
6. All RCL Mumbai policies and procedures in this document are aligned with Pearson's requirements. RCL Mumbai must not alter Pearson's prescribed learning outcomes, assessment criteria, or rules of combination.

Useful Contacts

7. For more information or guidance about assessment for HNDs please contact:

Founder and CEO and Pearson Quality Nominee Dr. Selva Pankaj	Selva.Pankaj@regentgroup.org.uk
Head of Programme HND Business Venkat Panchangam	Venkat.Panchangam@regentindia.in
Head of HND Computing Kishoree Chavan	Kishoree.Chavan@regentindia.in
Head of Quality Venkat Panchangam	Venkat.Panchangam@regentindia.in

8. Pearson requires that assessment instruments designed by centres must collectively ensure full coverage of all learning outcomes and assessment criteria within each unit, and provide opportunities for students to generate evidence across all grades of achievement.
9. Pearson further stipulates that the *targeted learning outcomes and assessment criteria must be clearly indicated on each assessment instrument as key information*. This provides a focus for students and assists with internal standardisation processes. Activities and guidance must enable students to produce evidence that meets the learning outcomes across all grades of achievement.
10. Pearson also specifies that assignment briefs must not:
 - change the wording of learning outcomes or assessment criteria,
 - add additional criteria,
 - use multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank tasks (not appropriate at L4/L5),
 - apply numerical marking or percentage weighting, or
 - penalise students for exceeding word counts.
11. A good assignment brief must:
 - clearly state the learning outcomes and assessment criteria being addressed,
 - include a vocational scenario where appropriate,
 - use clear, precise, level-appropriate language,
 - specify what evidence students must submit, the format, and word count guidance,
 - allow opportunities to achieve Pass, Merit, and Distinction.
12. Pearson provides assignment brief templates via the *Teaching and Learning Materials* section of each subject page on its website. RCL Mumbai may design its own briefs, but they must include the elements set out in the Centre Guide.
13. Further details on Pearson's requirements for assignment design and briefs are provided in the [BTEC Higher Nationals Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment \(2025–26\)](#), pp. 67–72.

Designing Assignment Briefs

14. The assignment brief is the document issued to students at the start of the assessment process which explains what they must do. It should motivate and support the student toward meeting the assessment and grading requirements of the unit.
15. Pearson recommends that clear assignment briefs must:
 - Inform the student of the activities set;

- Inform the student of the methods of assessment;
 - Set clear deadlines for submission of work
16. Pearson provides assignment templates for centres to use (available on the subject pages of their website), but centres may design their own provided they include the required information. Every assignment brief must contain:
- **Key information:** assignment title, assessor, date issued, deadline, qualification title and level, units covered, duration, and the exact learning outcomes/criteria being assessed (only in this section).
 - **Vocational scenario** (if appropriate): a realistic context or situation that helps students apply learning.
 - **Assignment activity and guidance:** clear description of the tasks, written at the appropriate level, using command verbs consistent with (or equivalent to) those in the unit specification. Individual outcomes/criteria must not be repeated within the task.
 - **Submission format:** a clear statement of the required evidence, word count guidance, format (e.g., report, presentation), and how the evidence will be assessed.
 - **Other information:** resources, reference materials, employer links, or mapped opportunities.
17. Pearson states that an assignment brief must **not**:
- Change the wording of learning outcomes or assessment criteria;
 - Add any new criteria;
 - Use multiple-choice or fill-in-the-blank tasks (not appropriate at L4/L5);
 - Use numerical marking or percentage weighting;
 - Penalise students for exceeding word counts;
 - Associate the brief with only a single criterion;
 - Split distinction criteria that span multiple outcomes.
18. At RCL Mumbai, the **Head of Programme (HND Business)** is responsible for overseeing assignment brief design and ensuring compliance with Pearson's requirements. For Healthcare and Computing, responsibility rests with the relevant Head once programmes become active.
19. The Head of Programme conducts **standardisation meetings** with teaching staff to review the effectiveness of assignment briefs against intended learning outcomes and student achievement. This process may lead to revisions to briefs for future use.
20. In addition, **all assignment briefs must be internally verified every year before issue to students** (see Section: Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs).

Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

21. Internal verification of assignment briefs involves a staff member reviewing the briefs to confirm they are fit for purpose before they are issued to students. Pearson requires that:
 - *All assignment briefs, including Authorised Assignment Briefs (AABs) and Example Assessment Briefs (EABs), must be internally verified every year before being given to students.*
22. Internal verification must be carried out by a staff member who:
 - Is familiar with BTEC assessment at the appropriate level;
 - Has subject knowledge within the programme area;
 - Is not the author of the brief being verified.
23. The purpose of internal verification is to ensure the brief is *fit for purpose*. This means confirming that:
 - The activities and evidence allow students to address the targeted learning outcomes;
 - The brief is written in clear, accessible language;
 - Tasks are vocationally relevant and appropriate to the level;
 - Timescales and deadlines are appropriate;
 - Equal opportunities are built in and no students are disadvantaged.
24. If the Internal Verifier identifies required changes, the Assessor must complete them and return the brief for review and sign-off. Only once the Internal Verifier signs off as *fit for purpose* may the brief be released to students.
25. Pearson requires that internal verification is always *recorded and reported*. Centres should use the official form (e.g. the Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form) or Pearson's published templates.

RCL MUMBAI Regulation

- All assignment briefs and/or examinations must be internally verified and approved each year before being issued to students.
- Verification is evidenced through the *Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form*.
- The assignment brief and/or examinations must be approved following any required changes as a result of the Internal Verification procedure and signed off on the *Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form*.
- The Internal Verifier must not be the author of the assignment brief and/or examination being verified.
- The Internal Verifier must have subject knowledge within the programme area and be familiar with BTEC assessment requirements.
- The Head of Programme (HND Business) is responsible for ensuring compliance. For Computing, responsibility rests with the relevant Head.

- The Head of Quality maintains overall oversight of Internal Verification records across all programmes and secures copies of all completed forms for audit.
- Feedback to tutors setting assignment briefs and/or examinations must be provided by the Internal Verifier to support continuous quality enhancement.

Assessment Tracking and Recording

26. Tracking and recording assessment outcomes is essential to ensure the integrity, transparency, and reliability of the assessment process. Proper tracking provides evidence that:
- student achievement has been assessed consistently against national standards;
 - individual student progress can be accurately monitored over time;
 - assessment decisions can be independently verified; and
 - the safety of certification is secured through a clear audit trail.
27. Good practice in assessment tracking also requires maintaining a timetable of assessment activities, recording achievement at criterion level on a unit-by-unit basis, and integrating records of formative feedback. Tracking data must be readily available for review by external quality assurers (EQA), auditors, and awarding bodies.
28. At RCL Mumbai, student marks are recorded by lecturers on approved mark sheets and submitted to Registry. Registry enters the data into the College's Student Record System (UnitE) and maintains oversight of tracking processes, supported by the Head of Quality.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- All assessment activities must be recorded against published timetables and unit learning outcomes.
- Assessment outcomes must be tracked at criterion level (Pass, Merit, Distinction) and integrated with formative feedback records.
- Lecturers are responsible for recording marks on approved mark sheets; Registry is responsible for entering and maintaining data on the Student Record System (UnitE).
- The Head of Quality provides oversight to ensure accuracy and compliance with national standards.
- Assessment records must be available for EQA review, audits, and internal monitoring.

Formative Assessment

29. Formative assessment takes place before summative assessment and is designed to support student learning. Pearson stresses that:
- Feedback must be **constructive, clear, and prompt**;
 - At least **one formal written formative feedback opportunity per assessment** should be provided and formally recorded;
 - Feedback must avoid "coaching" (telling students exactly what to write/do);

- A second formative opportunity may be appropriate if the brief was unclear or misdirected students;
- Records of formative feedback may be requested by Pearson during audits or EQA visits.

30. At RCL Mumbai, academic staff are required to provide students with formative feedback in line with these principles, embedded in assessment planning and delivery.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- All assessment activities must be tracked on a unit-by-unit basis, at criterion level, within the College's Student Record System (UnitE).
- Assessment tracking must incorporate formative feedback, student progress, and opportunities for grading.
- Senior and Associate Lecturers are responsible for accurate recording of marks; Registry enters and maintains data in UnitE.
- Oversight responsibility rests with Registry and the Head of Quality, who ensure assessment records are audit-ready for Pearson External Examiners (EEs) and other regulators.
- Each student must receive at least one formal written formative feedback opportunity per assessment, at a stage when evidence has been produced towards all targeted criteria.
- Formative feedback must be constructive, recorded, and prompt, allowing time for students to act on it.
- Formative feedback must not constitute "coaching" but should support independent student improvement.

Summative Assessment: marking and grading

31. Summative assessment is the final consideration of a student's assignment by the Assessor, agreeing which learning outcomes and assessment criteria the student has met, and recording those decisions. Students should be aware that all summative assessment decisions are **provisional until confirmed by the Assessment Board** and may be reviewed by the External Examiner.
32. Each successfully completed unit will be graded as a **Pass, Merit or Distinction**:
- **Pass**: awarded when all Pass criteria for the learning outcomes are satisfied, showing coverage of unit content and attainment at Level 4 or 5.
 - **Merit**: awarded when all Merit criteria (and Pass criteria) are met through high performance in each learning outcome.
 - **Distinction**: awarded when all Distinction criteria (and Pass and Merit criteria) are met, showing outstanding performance across the unit.
33. The award of a Pass is a defined standard of performance and cannot be given solely for completing an assignment. Students who do not satisfy the Pass criteria must be reported as **Unclassified (U)**.

34. Assessors must:
- Apply the criteria holistically and hierarchically (Merit builds on Pass, Distinction builds on Merit).
 - Annotate student work to show how evidence supports grading decisions.
 - Provide clear feedback aligned to the criteria, including comments on professional written communication (spelling, grammar, structure, and clarity).
35. Where student work falls below expected standards of written communication, it may be returned for correction before grading, in line with Pearson's expectations.
36. Pearson's specific Merit and Distinction criteria linked to each Pass criterion are set out in the relevant programme specification. Academic staff are responsible for applying these consistently, with internal verification ensuring accuracy.

Academic Misconduct

37. Academic misconduct is gaining or attempting to gain, or helping others to gain or attempt to gain, an unfair academic advantage in summative assessments which contribute to a unit mark or grade. Pearson identifies common forms of misconduct as plagiarism, collusion, duplication, falsification, personation, contract cheating/ghosting, misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and examination misconduct
38. Academic misconduct in whatever form is contrary to the ethos and values of RCL Mumbai. Students who are found to have engaged in academic misconduct may be subject to penalties up to and including withdrawal from the College.
39. Pearson guidance requires centres to have procedures to prevent, detect, and address academic malpractice. In particular, centres should check student work for plagiarism and contract cheating (including the use of AI or essay mills), and apply proportionate but robust sanctions where misconduct is proven
40. The College's Academic Misconduct Procedure (v3.15) sets out how suspected misconduct is detected, investigated, and resolved. Staff marking student work are responsible for identifying possible misconduct (including through plagiarism detection software and other indicators such as style inconsistencies, suspicious references, or AI misuse) and reporting it to the Programme Leader or Academic Integrity Lead.
41. Allegations of academic misconduct must be investigated and resolved (including through hearings where required) before the relevant Assessment Board takes place. Outcomes are reported to the Assessment Board and, where required, to Pearson.
42. Academic misconduct procedures apply to summative assessment only. Suspected misconduct in formative assessment should be addressed by feedback and guidance to help the student avoid misconduct in future.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- All allegations of academic misconduct in summative assessments must be investigated and resolved prior to an Assessment Board.
- Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to): plagiarism, duplication, collusion, falsification, personation, contract cheating/ghosting, misuse of Artificial Intelligence (AI), and examination misconduct.
- Misuse of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT or similar) is considered misconduct unless explicitly permitted in the assessment brief.
- Staff must check all student work for plagiarism using approved detection tools. Additional indicators (e.g., sudden changes in style, formatting anomalies, or suspicious references) must also be considered in line with Pearson's guidance.
- Academic staff must escalate suspected cases to the Programme Leader or Academic Integrity Lead, who will ensure they are managed under the College's Academic Misconduct Procedure.
- Penalties may include failure of the assessment, suspension, or withdrawal, depending on severity.
- Misconduct in formative assessment does not invoke penalties but must be addressed through feedback to support student development.

Authenticity and Authentication of Student Work

43. Authenticity means that all assessed work submitted by students must genuinely be their own. Authentication is the process by which RCL Mumbai confirms this. Maintaining authenticity is critical to ensuring that assessment decisions are fair, credible, and reflect the true achievement of students.
44. Centres must therefore have clear systems in place to secure authenticity. This includes requiring students to sign declarations of originality for each submission, ensuring assessors verify authenticity before awarding grades, and using appropriate detection methods to identify potential contract cheating, plagiarism, or the misuse of emerging tools such as artificial intelligence.
45. Authentication is not only about preventing misconduct — it also provides a transparent audit trail for internal verification, external quality assurance (EQA), and safeguarding the integrity of certification.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Authenticity of Student Work

- All students must submit an authenticity declaration with each assessment.
- Academic staff must confirm the authenticity of work prior to grading, using plagiarism detection tools and additional professional checks (e.g., sudden changes in writing style, formatting anomalies, reference inconsistencies, or suspected AI misuse).
- Any work suspected to be inauthentic must be escalated under the Academic Misconduct Procedure.
- Authentication records (student declarations, detection reports, and verification notes)

must be retained in line with assessment record-keeping requirements.

Conflict of Interest

46. Conflicts of interest arise when a person's ability to make impartial decisions about teaching, assessment, or verification is, or could reasonably be perceived to be, compromised by personal, professional, or financial relationships. Examples include where a member of staff is asked to assess or internally verify the work of a relative, a close friend, or an individual with whom they have a business relationship.
47. Unmanaged conflicts can undermine trust in the College's standards and damage the credibility of assessment. It is therefore essential that conflicts are declared openly, recorded transparently, and managed through alternative arrangements that safeguard impartiality.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- All actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest must be declared to the Head of Quality and recorded in the **College's Conflict of Interest Register**.
- Staff must not assess or verify the work of relatives, close friends, or any individual where impartiality could reasonably be questioned.
- Registry and Quality will ensure alternative arrangements are in place where conflicts are declared.

Assessment Deadlines

48. Assessment deadlines are a critical part of ensuring that students are assessed fairly and consistently. They ensure that all students complete their work under the same conditions and prevent any advantage being gained through additional time or access to the work of others.
49. Deadlines must be planned and published carefully to avoid clustering that could overwhelm students, while still allowing sufficient time for academic staff to mark, verify, and provide feedback. A clear assessment schedule also helps Registry, Quality, and programme teams manage workloads and meet external quality assurance requirements.
50. At RCL Mumbai, assessment deadlines are managed through the BTEC HND Assessment Plan spreadsheet. This plan records assignment issue dates, submission deadlines, and assessor details for each unit or component. It is compiled, published, and maintained by Registry in consultation with Programme Leaders and Heads of Programme, ensuring accuracy, transparency, and alignment with the overall academic calendar.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Assessment Deadlines

- All published assessment deadlines must be adhered to by students and staff.
- The BTEC HND Assessment Plan, maintained by Registry, records assignment issue dates, submission deadlines, and assessor names for all units.
- Students may apply for an extension to deadlines only under the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure. Approved extensions allow work to be marked without penalty.
- Work submitted up to two weeks late without an approved extension will be accepted but capped at a Pass.
- Work submitted beyond two weeks without an approved extension will not be marked or graded.
- The Assessment Board has discretion to permit resubmission under a new brief where appropriate.

Late Submissions

51. Late submissions refer to assignments submitted after the published deadline.
52. Pearson requires centres to develop and publish their own regulations on late submission of student work, including arrangements for dealing with students affected by adverse circumstances such as illness
53. RCL MUMBAI Mumbai's regulations on late submission are set out below. They provide for:
 - Students to submit assignments up to two weeks beyond the published deadline without prior approval; such work will be marked but capped at a Pass.
 - Students affected by adverse circumstances to apply for an extension under the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure. Where an extension is granted, the work will be marked with no penalty, provided it is submitted by the revised deadline.
 - Where work is not submitted by the revised deadline, it will not be marked or graded. In such cases, at the discretion of the Assessment Board, a student may be permitted to resubmit for a different assignment brief for that unit.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- All students may submit their work up to two weeks beyond the published deadline without approval, but the grade will be capped at a **Pass**.
- Work submitted more than two weeks late without an approved extension will not be marked or graded. In such cases, the Assessment Board may permit resubmission for a different assignment brief.
- Students affected by adverse circumstances must apply for an extension under the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure **before the published deadline**.
- Where an extension is granted, the work will be marked with no penalty if submitted by the revised deadline.
- If a student fails to meet the revised deadline, the work will not be marked or graded. At

the discretion of the Assessment Board, the student may be permitted to resubmit against a different assignment brief.

Non-submission

54. Non-submission is where a student does not submit assessed work to a published deadline or an extended deadline.
55. Pearson requires that all non-submissions are formally recorded in the student record system and reported to the Assessment Board
56. At RCL Mumbai, non-submissions are monitored as part of the student engagement and retention process, with data reported to Programme Leaders, Registry, and Assessment Boards.
57. Students may be permitted one opportunity for resubmission following non-submission, at the discretion of the Assessment Board.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- Where a student does not submit assessed work by the deadline or extended deadline, they will be recorded as a non-submission in the Student Records System and deemed to have failed the assessment.
- The Assessment Board may permit one opportunity for resubmission after non-submission, provided that:
 - The student must complete a **new and different assignment brief** for that unit; and
 - The grade will be **capped at a Pass**.
- If a student permitted to resubmit after non-submission fails to submit by the revised deadline without an approved extension under the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure, they will be deemed to have failed the assessment and no further resubmission opportunity will be allowed.

Resubmissions

58. Resubmission is where a student either fails to achieve a Pass for a given unit or fails to submit their work to the deadline (without an extension having been granted under the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure) and is expected to undertake a reassessment.
59. Pearson permits one resubmission opportunity per unit, capped at a Pass, provided the original submission was made by the deadline (or authorised extension) and there is no evidence of academic misconduct.
60. At RCL Mumbai, all resubmissions must be authorised by the Assessment Board.

61. Possible resubmission dates, and dates for the internal verification of resubmitted assessments, are set out in the BTEC HND Assessment Plan spreadsheet.

RCL Mumbai

- A student permitted a resubmission will have the grade capped at a **Pass** for that unit. Regulations on resubmission following non-submission are set out above.
- A student who has failed to achieve a Pass grade for assessed work will be permitted **one opportunity** for reassessment. A student will not be entitled to resubmission in any component for which a Pass or higher has already been awarded.
- Where the assessed work has been awarded an unclassified grade, submitted to a deadline or extended deadline, and there is no evidence of academic misconduct, the student will normally be permitted to **rework the initial piece of assessed work**.
- Resubmission deadlines will be set by the Assessment Board and must normally fall within **15 working days** of authorisation.
- Late resubmissions are treated under the College's late submission regulations. Work not submitted by the resubmission deadline (without an approved extension under the Mitigating Circumstance Procedure) will be recorded as a fail, and the student will not be permitted a further resubmission opportunity.
- No additional guidance will be provided to students undertaking resubmission beyond that already given for the first submission.
- All resubmitted work will be subject to internal verification and may be sampled by the External Examiner.

Repeating Units

62. A student may repeat a unit only if they have failed to achieve a Pass after both the first assessment and one resubmission opportunity.
63. Pearson's rules on repeating units are:
- The repeat must be authorised by the Assessment Board.
 - The student must study the unit again with full attendance and participation in all timetabled sessions.
 - The student may be required to pay the unit fee as determined by the College.
 - The overall grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass.
 - Units may only be repeated once.
64. If the student fails the repeated unit, they will not be entitled to another repeat attempt and may not be able to achieve the qualification.
65. At RCL Mumbai, all repeat units must be authorised by the Assessment Board and recorded formally, with reasons for the decision.

RCL Mumbai

- A student may be permitted to repeat a unit only if they have failed to achieve a Pass after both the first assessment and one resubmission.
- A student may only repeat a unit once.
- In repeating a unit, the student must:
 - Attend all timetabled teaching sessions;
 - Pay the unit fee as determined by RCL Mumbai (if applicable).
- The overall unit grade for a repeated unit is capped at a **Pass**.
- A repeat unit is treated as a new first attempt. Students therefore have one first submission and, if required, one resubmission opportunity (capped at Pass).
- If the student fails to achieve a Pass after the repeat unit and its resubmission opportunity, they will not be permitted any further attempt at that unit and may be unable to achieve the qualification.
- All repeat units must be authorised by the Assessment Board, with reasons formally recorded in the minutes.

Compensation

66. Compensation allows a student to progress or gain an award when they have not passed all units, under strict Pearson rules.
67. Pearson permits compensation only in the following circumstances:
 - One 15-credit unit at Level 4, and
 - One 15-credit unit at Level 5, provided all other units required for the qualification have been passed.
68. Compensation cannot be applied to mandatory core units, specialist units, or those linked to professional body requirements as set out in the programme specification.
69. At RCL Mumbai, decisions on compensation are made by the Assessment Board and formally recorded.

RCL MUMBAI

- If a student repeats a unit and still does not achieve a Pass in their first submission or resubmission, the Assessment Board may consider awarding compensation.
- Compensation may only be applied to:
 - One 15-credit unit at Level 4, and
 - One 15-credit unit at Level 5.
- Compensation will not be applied to mandatory, specialist, or professional units.
- Units granted compensation will be recorded as **Unclassified ('U' grade)** on the student's Notification of Performance and certificate transcript.
- All other required units must be completed and passed to achieve the HND. The
- Assessment Board must record reasons for granting compensation in its minutes.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

70. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) enables students to gain credit for prior certificated or experiential learning where this can be shown to meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of a unit. RPL ensures that students are not required to repeat learning unnecessarily and allows for flexible progression pathways, while maintaining the same standards of achievement as assessed work completed during the programme.
71. RPL decisions must be robust, transparent, and subject to the same scrutiny as any other assessment decision. This includes internal verification, external examiner review, and formal authorisation by the Assessment Board. Claims must be supported by valid evidence and clearly recorded in student records. RPL therefore balances flexibility for learners with rigorous assurance of academic standards.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

- Students may apply for RPL where prior certificated or experiential learning demonstrates achievement of relevant unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria.
- RPL claims must:
 - be supported by valid evidence;
 - meet the same standards as other assessment decisions;
 - be subject to internal verification and external scrutiny;
 - be formally authorised by the Assessment Board.
- All RPL decisions must be clearly recorded in the student record system and retained for audit.

Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

72. Internal Verification (IV) is used to check the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions. All sampled work must be verified against Pearson's grading criteria to ensure fair and reliable outcomes.

73. Internal Verifiers must be subject specialists who are familiar with BTEC Higher Nationals assessment at the appropriate level and trained in the College's assessment and verification processes.
74. Sampling must cover all grade bands (Referred, Pass, Merit, Distinction) to ensure accuracy across the full range of possible outcomes.
75. For each cohort of students, at least 15% of assessed work in any one unit must be sampled. Where there are new assessors or new programmes, a higher proportion of work must be sampled.
76. Each student must have at least one piece of assessed work sampled each academic year across their programme of study to demonstrate fairness and consistency.
77. Clear records of IV activity and sampling must be kept using the College's Internal Verification Form. Programme Leaders are responsible for retaining signed copies of all completed forms for audit purposes.
78. Internal Verifiers must provide constructive and developmental feedback to assessors to enhance the quality of marking and feedback processes across the College.
79. Where the Internal Verifier disagrees with the grade awarded by the assessor, the disagreement must first be discussed with reference to the unit learning outcomes and assessment criteria. If the assessor and IV cannot agree, the Programme Leader (or a third marker) will make the final decision.
80. Where feedback provided by an assessor is judged inadequate by the Internal Verifier, the work will be returned to the assessor for improvement before being released to students.
81. All Internal Verification must take place before assessed work is returned to students and must not be end-loaded.

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- Samples of student work selected for Internal Verification must cover all grades (Referred, Pass, Merit, Distinction), all assessors, all units, and all assignments.
- At least 15% of assessed work in each unit must be sampled, with increased sampling for new assessors or new programmes.
- Each student must be sampled at least once during the academic year across their programme of study.
- Internal Verification must be carried out before assessed work is returned to students and must not be end-loaded.
- Clear records of IV and sampling must be kept using the Internal Verification Form. Programme Leaders retain copies of all signed forms for audit purposes.
- Internal Verifiers must have subject knowledge and BTEC assessment expertise at the appropriate level.
- Feedback to assessors must be constructive and developmental to support quality enhancement.
- Where the Internal Verifier disagrees with the assessor's grade, the matter should first be discussed with reference to the unit learning outcomes. If unresolved, a third marker (normally the Programme Leader) will make the final decision.
- Where feedback is inadequate, the work will be returned to the assessor to provide improved feedback in line with College policy.

Standardisation

82. Standardisation ensures consistency in the application of Pearson's assessment criteria across different assessors and units, and consistency in the quality of feedback given to students.
83. At RCL Mumbai, standardisation is achieved through standardisation meetings and activities organised by the Head of HND (Business) and, the relevant Programme Leader or Head of Programmes for Computing. All teaching staff delivering and assessing HND units are expected to take part.

RCL Mumbai

- Standardisation meetings must take place **at least three times per semester** (pre-assessment, mid-semester, and post-assessment) to ensure consistency across all phases of delivery, assessment, and quality assurance. Additional meetings may be scheduled if required.
- Standardisation must cover:
 - Application of Pearson assessment criteria for Pass, Merit, and Distinction in assignment tasks;
 - Consistency of marking across assessors on the same unit;
 - Constructive, assignment-specific feedback, avoiding generic comments;
 - Awareness and consistent application of RCL MUMBAI's assessment policies and regulations;
 - Identification and sharing of good practice and training needs;
 - Review of academic misconduct cases and lessons learned;
- Records of all standardisation activities and agreed actions must be maintained and made available for External Examiners.
- Standardisation is an **ongoing process**, supported by additional activities such as sample cross-marking, peer review of feedback, and review of assessment briefs.

Student Complaints

84. Student complaints are an important mechanism for ensuring the quality of provision and services. A complaint is distinct from an appeal:
85. **A complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction about teaching, assessment delivery, facilities, or other services provided by the College.
86. **An appeal** is a challenge to an academic decision, such as the outcome of an Assessment Board.
87. Maintaining a clear separation between the two processes ensures that students know how to raise concerns appropriately and that issues are resolved fairly and efficiently. Complaints provide valuable feedback to the College, which can be used to improve the student experience.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- Concerns about teaching, assessment delivery, or services should be raised under the College's Student Complaints Procedure, not the Appeals Procedure.
- Complaints must be addressed fairly, transparently, and within published timelines.
- Students may escalate unresolved complaints to external bodies where applicable.

Student Complaints (separate from Appeals)

88. Pearson requires centres to distinguish clearly between **academic appeals** (challenges to academic judgment or outcomes) and **student complaints** (concerns about service, teaching quality, or other issues). Complaints processes must be transparent, accessible, and separate from appeals. Centres must also inform students of their right to escalate unresolved complaints to Pearson and/or the OIA.

RCL Mumbai Regulation

- Student complaints that relate to teaching, assessment delivery, or services must be raised under the **RCL Mumbai Student Complaints Procedure**, not the Appeals Procedure.
- Complaints must be handled fairly, transparently, and within published timelines.

Student Appeals

89. Appeals are a formal mechanism through which students may challenge the outcome of an Assessment Board where they believe an error has been made or where specific procedural or personal circumstances were not properly considered.
90. Appeals are distinct from complaints:
- Complaints relate to concerns about the delivery of teaching, assessment support, or services.
 - Appeals concern academic decisions such as progression, grades, or awards.
91. Pearson requires centres to make students and staff fully aware of what constitutes an appeal, how appeals differ from malpractice investigations, the possible outcomes, and the consequences of internal and external appeal decisions. Clear procedures must exist for students to escalate appeals to Pearson where relevant.
92. At RCL Mumbai, students (or recent students) may appeal against the outcome of an Assessment Board. This includes confirmed marks or grades, decisions on progression or non-progression, or the notification of a final award. Appeals are managed in line with the College's Consolidated Appeals Procedure, which specifies the grounds, process, and timescales for appeals. This ensures transparency, fairness, and compliance with sector and regulatory standards.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Student Appeals

- Students may appeal only against the outcome of an Assessment Board.
- Appeals must be submitted under the College's Consolidated Appeals Procedure, which defines valid grounds, stages, and timescales.
- Appeals must be lodged within the specified time limit after results are published.
- All appeals will be considered fairly, impartially, and in line with natural justice principles.

- Records of appeals and their outcomes will be retained for a minimum of six years for audit and quality assurance purposes.
- Students will be informed of their right to escalate unresolved appeals to Pearson or, in certain cases, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

Retention of Student Evidence and Assessment Records

93. The retention of student evidence and assessment records is fundamental to protecting the integrity of qualifications and meeting the requirements of awarding bodies and regulators. It ensures that assessment decisions can be verified, that student achievement is clearly documented, and that a reliable audit trail exists for internal and external quality assurance.
94. Pearson requires centres to:
- store all assessment records securely and safely;
 - maintain up-to-date and accurate records of student achievement, regularly reviewed against national standards;
 - retain internal and external assessment records for a minimum of three years after certification for awarding body scrutiny;
 - have current student evidence available for verification;
 - retain student work for at least 12 weeks after certification has taken place.
95. The Office for Students (OfS) further requires providers to maintain complete, accurate, and secure records under regulatory **Condition B3 (Assessment and Standards)** and **Condition E2 (Records, Data, and Transparency)**. These records must cover assessment outcomes, progression, appeals, and disciplinary or misconduct decisions. They must be sufficient to evidence robust decision-making and be retained for appropriate periods to meet both regulatory and audit expectations.
96. At RCL Mumbai, responsibility for student evidence and assessment records rests with Registry. Registry ensures records are securely stored, properly archived, and available to Pearson, the OfS, and External Examiners as required.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Retention of Student Evidence and Assessment Records

- Assessment records must be stored securely and safely in line with College data protection and information security policies.
- Assessment and achievement records are normally retained for **six years after certification**, exceeding Pearson’s minimum three-year requirement, to meet OfS and statutory audit expectations.
- Student work must be retained for at least **12 weeks after certification**.
- Records must include marks, grades, progression decisions, appeals, and academic/disciplinary outcomes.

- Registry is responsible for archiving records and ensuring controlled access for Pearson, OfS, and External Examiners.
- At the end of the retention period, records must be destroyed securely and in line with data protection legislation.

Assessment Board

97. The Assessment Board plays a central role in maintaining the integrity of academic standards and ensuring that assessment decisions are fair, transparent, and consistent with both Pearson and regulatory requirements. It is the final authority within the College for confirming marks, grades, progression, and awards for HNDs.
98. The Board is also responsible for confirming decisions relating to reassessment opportunities, repeats, compensation, and exit awards. It must be assured that all allegations of academic misconduct have been investigated and resolved before ratifying results.
99. Membership of the Assessment Board is defined in its Terms of Reference and normally includes the Academic Director (Chair), Head of Programmes, Head of HND, relevant Programme Leaders, Registry, and representatives from the Quality team. The presence of an External Examiner is required to provide independent oversight of academic standards.
100. The Board meets at the end of each semester, normally six weeks after the final assessment deadlines. The Registry team maintains the annual calendar of meetings and provides administrative support, including preparation of agendas, circulation of papers, and production of formal minutes.
101. All decisions of the Assessment Board are formally recorded and retained to meet Pearson and Office for Students (OfS) requirements. Outcomes and minutes are shared with External Examiners and, where appropriate, with relevant awarding or regulatory bodies.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Assessment Board

- The Assessment Board has authority to confirm student marks, grades, progression, reassessment, repeats, compensation, and final awards.
- All cases of academic misconduct must be investigated and resolved before results are ratified.
- The Board is chaired by the Academic Director or Head of Programme and includes the Head of HND, Programme Leaders, Registry, Quality, and an External Examiner.
- The Registry team is responsible for scheduling meetings, preparing agendas, distributing papers, and recording formal minutes.
- The Board meets at the end of each semester, normally six weeks after the final assessment deadlines.

- All decisions must be clearly recorded, retained for audit purposes, and shared with External Examiners and regulators as required.

Engagement with Students and Employers

102. Effective engagement with students and employers is essential to maintaining the relevance, quality, and continuous improvement of Higher National programmes. Students provide insight into their learning experience, while employers help ensure that programmes reflect current industry expectations and professional standards.
103. Student voice is captured through mechanisms such as Programme Committees, Student–Staff Liaison Committees, surveys, and feedback sessions. Employer engagement may include advisory input, guest lectures, live projects, or placements. The insights gained feed into programme evaluation, annual monitoring, and quality enhancement, ensuring RCL Mumbai’s provision is both academically sound and professionally relevant.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Student and Employer Engagement

- Student representatives will be consulted on assessment and programme matters through Programme Committees and Student–Staff Liaison Committees.
- Employer input will be sought, where relevant, to ensure assessments remain aligned with professional and industry expectations.
- Outcomes from student and employer feedback will be considered in annual monitoring and quality enhancement processes.

Membership, Decisions, Confidentiality, and Minutes of Assessment Boards

104. Assessment Boards are responsible for confirming grades, considering student progression, and approving awards. To ensure decisions are fair, consistent, and defensible, Boards must operate under clear governance arrangements. Membership should include academic leaders, registry staff, and quality representatives, with an independent element to strengthen impartiality.
105. Decisions must be formally minuted and signed by the Chair, with records securely stored for audit. Confidentiality is critical: results must not be released until formally ratified and published. This approach ensures integrity, transparency, and consistency in the confirmation of student outcomes.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Assessment Board Operation

- Membership includes: Chair (Academic Director), Head of Programmes, Programme Leaders/Heads, Registry, and Quality representatives.
- Boards must be quorate and include at least one independent member not directly involved in teaching the cohort.

- All decisions must be minuted, signed by the Chair, and retained for six years.
- All discussions and records are confidential and must only be shared through authorised channels.

Preparation for an Assessment Board

106. Good preparation is essential for Assessment Boards to discharge their responsibilities. This includes collating all achievement data, identifying students requiring discussion (e.g., mitigating circumstances, misconduct), and ensuring academic staff are ready to discuss performance in their units.
107. Registry is responsible for collating and preparing student data. Academic staff are responsible for preparing to contribute effectively to discussions about their groups and students.

Providing feedback on summative assessment to students

108. Feedback is integral to the learning process. Staff must ensure feedback is clear, constructive, and linked to learning outcomes and criteria. Feedback must help students identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to improve future work.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Feedback and Assessment Board Preparation

- Registry must collate all student assessment data in advance of Assessment Boards, including mitigating circumstances and misconduct cases.
- Academic staff must prepare to discuss unit and student performance at the Board.
- No results may be released to students until formally ratified by the Assessment Board. Registry is responsible for communicating results.
- Students are entitled to feedback on all assessed work (formative and summative). Feedback must be:
 - Provided within **15 working days** of submission (summative) or as soon as practicable (formative);
 - Linked to learning outcomes and assessment criteria;
 - Constructive, specific, and developmental (“feed-forward”);
 - Accessible in the agreed format (e.g., Turnitin, written, oral).
- Feedback records must be maintained and made available for Pearson and External Examiner scrutiny.

Guidance on Good Practice in Feedback

Academic staff should also ensure feedback is:

- **Timely** — returned quickly enough to support learning and before the next related assignment;
- **Relevant and meaningful** — focused, specific comments on key aspects of the work, avoiding vague or generic statements;

- **Encouraging** — balancing positive reinforcement with constructive criticism.

Programmes should include a **feedback statement** in Unit Guides and Handbooks, setting out:

- The purpose of feedback;
- When and how feedback will be provided (e.g., written, oral, group, Turnitin);
- Expected turnaround times.

To support students in using feedback effectively:

- Expectations should be managed through clear communication of learning objectives and assessment criteria in class.
- Students should be made aware of different channels of feedback (peer, group, written, verbal).
- Self-assessment may be encouraged (e.g., student reflections submitted with assignments).

All feedback should be clear, purposeful, and support the learning process.

Progression from Level 4 to Level 5

109. Progression requirements are in place to ensure that students moving from Level 4 to Level 5 (HND) have demonstrated sufficient achievement and readiness to succeed at the next level.
110. Pearson requires that students must achieve at least **90 credits at Level 4, including all mandatory units**, in order to progress to Level 5. This threshold ensures that students have a solid foundation in the knowledge, skills, and understanding needed for advanced study.
111. Students who do not meet the 90-credit requirement may:
 - be required to **repeat units** in order to retrieve missing credits;
 - be considered for an **exit award** where eligible (such as an HNC);
 - in limited circumstances, be offered **compensation** in line with Pearson regulations, where this would enable progression but never in relation to mandatory units.
112. The Assessment Board is responsible for confirming all progression decisions, ensuring they are fair, evidence-based, and compliant with Pearson and RCL Mumbai regulations. Decisions are formally recorded in the student record system for audit and external verification.

RCL Mumbai Regulation – Progression from Level 4 to Level 5

- To progress to Level 5, a student must achieve at least **90 credits at Level 4, including all mandatory units.**
- The Assessment Board is responsible for making and recording all progression decisions.
- Students who do not meet the 90-credit requirement will not progress and may:
 - be required to repeat failed units;
 - be considered for compensation in line with Pearson regulations (but not for mandatory units);
 - be offered an exit award (e.g., HNC) where eligible.
- All progression decisions must be recorded formally and retained in student records for audit and quality assurance purposes.

Conditions for Award and Calculation of Overall Grade

113. To achieve an award, students must meet defined credit requirements and pass all mandatory units. This ensures every student has demonstrated the essential knowledge and skills of the qualification.
114. Awards are classified using a credit-weighted calculation of unit grades, which provides an accurate reflection of overall achievement. In some cases, students who have narrowly failed a small number of credits may still achieve the qualification through compensation, but this cannot be applied to mandatory units. These rules ensure fairness for students while maintaining the integrity and comparability of RCL MUMBAI qualifications.

RCL MUMBAI Regulation – Award and Grading

- To achieve an HND, students must pass all mandatory units and achieve 240 credits (120 at Level 4 and 120 at Level 5).
- The overall classification will be calculated using the credit-weighted average of unit grades.
- Compensation may be applied only within defined limits and never to mandatory units.

Annex A: diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for marking and providing feedback to students

