



HIGHER EDUCATION ASSESSMENT POLICY (INCLUDING ASSESSMENT BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES)

Date Last Reviewed	December 2025
Date Effective From	6th January 2026
Date of Next Planned Review	December 2026
Signed	Natalie King, Managing Director

Purpose:

This policy applies to all BTEC HNC awards offered at AccXel. AccXel reserves the right to make reasonable changes to this policy where it will assist in the proper delivery of education. These changes will normally come into effect at the beginning of an academic year. AccXel may introduce changes during the academic year when it reasonably considers these to be in the interests of students or where this is required by law.

Responsibilities of AccXel:

AccXel will ensure that students have access to the applicable policies and procedures, these include:

- Complaints Policy

- Assessment Appeals Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments & Special Considerations Policy

Responsibilities of Students:

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Ensure that they understand and comply with the assessment regulations for the BTEC HNC course.
- Attend examinations and submit work for assessment as required.
- Submit any relevant information on mitigating circumstances which they believe may have affected their performance.

Duration of Award:

The table below summarises examples of the normal duration of a programme for students studying full-time or part-time for HNC awards.

Mode of attendance	Normal duration of programme	Normal credits per year
Part-time HNC	2 years	60 credits
Full-time HNC	1 year	120 credits

The total number of credits normally required for a BTEC HNC Diploma is 120 credits. The credits are made up of mandatory core units and units selected by the education team. The BTEC HNC programme must contain a minimum of 65 credits at level 4.

Withdrawal from a programme:

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 appropriate staff in the team area (e.g. Compliance Lead or Head of Education) so that the

correct procedures are followed. This will be further considered at the course Assessment Board and the decision recorded.

PASSING A UNIT AND THE AWARD OF CREDIT:

The following passages explain what the student needs to achieve in order to pass a unit, how the overall unit results are derived and how credit is awarded. Unit assessment is made up of one or more assessment tasks which could be either “In Programme Assessment” or “End Assessment”. Where there is more than one assessment task, weightings and rules for passing the unit will be defined and published, usually electronically. Each assessment component and/or unit will be graded as Fail, Extension, Resubmission, Pass, Merit or Distinction. Grades of achievement for BTEC/Pearson units for performance are agreed by the Assessment Board. The grades for BTEC/Pearson units awards as follows:

GRADE	OTHER OUTCOMES
Pass: awarded when all pass criteria have been achieved.	Resubmission: after formative and summative assessment the student has failed to achieve a pass grade.
Merit: awarded when all pass and merit criteria have been achieved.	Fail: after initial referral and reassessment the student has failed to achieve a pass grade the student will be deemed to have failed the unit.
Distinction: awarded when all pass, merit and distinction criteria have been achieved.	Extension: after the student has submitted a case for mitigating circumstances and it has been accepted the student is permitted a further opportunity for assessment.

Subject delivery teams will be responsible for recommending overall student 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 assessment components will be considered when awarding the overall grade.

The minimum criteria to pass a unit are as follows:

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

- Completed units equivalent to 120 credits at level 4
- Achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at level 4.

COMPENSATION PROVISIONS HNC:

A student can still be awarded a HNC if they have not achieved a minimum of a Pass in one of the 15 credit units but they have otherwise fulfilled all the above conditions. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on the student's performance in all units to the value of 120 credits.

Students are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC, based on unit achievement.

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

Points per credit:

- Pass 4
- Merit 6
- Distinction 8

Grade Point boundaries:

- Pass 420–599
- Merit 600–839
- Distinction 840 +

STUDENT ASSESSMENT/REASSESSMENT:

The following passages explain the number of assessment and reassessment entitlements within one delivery of a unit and explains the different forms of assessment and re-assessment available.

Registration onto a unit entitles the student to:

- one taught delivery of the unit
- access to learning and teaching resources
- an initial opportunity to attempt the assessment tasks
- one resubmission opportunity (if required – capped at a Pass)
- One re-take opportunity (if required – capped at a Pass)

Formative and Summative Assessment:

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.

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 the need for another formative assessment once issues have been addressed.

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

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 grade that is 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 “Resubmission”. Students will have an opportunity to resubmit their work to a Pass level only.

Passing a unit following RESUBMISSION:

The minimum 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 resubmission therefore the maximum grade available is a “Pass”.

Students are normally only allowed one resubmission opportunity for each unit. Should a student not submit work that consolidates a pass grade, the unit will be recorded as a “Fail”. The students will have one opportunity to retake this unit.

RETAKE in a unit:

If the student does not achieve the minimum pass criteria for the unit overall, they are entitled to a retake at the end of the unit, that is capped at a Pass.

Retake assessment will be on a ‘task for task’ basis and will usually be of the same form as the initial task. 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 if this was group work or took place on a field trip.

Appealing against an assessment decision:

The appeals procedure will be explained to students during the course induction and again if an appeal is requested. Students intending to make an appeal must refer to and follow the AccXel Higher Education Assessment Appeals Procedure.

LATE SUBMISSIONS:

Deadlines for assessment are an important part of BTEC's. Students are encouraged to develop good time management that will stand them in good stead in the workplace. It is important that students are assessed fairly and consistently and that some students are not advantaged by having additional time to complete assignments.

Where an authorised extension has not been approved in advance, work submitted late by up to 5 working days of the published deadline may be marked. This work however will be capped at a Pass.

Work submitted after 5 days of the published deadline and without an authorised extension will not be marked and will be recorded as "Did Not Submit". Students will be offered a single retake at the next available opportunity. Merit and Distinction criteria will not be included in the retake brief and the work will be capped at Pass only.

Students must be made aware of the consequences of failing to meet deadlines.

EXTENSIONS IN A UNIT OR AN ASSESSMENT TASK:

An extension in an assessment task or an overall unit means that, due to mitigating circumstances accepted by AccXel, the student has a further opportunity to take the assessment task that was affected. The grade is not capped unless the task is already a "Resubmission".

Extensions for an assessment 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 task may be set if it is not appropriate for the student to be assessed by exactly the same method as the initial task, for example if this was group work or took place on a field trip.

ASSESSMENT AND REASSESSMENT PERIODS:

All assessment and reassessment (retake) for BTEC HNC programme provision will take place within a specified period.

Each programme team will publish a calendar for assessment and reassessment deadlines.

Normally, reassessment will take place within 6 months of notification of “Resubmission/Retake” at the next appropriate assessment window.

FAILURE OF A UNIT:

The following passages explain the circumstances in which a student can fail a unit. There are three circumstances in which a unit can be failed:

- following a first attempt and resubmission, the student has not made any valid attempt in one or more assessment tasks i.e. non-submission
- following a resubmission, 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 the sanction set because of academic misconduct

If a student fails a unit:

- They can retake the same unit on one occasion only if this applies to core and elective units.
- They can retake a substitute for the unit on one occasion only - this applies to elective units only.
- If a unit is failed due to academic misconduct, a student may be given a sanction that means they are not allowed to retake the unit or a substitute unit.

PROGRESSION TO NEXT STAGE OR LEVEL:

The following passages explain the constraints on progression that are not based solely on individual student performance.

If the student passes all the units at any given stage or level of the programme they can normally progress to the next stage or level. In some circumstances however, progression could be affected by the following factors:

- Any specified pre-requisite relationships between units that dictate the sequence in which they must be studied.
- the non-availability of units.

If the student has not passed all the units but has had mitigating circumstances accepted at either the first assessment or a reassessment point, then they will be allowed to progress with a further opportunity at reassessment, at the discretion of the Assessment Board.

If the student has failed a unit/s then normally they will be provided with the opportunity to re-take the unit/s to a Pass level only and not be allowed to progress until these units have been passed.

Exceptionally, at the discretion of the Education Team 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/Employers will be charged an additional fee for the additional unit.

RESUBMISSION AND RETAKING A UNIT (Core and Elective):

Resubmissions – A student who, for the first assessment opportunity, has failed to achieve a Pass for that unit specification shall be expected to undertake a reassessment or resubmission.

- Only one opportunity for reassessment of the unit will be permitted.
- Reassessment for course work, project or portfolio-based assessments shall normally involve the reworking of the original task.
- For examinations, reassessment shall involve completion of a new task.
- A student who undertakes a reassessment will have their grade capped at a Pass for that unit.
- A student will not be entitled to be reassessed in any component of assessment for which a Pass grade or higher has already been awarded.

Retake – If a student fails to achieve a pass for a unit in both the first submission and resubmission opportunity, they will be allowed to retake the unit, on one occasion only at our discretion and/or via the Assessment Board, unless prevented due to:

- an academic misconduct sanction
- availability of the unit concerned
- programme duration regulations

Retaking a core or elective unit means that:

- The student/employer may be charged a fee
- The student must take all the assessment tasks in the unit with full attendance
- The student must have the same reassessment opportunities as at the first registration
- The unit retake will be capped at a Pass

If the unit is no longer available, a replacement unit may be studied as directed by the Awarding Organisation. This will be treated as a retake and will be subject to all regulations relating to retake units. 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 with the programme team and more importantly with the Awarding Organisation.

Consequences of Failure on a Retaken Unit (core and elective):

If a student fails a core or elective unit after retake this would normally mean that they will have to withdraw from the programme.

EXTENSIONS REGULATIONS:

Short Term Extension – up to and including 10 working days

It is the responsibility of all students to attend any examinations and to submit work for assessment by the set date and time for that assessment. Where a student's circumstances are such that the student feels unable to meet this deadline, the student is strongly encouraged, as soon as possible, to discuss

his/her circumstances with an appropriate member of academic staff in advance of the submission/examination date. The member of staff will support the student to identify a suitable type of extension, depending on circumstances.

The purpose of a short-term extension is to allow a student, for acceptable reasons, to defer the submission of work to a later date agreed by the tutor.

Requests for extensions must be submitted with supporting evidence, in advance of the hand in date and time.

A student may request a maximum of one short term extension to a submission deadline per element of a module's assessment when circumstances outside the student's control have arisen which prevents submission or are likely to result in significant underperformance if the original deadline is enforced.

Students must submit a request to the Head of Education via email. The email should state the students name and nature of request clearly specified, e.g. Joe Bloggs, Mitigation request.

The Head of Education working with the Vice Principal (the panel) has delegated authority to approve an extension request. The Panel are permitted to request, at their discretion, evidence to support short term extension requests, especially where a student is regularly seeking multiple short-term extensions (i.e.: for many different elements of assessment on numerous occasions).

All extensions are for a default period of ten working days. A student is permitted to submit the work earlier than the expiry date of the extension period.

The following are acceptable reasons for such a request, but require evidence:

- short-term illness
- a short-term illness of any person for whom the student has a responsibility for care
- authorised absence from AccXel during teaching weeks
- an enforced change in employment circumstances for which only short-term notice was given
- other reasons considered acceptable by the Education Team

The following are not acceptable reasons for such a request:

- academic workload
- misreading the instructions on submission deadlines
- computer, disc, printer or any other technical failure for which the student is responsible (students should ensure that they keep a back-up copy of their work)
- unauthorised absence from College (e.g. holiday taken during teaching weeks)

If a student's circumstances require additional time beyond the expiry date of the original short-term extension, the student can seek a long term extension or submit a claim for mitigation as no further short-term extensions can be granted. Consequently, the assignment is processed and assessed by the appropriate Tutor/team at a future assessment period (as determined by the College and in line with the academic calendar).

A short term extension cannot be granted to extend the period of five working days in which students can submit late work.

Student/Tutor must consider the following guiding principles:

- a long or short extension must be agreed in advance of the assessment date, rather than using mitigating circumstances.
- students should always be encouraged to submit partially completed work rather than not submit anything if an extension or mitigating circumstances has not been agreed.
- if students are experiencing difficulties in submitting work, long extensions should be considered where possible (but not past the end of the re-sit period). Long extensions could be given for all modules if the student's circumstances are such that they are likely to be able to work towards submission at the first attempt for all modules during the re-sit period.
- a form must be completed for both long and short extensions, dated prior to the hand-in date.
- if an extension is seen as not appropriate or not feasible, the student should be advised to submit some work, even if partially completed.

Long Term Extension – up to 6 months:

A student may request a long-term extension to a submission deadline per element of a module's assessment. Long term extensions of up to six months are considered and approved if, in the view of the Panel, the student is experiencing personal or professional difficulties and use of other measures would:

- result in significant disadvantage to the student's academic performance and/or ability to complete scheduled (re)assessment tasks
- exacerbate an existing health problem or result in additional stress related problems
- fail to address the underlying problem or issue which is unpredictable in nature

Students must submit their request before the submission deadline.

A long term extension may also be considered and approved where there are practice-related issues which can be resolved only through additional time for completion.

Long term extensions are viewed as exceptional solutions and are used only in circumstances where the Panel is confident that the individual case merits such action.

All long-term extensions are considered on a confidential basis.

A long term extension cannot be granted to extend the period of five working days in which students can submit late work.

Long term extensions are agreed only in exceptional cases where the students can provide full and appropriate evidence over the 6-month full period.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES:

Mitigation is the process by which AccXel makes allowance for any matter or circumstance which may have seriously affected a student's performance in an assessment element(s) (including an element submitted for re-assessment).

Eligibility:

Mitigating circumstances must have had a seriously adverse effect on the student's performance and have been unanticipated and beyond the student's control.

The following reasons are considered as acceptable grounds for mitigation and for which evidence must be supplied:

- a serious personal illness which is not a permanent condition
- the death, or serious illness, of a close family member, a friend or person for whom the student has a responsibility of care
- sudden or unforeseen circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the student

The following reasons are not considered acceptable as grounds for mitigation:

- family, work, financial or other general problems which lie outside of the circumstances
- poor awareness of the AccXel's Academic Regulations
- being unaware of, or misunderstanding, a submission deadline or the date of an examination
- computer, disc, printer or any other technical failure for which the student is responsible (students should ensure that they keep a backup copy of their work).

A disability which emerges during a student's studies may be considered under the mitigation process at the first assessment point after it emerges. Following diagnosis and assessment of the effects of the condition the College makes allowance and in doing so enables the student to be assessed on the same basis as other students.

Mitigation is considered only in sudden or unexpected circumstances. Students are strongly encouraged to disclose recurrent problems affecting their performance in assessment so that the College can provide appropriate help and/or make allowance with regard to the assessment process. Such recurrent problems, if disclosed by a student, are considered on a strictly confidential basis.

Claims for mitigation must be submitted by the student, or in exceptional circumstances (e.g. when a student has been hospitalised) by the Compliance Lead on behalf of the student, no later than five working days after the submission date of assessed work or the date on which an examination has been sat.

Exceptionally, if the documentary evidence in support of a claim cannot be provided by the submission deadline, the claim is submitted within the deadline but without the documentary evidence. In such circumstances the evidence must be submitted within a further ten working days.

A claim for mitigation, once formally submitted, cannot be withdrawn.

A mitigation claim against an (initial or re-assessment) attempt at an element of assessment for which a penalty for an assessment offence has been applied cannot be considered. The claim is deemed null and void.

Any penalty for an assessment offence under the College Policy which is determined (following the conclusion of the assessment offences process) for an attempt (initial or re-assessment) at an element of assessment for which mitigation has earlier been granted deems the outcome of the mitigation process null and void. The penalty for the assessment offence is therefore applied.

Consideration:

Claims for mitigation are considered against two criteria:

- the basis of the claim is an acceptable ground for mitigation; and
- the claim is supported by documentary evidence (eg: a certificate/letter from a medical professional in the case of illness; a death certificate in the case of bereavement etc.) which must accompany the claim wherever practicable.

Claims for mitigation are considered only if both the above criteria are satisfied.

Students are strongly recommended to ensure that claims for mitigation are submitted to a Tutor for an initial check on whether both criteria have been satisfied before the claim is formally considered.

Inform the College of any extenuating circumstances which they wish to be taken into consideration in respect of assessed work, prior to the deadline and normally at least 24 hours before the published deadline.

Ensure that the request is submitted in the appropriate manner. A formal request must be fully completed and submitted to the Head of Education by email. The email should state clearly the students name and nature of request clearly specified, e.g. Joe Bloggs, Mitigation request.

Claims for mitigation are considered by the Panel without knowledge (whether by staff or students) of any mark attained by students and in confidence.

Consequences:

The outcome of a successful mitigation claim is that:

- any mark achieved for the relevant element(s) is annulled
- the student is required to take either the initial attempt (or the reassessment attempt) in the mitigated element(s) at a time determined by the College. In certain circumstances the student may be required to re-attend the module in order to be assessed in the mitigated element
- the module result will not be capped unless it is a further attempt at the re-assessment attempt following a previous failure.

Late Mitigation:

A student may submit a late mitigation claim (defined as a claim which is submitted after the standard deadline).

In addition to the detail of the mitigation claim and the supporting evidence, a student is also required to explain why the claim was not submitted within the standard deadline of five working days after the submission date of assessed work or the date on which an examination has been sat, supported by appropriate documentary evidence.

Late mitigation claims are considered by the Panel.

The Panel first determines if the student has provided a valid reason for why the claim was not submitted at the appropriate juncture.

If the Panel believes that no valid reason (supported by documentary evidence) has been provided to explain the late submission of a claim, it is rejected.

If the Panel is satisfied that a valid reason for the late submission of the claim has been provided (and supported by documentary evidence), the Panel considers the detail of the mitigation claim itself.

The consequences of the approval of a late mitigation claim are the same as for a claim submitted and considered in accordance with the standard deadline. It should be noted that the timing of any (re)assessment permitted as a consequence of a successful late mitigation claim may be different to the timing allocated to students who submitted a mitigation claim at the appropriate juncture.

A late claim for mitigation, once formally submitted, cannot be withdrawn.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

AccXel will investigate, admitted or found cases of cheating, plagiarism and unfair practice across the institution. This will be considered by the Quality Team. Prior to consideration cases are investigated by the Head of Education.

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage may be considered as an offence and dealt with under these Regulations and the associated policies.

For the purpose of these Regulations, assessment includes the following forms of assessment:

- Coursework
- Examinations
- Other Forms of Assessment

Each case will be considered on its own merits, and on the basis of:

- the gravity of the case
- the circumstances of the case
- the level at which the offence took place
- whether the offence was a repeat offence

Determination of whether an offence has occurred:

The determination of whether cheating, plagiarism, or other form of seeking unfair advantage has occurred is made through an Investigatory Interview by the team in cases of minor misconduct, or by the Head of Education or Vice Principal for cases of serious misconduct.

Schedule of Decisions Available following an investigation:

The following penalties may be applied:

- determine that the student may be awarded the appropriate grade for the re-assessed work
- Assign a 'Fail' grade and determine that the grade for re-assessed work will be a maximum of a 'Pass' grade
- Determine that the student has failed the level and is required to withdraw from the programme of study

Record of offences:

A record of admitted or found offences will remain on the student's file for the duration of their study at AccXel.

Right of Appeal:

A student has the right to appeal a finding of academic misconduct. Grounds on which the appeal is made must be included in the notification of appeal. A simple request for a rehearing does not constitute valid grounds for appeal.

However an appeal can only be made with respect to the procedures which led up to the decision being made. The student cannot appeal the outcome of the academic offence, only where the College fails to follow due process and this can be evidenced. There are no grounds for appeal on the basis of the following:

- New evidence (unless related to the procedure) not already disclosed
- Disputing the academic judgement of the academic staff and Head of Education/Vice Principal considering the case
- Disputing the competence of the staff involved

OPERATION OF ASSESSMENT BOARD (AB):

Terms of Reference:

The AB is authorised to:

- determine the standard of student module assessment outcomes
- note any instance of cheating, plagiarism and other forms of unfair practice
- determine the progression for the learner
- note any accepted claims of mitigation
- confirm unit grades and classifications
- identify referral/deferral opportunities

Record of Attendance:

A full list of members of the AB is confirmed and recorded in the minutes. This is evidence of their attendance.

Chair:

Normally chaired by the Head of Education or Principal.

Information to the Assessment Board:

The following provisions apply:

- the Promonitor/spreadsheet of grades arrived at by internal examiners/assessors will be tabled as a confidential paper

- where there is a discrepancy, the grade as moderated by the external examiner(s) may also be tabled, providing both grades are shown.

All results sheets/spreadsheets must be collected in at the end of the meeting.

Discussion and Decision-Making:

The Chair should clearly identify the courses of action open to the AB.

The module/unit assessment outcomes for each student should be conducted as follows:

- the grades for each student should be considered
- any amendment to the grades will be agreed and recorded on the grading sheet/schedule
- the overall module/unit assessment outcomes for the student will be agreed

Consideration of individual results should be conducted as follows:

- Extenuating circumstances
- Cases of cheating and plagiarism
- Progression of students on to the next stage of the programme
- The awards to be made to students
- Referrals and deferrals

Assessment Boards may also monitor academic standards. It is only when the unit results of students' achievement have been considered by an AB that certification can be claimed for through the awarding body. Prior to this the External Examiner (EE) will have sampled work and the report will be received by the AB.

The decisions of the AB will be formally recorded in the minutes. The Chair of AB will confirm the minutes and will forward them to the next meeting of the relevant Awards Board.

The award of Merit or Distinction should be determined in accordance with Pearson regulations and EE report.

Tutors should take care not to disclose the confidential proceedings of the AB and should guide the student on what they now have to do

AB minutes are forwarded to the Pearson EE following the Awards board meeting. Thereafter a claim can be made.

Disclosure of Results:

Only designated staff are authorised to disclose results.

This policy has been agreed by the AccXel senior management team and agreed. It will be reviewed every year or after significant changes to AccXel's business or staff.

Signed:

Natalie King

Date: 06/01/2026