Regent College London

Internal Verification Policy and Procedure
Higher National courses

1   Purpose

1.1   To provide a policy and procedure for assuring academic standards through an internal verification policy, process and procedure that meets the requirements of both Pearson and the relevant parts of the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for higher education.

2   Background

2.1   It is essential that quality assurance systems are in place so that the assessment of students is fair, consistent and at the appropriate academic standard. In addition, Regent College London (the College) must meet the requirements of Pearson, as the Higher National awarding organisation, to maintain confidence in the College's management of its devolved academic responsibilities. The College uses the Internal Verification process as an integral part of the academic cycle from the design of assessment briefs to the assessment of academic standards of student work.

3   QAA Quality Code

3.1   This Internal Verification Policy and procedure takes account of the relevant Expectations, Practices and Guiding Principles of the UK Quality Code.

This Policy aligns with the UK Quality Code core and common practices in

Expectation for Standards:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Expectations for Quality:

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

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

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

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

• The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.

• The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.

• Where a provider works in partnership with other organisations, it has in place effective arrangements to ensure that the academic experience is high-quality irrespective of where or how courses are delivered and who delivers them.

• The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.

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

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

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

This Policy also incorporates the following Guiding Principles set out in

the Advice and Guidance for Assessment:

• 2. Assessment is reliable, consistent, fair and valid

• 4. Assessment is inclusive and equitable

• 5. Assessment is explicit and transparent

• 6.Assessment and feedback is purposeful and supports the learning process

• 7. Assessment is timely

• 8. Assessment is efficient and manageable

• 10. Assessment encourages academic integrity

4   Internal Verification Procedure and Policy

(a) Internal verification procedure

4.1   The following are the key features of the Internal Verification procedure operating at Regent College London and are consistent with Pearson's requirements:

- Assessment decisions through the allocation of grades (refer, pass, merit and distinction) are evaluated by the sampling of marked student work

- Feedback provided by primary markers of student work is evaluated by the sampling of marked work by the Internal Verifier

- Internal Verification seeks to assure that assessment decisions and the allocation of grades is evidenced against the learning objectives provided in the assignment brief

- Ensuring consistency of marking (grading) of assessed work across different assignments for different Units and where different markers grade the same assignment within a Unit

- Ensuring that the assignment briefs and controlled assessments (examinations) are fit for purpose and meet fully the requirements of Pearson

- Providing feedback to tutors following Internal Verification of assignment briefs

- Maintaining a record of Internal Verification for both the production of an assignment brief and/or examinations before it is given to students and the assessment process including grading and feedback to students

The Internal Verification procedure at the College is intended to be supportive and developmental in enabling assessors to develop good practice and demonstrate quality enhancement.

(b) Internal Verification policy

4.2 The following represents the Internal Verification policy that the College operates for setting assignment briefs and/or examinations:

- All assignment briefs and/or examinations must be submitted for Internal Verification and appropriate changes made before being given to students.

- Internal Verification of **assignment briefs** and/or examinations must be evidenced through completion of 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 Programme Leaders should keep a copy of all signed Internal Verifier Forms for all assignment briefs and/or examinations given to students

- Feedback to tutors setting assignment briefs and/or examinations should be provided by the Internal Verifier so that the tutor engages in quality enhancement

Annex 1 provides a diagrammatic summary of the procedure for internal verification of assignment briefs and/or examinations.

4.3 The following represents the Internal Verification policy that the College operates for marking and providing feedback to students on assessed work:

- The Academic Dean has oversight responsibility of the internal verification processes

- Samples of student work selected for Internal Verification must cover all grades – referred, pass, merit and distinction

- For each cohort of students **at least fifteen per cent** of student work for any one Unit must be sampled to represent the full spectrum of grades available

- Each and every student must be sampled at least once each academic year over the duration of their programme of study

- Clear records of Internal Verification and sampling of student work must be kept using the **Internal Verification of Assessor Form**.

- Programme Leaders should keep a copy of all signed Internal Verification of Assessor Forms

- Feedback to tutors marking student work should be provided in order to further enhance the marking and feedback processes at the College

Annex 2 provides a diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for grading and providing students with feedback for their assessed work.

(c) Guidelines for disagreements of grades and adequacy of feedback to students

4.4 Where the Internal Verifier disagrees with the grade awarded by the primary or first marker of the student work the following procedure should be followed:

- The Internal Verifier should discuss any student work where there is a disagreement of grade to be awarded. This should be done in an evidence-based manner using the individual learning outcomes form given in the assignment brief. If the first marker and Internal Verifier subsequently agree the grade this resolves the matter. The resolution should be indicated on the Internal Verification of Assessor Form

- Where the Internal Verifier and the primary marker are unable to reach agreement on the grade for a piece of student assessed work a third marker should be brought in. This should be the Lead Internal Verifier or the Programme Leader. The third marker makes the final decision over the grade to be awarded in the absence of agreement between the other two markers.

(d) Release of grades for assessed work to students

4.5 Release of grades for assessed work to students must only take place following full adherence to the above Internal Verification policy and only after grades have been confirmed by the Assessment Board. The Chair of the Assessment Board may, in exceptional circumstances, take Chair's action to approve individual student grades to enable timely release to students. All grades must be approved at a properly convened meeting of the Assessment Board and any Chair's actions reported at the next meeting of an Assessment Board.

5   Lead Internal Verifier and Internal Verifier roles

5.1 The **Lead Internal Verifier*** is responsible for planning the internal verification schedule for programmes and their constituent units of study. It is the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier to ensure that all appropriate preparations are made in advance of visits by Pearson, especially the annual Standards (External) Verifier visit and the Academic Management Review (AMR)

5.2 **Internal Verifiers** should act in a supporting and encouraging way to primary markers and identify good practice for dissemination across the College and areas for quality enhancement. It is the responsibility of the Internal Verifier to ensure that all marking has been conducted correctly, academic standards are secure and feedback is provided to each student according to the College's Feedback Policy and the requirements of Pearson.

6   Outcomes of Internal Verification

6.1   The internal verification system may lead to the following outcomes:

Confirming the grading and feedback provided for the assessment.

(a) Confirmation is made when the Internal Verifier is satisfied that there is sufficient valid and reliable evidence that grading is appropriate in relation to the assessment criteria for the assignment. Confirmation also means that feedback has been provided, on both the covering sheet and the script that will identify strengths and areas for improvement to the student.

(b) Disagreement with the grade allocated by the primary marker (4.3 provides guidance) or judging that feedback provided is insufficient or inadequate. In the latter case the assessed work should be given back to the primary marker so that he or she can provide fuller feedback according to the College's policy.

6.2   The process of internal verification should also be seen as developmental and resulting in quality enhancement. Internal verification works well when the Internal Verifier meets regularly with primary markers and discusses the assessment process and outcomes of internal verification with them.

7   Internal Verification forms/templates

7.1   There are two types of forms/templates to be used in the internal verification process:

(a) Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form

(b) Internal Verification of Assessor Form

7.2   The *Assignment Brief Internal Verification Form* is used to assess the quality and appropriateness of assignment briefs. Proposed assignment briefs must be submitted to the Internal Verifier in good time for distribution to students according to published dates. Given the iterative process involved the member of staff responsible for drafting the assignment brief should aim to get the draft to the Internal Verifier **two weeks** before it is due to be given to the students on the unit of study.

7.3   The *Internal Verification of Assessor Form* is used to monitor and ensure that academic standards are met and that good and full feedback is provided to students on their assessed work.

Annex 1: Diagrammatic summary of the internal verification process for assignment briefs

```
┌─────────────────────────────┐                          ┌──────────────────────┐
│   Tutor prepares/revises     │ ◄──────────────────────  │      Feedback         │
│ assignment brief and/or      │                          │    given to the       │
│        examination           │                          │        tutor          │
└─────────────────────────────┘                          └──────────────────────┘
             │                                                        ▲
             ▼                                                        │
┌─────────────────────────────┐                                      │
│  Assignment brief and/or     │                                     │
│ examination submitted for    │                                     │
│   internal verification (IV) │                                     │
└─────────────────────────────┘                                      │
             │                                                        │
             ▼                                            ┌──────────────────────┐
            ╱╲                                            │                       │
           ╱  ╲                                           │     IV requires       │
          ╱    ╲                                          │    further work       │
         ╱ Feed- ╲  ─────────────────────────────────►   │                       │
        ╱  back   ╲                                       └──────────────────────┘
       ╱ given to  ╲
      ╱  the tutor  ╲
     ╱───────────────╲
             │
             ▼
      IV approves the
      assignment brief
          and/or
        examination
             │
             ▼
```
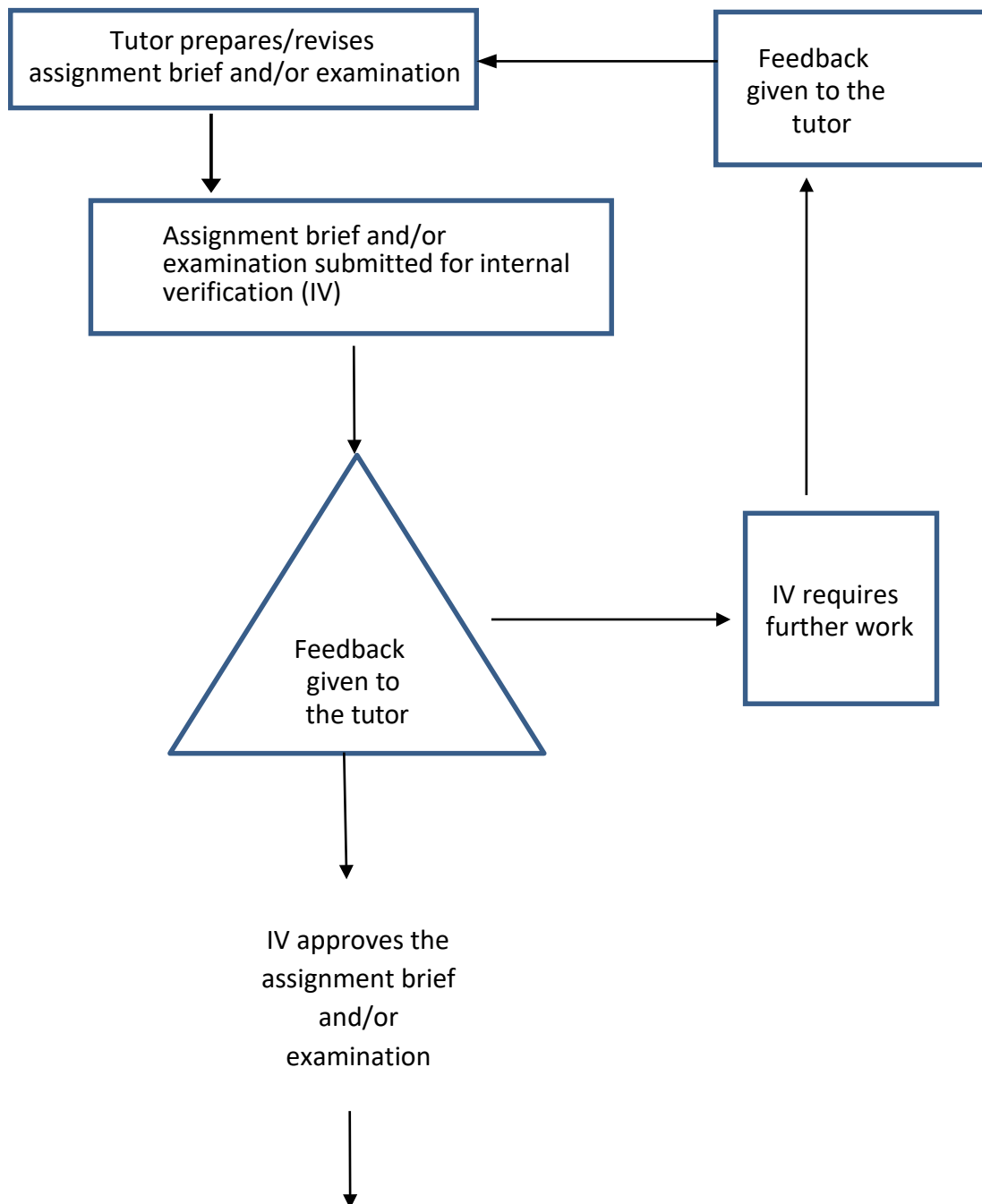
Assignment brief and/or examination is released to the student according to published date

Annex 2: Diagrammatic summary of the internal verification procedure for marking and providing feedback on student assessed work

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Student submits their  │
│       assignment        │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
             ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐          ┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Assignment is graded  │          │   IV does not agree     │
│      and feedback       │ ───────► │    grade and/or         │
│  provided by the first  │ ◄─────── │    feedback provided    │
│         marker          │          │    by the primary       │
└─────────────────────────┘          │    assessor marker      │
             │                       └─────────────────────────┘
             ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│   Internal verification │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
             ▼
          ╱╲
         ╱  ╲
        ╱ Feedback ╲
       ╱  given to  ╲
      ╱  the first   ╲
     ╱     marker      ╲
    ╱───────────────────╲
             │
             ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│    IV agrees grade and  │
│    Quality of feedback  │
│      to the student     │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
             ▼
┌─────────────────────────┐
│  Assessment Board meets │
│  to consider grades and │
│     make decisions      │
└─────────────────────────┘
             │
             ▼
```

Confirmed grades and feedback on assignment given to students

Author	Head of Academic Standards & Quality Enhancement
Version	Version 5.2
Update	October 2019
Approval	Academic Board November 2019
Review Date	August 2020