



**MONARCH**  
INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES



Monarch is Your Passport to Global education

# Student Handbook

# COMPUTING

**Higher National Diploma  
in Computing (HND)**

**Academic Year 2022-23**

**Specialist pathways:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## INTRODUCTION

It is with pleasure that we welcome you to the delivery of the Pearson Level 4/5 Higher National Certificate / Diploma Programme delivered at Monarch. We offer you the opportunity of reaching your full potential while studying at your own pace. We are here to support you on this exciting journey you have embarked on. Please let me assure you that at no point are you alone in your quest for learning and self- development as Monarch takes its obligations to its students very seriously.

We aim to help you succeed and to achieve your goals. Although you are expected to invest time and effort into your studies, you should take this opportunity to make your learning experience enjoyable and fun. Here is your chance to meet new people and make friends across the globe.

In addition, we lay down the standards which Monarch requires from students and set out the policies by which we operate. You should read through the handbook carefully as it contains important details about the course content and management and your responsibilities as a student. Your course will be managed and administered by the Monarch student support team. If you have any queries or concerns that are not covered in this handbook, please contact student support for additional guidance and information.

The completion of your course will provide you with a firm foundation for a successful career in your chosen path. We wish you all the best and hope that you will find this experience productive and rewarding.

Good Luck!

***Dr. Saurath Mahar***



## WHY CHOOSE A BTEC HIGHER NATIONAL QUALIFICATION IN COMPUTING?

The purpose of BTEC Higher National qualifications in Computing is to develop your professionalism, reflection skills, and employability skills in the IT sector. The BTEC Higher Nationals include a Level 4 Certificate (HNC) and a Level 5 Diploma (HND). These qualifications aim to widen access to higher education and to enhance your career prospects, with a step-by-step approach to progress to a Degree.

## WHO ARE BTEC AND THE AWARDING BODY - PEARSON EDUCATION LTD?

The BTEC Higher National qualifications are awarded by Pearson and Monarch work in partnership to deliver the programme. As the awarding organisation, Pearson has approved Monarch to offer a variety of HND qualifications. The management team is then responsible for ensuring that the quality of the provision offered meets Pearson's exacting conditions and standards. The quality is monitored regularly through visits from Pearson's External Examiners and a regular Pearson Annual Management Review.

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE - QUALIFICATION TITLES

The qualification is called Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Computing. There are specialist pathways which are identified within brackets in the qualification title:

- Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Computing (Software)

## AIMS OF THE HIGHER NATIONALS IN COMPUTING

The purpose of Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Computing is to develop students as professional, self-reflecting individuals able to meet the demands of employers in the IT sector and adapt to a constantly changing world. The qualifications aim to widen access to higher education and enhance the career prospects of those who undertake them.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE PEARSON BTEC HIGHER NATIONALS IN COMPUTING

Objectives of the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Computing The objectives of the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Computing are as follows:

- To equip students with computing skills, knowledge and the understanding necessary to achieve high performance in the global computing environment.



- To provide education and training for a range of careers in computing, including network engineering, software engineering, data analytics, security, intelligent systems, and applications development.
- To provide insight and understanding into international computing operations and the opportunities and challenges presented by a globalised market place.
- To equip students with knowledge and understanding of culturally diverse organisations, cross-cultural issues, diversity and values.
- To provide opportunities for students to enter or progress in employment in computing, or progress to higher education qualifications such as an Honours degree in computing or a related area.
- To provide opportunities for students to develop the skills, techniques and personal attributes essential for successful working lives.
- To provide opportunities for those students with a global outlook to aspire to international career pathways.
- To provide opportunities for students to achieve a nationally recognized professional qualification.
- To provide opportunities for students to achieve vendor accredited certifications.
- To offer students the chance of career progression in their chosen field.
- To allow flexibility of study and to meet local or specialist needs.
- To offer a balance between employability skills and the knowledge essential for students with entrepreneurial, employment or academic aspirations.



## AIMS OF THE LEVEL 4 HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING

The Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Computing offers students six Specialist pathways designed to support progression into relevant occupational areas Or on to degree-level study. These pathways are linked to Professional Body standards And vendor accredited certification (where appropriate) and can provide professional Status and progression to direct employment.

The Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma offers the following specialist pathways For students who wish to concentrate on a particular aspect of computing:

- **Network Engineering**
- **Software Engineering**
- **Data Analytics**
- **Security**
- **Intelligent Systems**
- **Applications Development**

There is also a non-specialist 'Computing' pathway, which allows students to complete

A Pearson BTEC Higher National Diploma without committing to a particular Professional specialism. This offers additional flexibility to providers and students.



## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE OF THE PEARSON BTEC LEVEL 4/5 HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA IN COMPUTING

HNC Unit Number and Title	
1 Programming	Core Mandatory Unit
2 Networking	Core Mandatory Unit
3 Professional Practice	Core Mandatory Unit
4 Database Design & Development	Core Mandatory Unit
5 Security	Core Mandatory Unit
6 Planning a Computing Project	Core Mandatory Unit
7 Software Development Lifecycles	Specialist Unit
13 Website Design & Development	Optional Unit

HND Units (Software Engineering)	
16 Computing Research Project	Core Unit
17 Business Process Support	Core Unit
18: Discrete Maths	Specialist Unit Mandatory
19: Data Structures & Algorithms	Specialist Unit Mandatory
20: Applied Programming and Design Principles	Specialist Unit Mandatory
36: User Experience and Interface Design	Optional Unit
45: Internet of Things	Optional Unit



## ACHIEVING A PASS, MERIT OR DISTINCTION IN YOUR HNC OR HND

To enable you to achieve the grade you want for your Pearson Level 4/5 Higher National HNC / HND course, you need to have plan on what grade you want to achieve for each unit. The calculation of the overall qualification grade is based on your performance in all units. You are awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction qualification grade using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC or Level 5 for the HND, based on unit achievement. The overall qualification grade is calculated in the same way for the HNC and for the HND.

All units in valid combination must have been attempted for each qualification. All 120 credits count in calculating the grade (at each level, as applicable). The overall qualification grade for the HND will be calculated based on student performance in Level 5 units only. Units that have been attempted but not achieved, and subsequently granted compensation, will appear as

‘Unclassified’; i.e. A ‘U’ grade, on the student’s Notification of Performance, that is issued with the student certificate.

### Point boundaries and credits

Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma in Computing

Grade	Points per credit	Point Boundaries
Pass	4	420–599
Merit	6	600–839
Distinction	8	840 +

Pass qualification grade To achieve a Pass in the BTEC HNC Diploma qualification, a student must:

- Achieve at least 120 credits at or above Level 4 (a maximum of 55 credits may be at Level 5)
- Achieve a minimum of 65 credits at Level 4
- Complete a valid combination of mandatory and optional units
- Provide evidence for each learning outcome and associated assessment criteria for the chosen combination of units.

To achieve a Pass in the BTEC HND Diploma qualification, a student must:

- Achieve at least 240 credits
- Achieve a minimum of 125 credits at Level 5



- Complete a valid combination of mandatory and optional units
- Provide evidence for each learning outcome and associated assessment criteria for the chosen combination of units.

Qualification grades above Pass grade A Merit or Distinction grade for the HNC Diploma is based on the student's best performance in units at Level 4 to the value of 75 credits and for the HND Diploma it is based on the student's best performance in units at Level 5 to the value of 75 credits.

The units from which the best 75 credits are selected come from the whole qualification including the mandatory units.

Credit from mandatory units will automatically be included in the calculation once the maximum amount of credit for optional specialist units for the rule of combination is used up.

The overall qualification grade for the HND will be calculated based on student performance in Level 5 units only.

## **PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES - WHAT COULD THESE QUALIFICATIONS LEAD TO?**

On successful completion of the Level 5 Higher National Diploma, you can develop their careers in the IT sector through:

- Entering employment
- Continuing existing employment
- Linking with the appropriate Professional Body
- Committing to Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Progressing to university

## **PROGRESSION TO UNIVERSITY OR EMPLOYMENT**

The Level 5 Higher National Diploma is recognised by Higher Education providers as meeting admission requirements to many relevant business-related courses, for example:

- **Bsc (Hons) in Computer Science**
- **Bsc (Hons) in Software Engineering**

Monarch accept Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals as a qualification for entry onto an undergraduate degree. After completing a Pearson BTEC Higher National Certificate or Diploma, students can also progress directly into employment.



# MONARCH POLICIES | STUDENT SUPPORT OFFICE

## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

### 1. Background

Cheating in examinations or in other assignments assessed for the award of a certificate, diploma or degree is a serious academic offence. A student who copies other people’s work is passing off something as their own when it belongs in reality to someone else. A qualification is awarded when a person has achieved a certain body of knowledge and acquired certain high level skills. If the student had not actually gained that knowledge or could not use those skills, because in fact s/he had misled the assessors about the extent of her/his accomplishment, then the qualification could not be treated by employers or others as a reliable indicator. As a consequence, the award would be devalued for all those who had earned it honestly.

For these reasons, MONARCH has a duty to all its students and to its awarding organisations to ensure that all certificates and diplomas are earned by students by their own efforts, not by cheating. Consequently, there are penalties for any student who commits an act of academic misconduct ranging from failure in the module to exclusion from the course of study. There are also intermediate requirements to resit or retake a module. This would cost the student substantial additional investment of time and money. The penalties extend to long periods of suspension from the course and, as it have been already noted, to permanent exclusion.

Academic misconduct examples are provided below. This is not an exhaustive list. During induction they will be explained to new students.

### 2. Types of academic misconduct in time-constrained examinations

The normal penalties for each offence are set out in the right hand column in the table below.

1	A reprimand will be issued where the Panel substantiates academic misconduct and the seriousness of the mitigating factors justifies a	1
2	Removing any script, paper, or other official stationery (whether completed or not) from the examination room, unless specifically authorised by an	1
3	Introduction or use of devices of any kind other than those specifically permitted in the rubric of the paper.	2
4	Communicating with another student or with any third party other than the invigilator/examiner during an examination Test.	2
5	Possession/or limited use of crib sheets, revision notes etc. At any time during an examination or test.	2
6	Having obtained special examination arrangements by making false declarations.	2



7	During an examination or test, copying or attempting to copy the work of another student, whether by overlooking his or her work, asking him or her for information, or by any other means.	2
8	Possession and extensive use of crib sheets, revision notes etc. At any time	3
9	Obtaining access to an unseen examination or test prior to the start of an	3
10	Attempting to persuade another member of MONARCH (student, staff or invigilator) to participate in actions which would breach these rules	4
11	Taking into an examination a pre-written examination script for submission and exchanging it for a blank examination script.	4
12	Being party to any arrangement whereby a person other than the candidate represents, or intends to represent, the candidate in an examination or test.	4
13	Where students have previously committed an offence where penalty 2 or 3 is awarded, students shall receive Penalty 4 for  Any subsequent allegations that would merit a penalty 2 or 3	4
14	A penalty of exclusion shall be applied where a student has previously received a Penalty 4 under these Regulations or where a second allegation is upheld within one semester that each individually equate to Penalty 4.	5
15	Being party to any other arrangement that would constitute a breach of	See
15	Having obtained special examination arrangements by making false declarations.	2

**\*Note:** The penalty will correspond to the nature of the offence and will be in accordance with penalties outlined for each of the above

### 3. Types of academic misconduct in coursework

1	A reprimand will be issued where the Panel substantiates academic misconduct and the seriousness of the mitigating factors justifies a reduction	1
2	Making available work that can be passed off or presented as the work of	2
3	Having obtained special consideration for the submission of coursework by	2
4	Isolated use of quotes or close paraphrasing without the use of quotation	2
5	Representation of work produced in collaboration with another person or	3



6	The presentation of data in laboratory work, projects etc. Based on work purporting to have been carried out by the student but which has been	3
7	Prevalent use of quotes or close paraphrasing amounting to at least 20% of the total word count, without the use of quotation marks/grades and	3
8	Commissioning another person to complete work, which is then submitted as a student's own work. This could include the use of professional essay writing services or essay banks.	4
9	Stealing another student's work and submitting it as the student's own	4
10	Attempting to persuade another member of MONARCH (student or staff)	4
11	Where students have previously committed an offence where penalty 2 or 3 is awarded, students shall receive penalty 4 for any subsequent allegations that would merit a penalty 2 or 3.	4
12	A penalty of exclusion shall be applied where a student has previously	5
13	Being party to any other arrangement that would constitute a breach of	See

**\*Note:** The penalty will correspond to the nature of the offence and will be in accordance with penalties outlined for each of the above.

#### 4. Standard list of penalties

**Penalty 1:** Reprimand, a formally recorded warning kept on the student's record.

**Penalty 2:** Failure in item of assessed work, with right to resit. A mark/grade of zero will be recorded for the assessed work.

**Penalty 3:** Failure in the module, without right to resit. The student must register for the same or an alternative module.

**Penalty 4:** Failure in the module, without right to resit (the student must register for the same or an alternative module) and suspension for 2 semesters commencing at the start of the next full semester.

**Penalty 5:** Exclusion.

A signed copy of a note confirming understanding of the procedure must be given to the student and another copy kept in the student's file.



## ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

### 1. Introduction

These regulations comprise the rules for the construction, operation and assessment of higher education undergraduate level and postgraduate level programmes at MONARCH. Every higher education student must, as part of their studies, familiarise themselves with these regulations, since they explain:

- **MONARCH's admissions procedure**
- **MONARCH's academic and modular structure**
- **MONARCH's assessment regulations**

*MONARCH's academic committee framework is set out in Procedure 1.3*

To help students understand the procedures, during the induction period of their qualifications, programme coordinators must introduce and explain the key points from the academic regulations.

### 2. Admission to MONARCH higher education programmes

MONARCH aims to provide the opportunity for access to higher education for all students who have demonstrated the potential to benefit from the higher education programme to which they have applied. Whilst it is possible for students to benefit from a higher education experience without successfully completing a programme, 'potential to benefit' is here used to mean potential successfully to complete an identified programme of study. The principle aim of the admissions process is the identification of potential to benefit, by providing evidence that indicates a reasonable expectation of achieving the specific award associated with an identified programme of study.

MONARCH admissions process (see Policy 4 Student admissions and related procedures) is designed to ensure that all applicants, including those from backgrounds where members of the family have not previously entered higher education, have an equal opportunity to demonstrate their potential to benefit educationally.

These include certificated minimum entry requirements and non-certificated entry at the Application stage.

### 3. Application stage

All applications to MONARCH will be reviewed to ascertain if they provide sufficient evidence of potential to benefit in relation to the minimum entry requirements of the programme of study to which the application relates.

### 4. Admission stage

All applications that meet the minimum entry requirements of the programme of study applied for are entitled to proceed. This stage is designed to provide additional opportunities to demonstrate potential to benefit through a range of other methods such as interview, portfolio and admissions tests. The specific details of admission stage procedures will vary and will reflect the specific academic subject and level of the programme to which an application relates.



## 5. Non-certificated entry

Applications will be considered that seek to demonstrate potential to benefit through non-certificated prior experiential learning. Such applications need to demonstrate that prior learning is equivalent to that which is required by the minimum certificated entry requirements. This will usually only apply to mature students (over 21) who are able to identify, at the application stage, that they have relevant and significant prior experience that provides evidence of potential to benefit by achieving the learning outcomes of the programme and attaining the standard of the award.

## 6. Undergraduate level Diploma or Certificate minimum entry requirements

The admission stage will provide appropriate opportunities further to establish this potential to benefit. Applicants whose qualifications do not conform to the standard entry requirements detailed below will be considered on merit. The applicant must be capable of operating at the appropriate undergraduate or postgraduate level. Relevant vocational, professional or other experience will be taken into account.

The possession of the achievement entry requirements guarantees the offer of a place. Each programme has its own entry requirements which are clearly stated in the academic prospectus as well as MONARCH website.

## 7. Postgraduate level Diploma or Certificate minimum entry requirements

Each programme has its own entry requirements which are clearly stated in the academic prospectus as well as MONARCH website.

## 8. Academic structure

Each academic cohort of study normally consists of up to two - three semesters, and depending on the programme it can also be annual. This depends on number of factors including the choice of programme. The semesters are means of dividing the cohort into units of study depending on the number of the programmes.

The first and last week of each semester are normally used for procedures such as induction, tutorials, assessment, review and administration. The remaining weeks of each semester consist of direct programme delivery. Students must attend for the full weeks of the academic year.

MONARCH 's academic structure supports full-time routes to most higher education qualifications. The length of these programmes may vary according to the qualification.

## 9. Levels of study

As a student progresses to each level of study on a higher education programme, the level of the work presents a greater academic challenge than the previous one. For example, at undergraduate level this is often reflected in the fact that students are progressively given a greater role in the planning, organisation and direction of their studies. They are also expected to demonstrate an increasing sophistication in their contextual awareness, analytical and technical skills.

### 9.1 Undergraduate levels of study

There are three levels of undergraduate study: Certificate (Level 4), Diploma (Level 5); degree (Level 6).



## 9.2 Postgraduate levels of study

MONARCH delivers higher education programmes up to Masters. MONARCH also offers professional qualifications and certifications.

## 10. Module types

All programmes of study offered by MONARCH are made up of different types and combinations of modules. Modules fall into three complementary categories: Core, Mandatory or Optional.

*Core modules* often referred to as 'specialist' or 'prescribed' or 'compulsory' modules have been developed to be taken by all students following a particular programme of study. These modules are designed to offer students the underpinning knowledge necessary to progress with their studies.

*Mandatory modules* are not only prescribed, like core modules, owing to their providing the underpinning knowledge, but a pass in them is required as a condition to taking certain other modules subsequently. If they are not passed the student cannot progress to certain other modules. If the latter are themselves core, then the student will not be able to complete the award.

These do not feature in degree structures to present unnecessary hurdles for students. They are only permitted on two grounds:

- 1)** Where the knowledge or skills they contain are necessary to be able to study other requisite parts of the course;
- 2)** Where another external validating body requires them to meet the requirements for professional recognition.
- 3)** *Optional modules* are offered within programmes to enhance student choice and enable students to add breadth to their studies. These modules are normally offered as a required choice from a range of options at a specific stage, semester or level of a programme of study.

## 11. Mode of study

All undergraduate and postgraduate level programmes in MONARCH are offered in the full-time mode.



## APPEALS

### 1. Summary of appeals procedure

The procedure applies to decisions on assessments made by the Academic and Advisory Committee.

A candidate may not lodge an appeal on the grounds of dissatisfaction with the design, curriculum or delivery (teaching, departmental support, etc.) Of a course. MONARCH 's Complaints procedure exists in part to deal with such issues. However, the investigation of a complaint from a student may reveal issues that would have formed grounds for an appeal under the Appeals procedure. When this is the case, a student must not be prevented from exercising the right to appeal subsequent to the findings of the complaints investigation on the grounds of its being 'out of time'. In such instances, the deadlines set out in this procedure must be calculated from the date at which the complainant received the information as an outcome of the complaints investigation that might form the basis of her/his appeal.

The HOI (Head of Institution) is empowered to refer the matter as an appeal to whichever is the appropriate forum for its consideration. Equally, if a student submits as a complaint, which is wholly or partly an appeal on one of the four grounds, it is an obligation of MONARCH to ensure that the issue is considered under the Appeals procedure.

### 2. Grounds for appeal

A request for a review of an assessment decision may be made on one or more of the following grounds:

- That a candidate had submitted evidence of mitigating circumstances as specified in MONARCH documents, but these were not considered by the assessor or the Academic and Advisory Committee
- That the assessor or the Academic and Advisory Committee was not aware of mitigating circumstances affecting the candidate's performance because the candidate had been unable, or for valid reasons, unwilling, to divulge them before the decision was reached
- That the assessment procedures were not followed in accordance with the regulations resulting in an error in the candidate's assessment
- That some other material irregularity had led to a breach of the procedures or regulations resulting in a decision detrimental to the student

These are the only grounds for appeal. There is no right of appeal against assessment decisions which are matters of academic judgement.

### 3. The procedure for appeal

Students may wish to take advice as to whether to appeal or not. Their Programme Manager, the appropriate Head of Department, Student Student Affairs Officer and Academic Head are all suitable members of staff from whom to obtain advice about how to use the Appeals procedure.

Whatever source of information the student chooses, it is their responsibility to choose whether to appeal, the grounds upon which they do so and the evidence they decide to present.



For assessments dealt with by Academic and Advisory Committee, a student who wishes to appeal against a decision of the Assessment Committee must write to the Programme Manager to invoke the Academic Appeals Procedure within 6 weeks of the date of the letter from the Chair of the Academic and Advisory Committee that provides the student's result.

A request for a review must state the decision concerned, the grounds and be accompanied by documents that are evidence for the case on these grounds.

The HOI shall make an assessment of the validity of the case and decide whether or not it should be put before an Assessment Appeals Panel. The decision to proceed with such a request will only be taken if it has been established that the case is based, *prima facie*, on additional information about a candidate's personal circumstances or on evidence of procedural irregularity and is not one which challenges the academic judgement of the Academic and Advisory Committee.

This decision should normally be made within 10 working days of receipt from the student, and be advised to them in writing.

#### 4. The function of the Assessment Appeals Panel

The Assessment Appeals Panel will consider appeals against assessment decisions of assessors. The Assessment Appeal Panel reports to the Academic and Advisory Committee.

It will establish whether there is, *prima facie*, a justified case of appeal and if so to consider whether:

- To uphold the decision of the Academic and Advisory Committee
- To overturn the decision of the Academic and Advisory Committee
- To require the Academic and Advisory Committee whose decision has been challenged, to reconsider that decision.

#### 5. The constitution of the Assessment Appeals Panel

The membership of the Assessment Appeals Panel shall be:

- A Director or her/his nominee who has not previously been involved in the assessment decision and is a member of the Senior Leadership Team
- Any Head of Department who has not previously been involved in the assessment decision
- A member of teaching staff, not directly concerned with the course/programme, in which the course and the appellant are based
- The secretary to the Panel

Any potential member who has been involved in teaching, assessing, counselling or advising an appellant will be ineligible to serve on the committee hearing the case of that appellant. A quorum of the Assessment Appeals Panel is all three members, plus the Secretary.



## 6. Convening of Assessment Appeals Panel

The Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Academic Appeals Panel on the first convenient date, which shall not normally be more than twenty working days after the request has been lodged. Ten working days' notice of any meeting of the Academic Appeals Panel shall be given to the members, the appellant and any other persons being required to attend.

The appellant must be present and may be accompanied by one person of his/her choosing. If the appellant does not appear and the Panel is satisfied that notice of the appeal hearing was duly sent to him/her, the appeal lapses. The Assessment Appeals Panel and/or the appellant may summon to appear any other person(s) whom they may reasonably consider to be material witnesses.

## 7. Conduct of Assessment Appeals Panel hearings

Prior to the hearing, all parties to the appeal will have been circulated with written statements setting out the appellant's grounds for appeal and any written statements of those responsible for the assessment decision which is being appealed against.

The Panel will start by hearing an opening statement from the appellant, or the appellant's representative, on the grounds for the appeal.

The Chair of the Panel must ensure that witnesses are only questioned about matters germane to the case of the appellant on the grounds permitted by the Procedure.

After all witnesses have been heard, the appellant or her/his representative may make a concluding statement summarising what has been presented to the Panel.

The Assessment Appeals Panel is not empowered to consider any appeal on grounds other than those lodged by the appellant at time of giving notice of the appeal. The Panel will then deliberate in private and announce its decision publicly to the appellant and the appellant's representative.

The Panel's decision will also be communicated in writing to:

- The appellant
- The appellant's representative, if there is one
- The HOI
- The Programme Coordinator
- The Chair of the Academic and Advisory Committee which made or recorded the decision against which the appeal has been made
- The Academic Head to which the appeal refers

## 8. Decisions of the Assessment Appeals Panel

The Assessment Appeals Panel shall consider the appeal and if it finds that the appellant has established a case, will either overturn the decision of the Academic and Advisory Committee or require the Academic and Advisory Committee whose decision has been challenged, to reconsider that decision.

Where the Assessment Appeals Panel finds that the appellant has not established a case for a review of the decision, it will uphold the Academic and Advisory Committee's decision. There is no further right of appeal within MONARCH.



When a decision has been referred back to the Academic and Advisory Committee it shall reconsider, within three calendar months, the appellant's case, giving due consideration to the comments and recommendations of the Assessment Appeals Panel. The Committee will either confirm their decisions or make such adjustments as in the circumstances they deem just. The Chair of the Academic and Advisory Committee will inform the appellant and take any further necessary action.

In cases of procedural or other irregularity the Appeals Panel has the power to annul a decision of an Academic and Advisory Committee. If an error or irregularity is found to have affected more than one candidate, the Appeals Panel may annul the whole assessment or any part of it. The decision of the Appeals Panel shall be final.

## 9. Intermission of studies and mitigating circumstances

MONARCH recognises that a student in good academic standing may need to take a break from their studies for non-academic reasons. MONARCH may permit a student to intermit. However, there is a presumption that students must try to complete their programmes of study by the original end date.

It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate that there are sufficient grounds to grant permission to intermit. However, permission will not be granted on more than two occasions, one of which may not immediately succeed another. The duration of a period of intermission shall not exceed one academic year at a time within a single period of registration, with no less than one semester and no more than two semesters requested.

Requests for intermission must be made in writing to the Campus Administrator. The request must include a reason for the intermission and the intended date of return to the programme of study, together with any relevant documentation. It should be submitted for consideration no less than six weeks before the effective date and be presented to the next Academic and Advisory Committee.

### 9.1 Mitigating circumstances

MONARCH recognises and accepts that in rare instances, student performance will be affected by circumstances beyond their control. This may, for example, include a sudden or long-term illness that has prevented or impeded the assessment of student work through absence, the non-submission of work or poor performance.

The purpose of mitigating circumstances is to offer eligible students the opportunity to be assessed or reassessed on equal terms with other students. Students who believe that their assessed performance was affected by such circumstances should apply for mitigating circumstances using the procedures set out below. Claims for mitigation in respect of poor performance shall not be valid.

A student may submit a claim seeking mitigation for a particular item of assessed work on two occasions only. A mark/grade of zero will then be awarded for that item of assessed work, if it is not attempted at the next opportunity there will be no further opportunity for reassessment.

### 9.2 Making a claim for mitigation

Students who wish to claim mitigation, must submit a Mitigating Circumstances form to the Administration Department. It is the student's responsibility to complete and submit the form. In exceptional circumstances, the student may nominate another person to submit the form on her/his behalf.

Members of MONARCH's staff may not initiate mitigation claims.



### 9.3 Academic and Advisory Committee action

Having received a claim for mitigating circumstances, the Academic Committee may (1) deny the claim and allow the current mark(s) to stand; or (2) support the claim and recommend one of the following actions:

If it supports the claim, then it will make one of the following recommendations:

- To award a mark/grade on the basis of works (complete or partially completed) prepared in fulfilment of module requirements. Credit awarded in this way will be recorded as a Mitigated Pass (MP) on the grade sheet
- To seek to assess and mark/grade the student's learning through whatever means they believe is appropriate. This may include additional assessment tasks or the review of previous work
- To allow an examination to be taken or coursework to be resubmitted to a new timetable. The marks/grades gained from this will be recorded as if taken for the first time. Where the assessment was itself a second attempt, the process of retrieval will also be allowed to be retaken without further penalty. Where this is the outcome the Academic and Advisory Committee grade sheet will be marked as Deferred (Df)
- To recommend that credit is awarded but no mark/grade is entered. In this case, the aggregated end-of-level mark/grade will be based on a corresponding number of fewer modules. A maximum total of 30 credits in any single level of a programme, may be awarded in this way

The Academic and Advisory Committee retains the right to exercise discretion in determining the validity of any claim and any actions or compensation that may be offered as a result of the claim.

Where there is enough evidence of the student's achievement (or it is subsequently obtained), the Academic and Advisory Committee may recommend that the student is offered an appropriate award.

## 10. Right of appeal to an awarding organisation

If an appeal is rejected, the appellant must be informed at the time s/he is given the decision that s/he has the right to request the awarding organisation to review MONARCH's implementation of its assessment appeals process.

In such circumstances, the appellant must be provided with the address and contact name to which to send her/his request.

Awarding organisations will normally only consider appeals when they are satisfied that an institution's internal appeal processes have been exhausted: this places the onus upon all those involved with MONARCH Appeals procedure to ensure that everything is formally recorded in a systematic and comprehensive manner.



# COMPLAINTS

## 1. Background

MONARCH welcomes comments and suggestions from students about the services it provides. Students wishing to make a suggestion or comment about MONARCH 's policies or services, either academic or non-academic, can do so informally:

- At the point where the service is provided
- By contacting the person in charge of the relevant area
- By raising the matter with the student representative on the appropriate MONARCH committee or with their lecturer.

Occasionally, however, students may wish to make a complaint about the services they receive. This document sets out the procedure for making a complaint to MONARCH . MONARCH recognises that it has a duty to provide fair and objective procedures for examining and resolving complaints, and to ensure that its procedures are free from partiality arising from personal or institutional conflict of interest or other sources of bias. No student will be disadvantaged by having raised a complaint, but MONARCH also expects that students will not make frivolous, vexatious or malicious complaints.

This document covers complaints from students only in areas that are fully within the control of MONARCH . MONARCH is responsible for all the services it provides for students, and comments or complaints about these should follow the procedures outlined in this document. This includes student- to-student complaints if these cannot be sorted out informally by the students themselves or by the Student Affairs Officers, who may be consulted for advice and support.

## 2. Academic matters

For academic matters, responsibility for dealing with complaints about academic matters lies with the Head of Institution. If students have any comments or complaints relating to supervision, these should be addressed either to the programme coordinator or lecturer concerned or to the Head of Institution. If they wish to make comments about lectures, seminars, etc, organised by curriculum teams, they should raise the issue with the Head of Institution.

MONARCH expects that complaints will normally be dealt with informally in the first instance. It should be possible to resolve most problems quite quickly in this way, avoiding stress and saving time. Students with a complaint should seek to bring it to the attention of MONARCH as soon as possible following the occurrence of the problem, and ideally within one month. Many complaints can be dealt with quickly and effectively in this manner, without recourse to formal procedure. At the outset a student with a complaint to make will be invited to suggest the remedy they are seeking, without prejudice to the outcome.

## 3. Confidentiality

Every attempt will be made to maintain the confidentiality of a complainant. However, where a complaint is of a personal nature against an individual, it is likely that the complainant's identity would have to be revealed at some stage in all but the most exceptional cases in order for there to be a fair investigation. For example, where a complaint is made against an individual, that person has the right to know who is complaining against them and what the



nature of the complaint is. MONARCH will endeavor to inform an individual complainant of the extent to which their identity is likely to be revealed at each stage of the procedure.

#### 4. Informal complaints procedure

Students who experience a problem with any service provided by MONARCH or anything else within the control of MONARCH can, under the informal procedure, raise the matter in a number of ways.

They can raise the matter directly with the individual who has given cause for complaint. If informal discussion does not resolve the situation satisfactorily the person responsible for the area to which the complaint relates can be approached. If that still does not resolve the issue then students should consult their programme coordinator.

If the matter relates to a student-to-student complaint, a similar course of action can be followed. The matter can be raised directly with the student who is giving cause for complaint. If informal discussion does not resolve the issue then the matter can be raised with either the Student Affairs Officer or with the class representative or MONARCH student representative and if that still does not resolve the issue the student should consult their programme coordinator.

#### 5. Formal complaints procedure

##### Stage One

If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, a complaint should be made in writing to the Campus Administrator for the team concerned, who will acknowledge receipt and ensure that the matter is looked into as soon as possible. An initial response to any complaint can be expected within seven (7) days of its receipt, and a considered response to the complaint should be received within a further three weeks, with any subsequent remedy implemented with the minimum of delay.

In some cases the informal procedure set out above may have already involved the Campus Administrator. In that case, or if the complaint is against the Campus Administrator, the complaint should be put in writing to the Head of Institution, who will appoint the programme coordinator.

##### Stage Two

It is hoped that very few complaints would remain unresolved after this stage. However should this be the case, the complainant can request that, for non-academic matters, the Campus Administrator refers the matter to the Head of Institution who will arrange for the programme coordinator to undertake an independent assessment of the case and come to a conclusion on the matter. A full and considered response to the complaint should be completed within six weeks and any subsequent remedy implemented with the minimum of delay.

If a student is required to attend in person as part of the investigation into a complaint, they are entitled to be accompanied at any stage by a member of MONARCH : this could be a lecturer or other senior member, or a student including a class representative or MONARCH student representative.



Throughout the formal complaints procedure a written record of the complaint will be taken and made available on request to anyone involved in the matter (subject to the protocols on confidentiality noted in 3 above). At Stage 1 the written record will be maintained by the Administration Department; at Stage 2 it will be the responsibility of the Head of Institution to keep a written record and to send a copy to the Head of Institution.

## 6. The Visitor

MONARCH rules provide for an independent review of appeals and complaints through the person of a Visitor. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, having followed all the appropriate appeal or complaints procedures, it may be open to them ultimately to refer the matter to the nominated Visitor. Advice on the appropriate procedures may be obtained from the Head of Institution.



## PROG/ANNUAL MONITORING

### 1. Monarch aims to promote:

- A self-critical culture: an ethos in which it is possible for staff to be open about weaknesses without feeling vulnerable to criticism or punitive measures.
- Quality assurance arrangements that operate on the basis of 'bottom-up' self-assessment and reflect a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Robust teaching observation that is used to share good practice and support classroom/workshop performance.
- Judgements that are based on objective evidence, including students' experiences and the views of other customers.
- Clear action plans with measurable and achievable targets and the rigorous monitoring of progress in reaching these targets.
- Opportunities for teams to share experience, particularly examples of good practice.
- The early identification of performance concerns and effective improvement planning.

The Course Quality Review and Annual Monitoring Review process provides an annual opportunity for reflection, self-evaluation, acknowledgement of any weaknesses and celebration of successes at course level by programme teams and at Monarch level by senior management.

**Quality Reviews** consider individual programmes/courses.

The **Annual Monitoring Review** provides an evaluative overview of the position of MONARCH as a whole.

### 2. Quality Reviews

Each year, MONARCH allocates two to three days to its self-assessment process at course/programme level. All programme teams are required to review their performance on an annual basis.

Teams are issued with the performance data for the current year. There are also strategic steers, provided by MONARCH senior management. These are intended to give direction and focus to the review and the ensuing planning process.

#### Quality Reviews (cqrs) consider:

- Reports of the external/standards verifier for each programme
- Commentary on any action taken to meet EV/SV recommendations
- Module evaluation reports
- Data on student attendance
- Data on retention, achievement and progression
- Outcomes from the cross-MONARCH student and staff survey
- Outcomes from teacher observation activities
- Commentary on learning resources
- Commentary from programme managers about strengths and weaknesses of each programme

An overall action plan is then framed for each programme to address identified weaknesses and area for improvement in the ensuing year.



The Quality Reviews (cqrs) are reviewed and moderated by the Academic and Advisory Committee and, where content is judged to be insufficiently rigorous, guidance is provided about issues that need addressing.

### 3. Annual monitoring report (AMR)

The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is prepared when all cqrs have been completed. It takes account of all MONARCH `s activities over the past year.

#### The Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) considers:

- Key issues arising from the Quality Reviews
- Any identified areas of good practice in teaching and learning
- Action taken by MONARCH in respect of student enhancement
- A summary of student data across all MONARCH `s programmes and activities
- Commentary about any external review, inspection or scrutiny reports and their outcomes (eg QAA, BAC, etc.)
- Commentary on MONARCH `s progress against its strategic plan objectives over the past year
- Commentary on marketing, promotion and recruitment initiatives
- Overall successes and weaknesses of the past year
- Proposed MONARCH initiatives for the coming year

The draft AMR is presented to the Board of Governance for approval and will be published on MONARCH website after it has been formally approved.



# PLAGIARISM

## 1. Introduction

MONARCH is committed to fair assessment procedures for all students.

Academic misconduct threatens fair assessment, which in itself can then disadvantage all students and challenge the quality of awards made by MONARCH. Plagiarism is one aspect of academic misconduct, but it is also a subject which raises important learning and teaching issues. We take plagiarism seriously, but also acknowledge that in a complex learning climate, an education driver is more important and more effective than a merely corrective or punitive approach.

MONARCH is therefore committed to:

- Enabling students to avoid plagiarism through a programme of support and education at programme level aligned with MONARCH policy and procedures
- Ensuring that staff have a shared understanding of policy and procedure, and implementing this consistently across programmes

Awareness of plagiarism and effective means to avoid it in scholarly work is an important element of higher education. The acquisition of higher level skills is progressive. The approach to educating students, particularly in levels 4 and 5, should therefore be student-friendly, for example in language and exemplar material.

Inevitably, cases of plagiarism occurring at more advanced levels of study will tend to attract a more penalty-driven approach, but we wish still to emphasize the importance of developmental training and education at every level.

Wherever possible, assessment strategies across a programme of study should be designed in such a way as to minimise the opportunity for plagiarism.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the material, ideas, and arguments of another person/ persons as one's own. To copy sentences, phrases or even particular striking expressions without acknowledgement, in a manner which may deceive the reader as to the source, is plagiarism; to paraphrase, in a manner which may deceive the reader, is likewise plagiarism. Plagiarism is identified in the composition of the work submitted by a student for assessment. No work to be assessed or accepted without similarity checking software.

### 2.2 Copying

Incorporating into an assessment material from books, journals, the web, the work of another student or any other source, without acknowledgement and submitting it in verbatim or paraphrased form as one's own, is an act of plagiarism.

### 2.3 Collusion

Collusion through the submission of work for assessment that purports to be the student's own work but is in fact jointly written with another student or other students, is an act of plagiarism.

### 2.4 Duplication

Duplication of material means the inclusion in coursework (including essays, projects, reports,



dissertations and theses) of a significant amount of material that is identical or substantially similar to material which has already been submitted by the student for the same or any other programme or course at this MONARCH or elsewhere.

### 3. Signposting

To support consistency across MONARCH , all assignment coversheets will carry the following statement:

*MONARCH is committed to fair assessment procedures for all students. Our plagiarism procedure is designed to help you in understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it in your work. To this end, please read your handbook carefully.*

Students will also be required to sign declarations on coversheets. No student will be able to demonstrate that help was not offered in clearly-indicated ways.

Staff will be asked periodically to review with students the importance of both the statement and the declaration and to demonstrate this at programme level by an appropriate record and possibly by minutes from a staff-student liaison meeting.

## 4. Institutional support in educating students to avoid plagiarism

Appropriate support, information and educational materials are crucial, for example in programme handbooks, web- based support, classroom teaching and tutorials. Personal tutoring and workshops can also be used to identify students' concerns at an early stage.

### 4.1 Clarity of guidance for students

Clear guidance on what constitutes plagiarism and strategies to avoid it will be provided as generic text for use in handbooks.

### 4.2 Developing academic skills

The avoidance of plagiarism is part of education for effective academic writing and necessarily continues at all levels. Learning to write in a formal register, whilst ensuring that the work of others is acknowledged, takes time to learn and should be seen as a progression which may take time and skills to refine.

Education and formative development of students' understanding of plagiarism should be emphasised at all phases, particularly pre-detection, but also in the detection and investigation phase, so that no student can convincingly argue that help was not available and given in the key stages of their submission of work, or staff response to it.

### 4.3 Educational resources

In addition to any local resources, a central suite of educational resources will be available to students and tutors via a web interface. Items from the suite may be downloaded by tutors and embedded within modules. These will show an increasing level of sophistication to support student progression and staff expectations.

### 4.4 Referencing/citing correctly

MONARCH has agreed that the common standards for citation and referencing will be the Harvard system.



## 5 Detection of plagiarism and follow-up investigation

MONARCH has invested in comprehensive Turnitin plagiarism detection software and will use this to manage all detected instances of plagiarism. Turnitin reports can be accessed by academic staff when they are assessing student work.

### 5.1 Actions taken in the event of a case of suspected plagiarism

Students who are suspected of plagiarism will have the relevant work and personal circumstances investigated according to MONARCH disciplinary procedures. The procedures set out several possible courses of action and are designed to ensure that all students in MONARCH are treated consistently.

The procedures are also designed to ensure that all investigations into suspected plagiarism are carried out fairly, thoroughly and impartially. This is achieved by the convening of independent panels of academic staff to investigate the alleged plagiarism and, where appropriate, award a suitable penalty. It is fundamental, as part of natural justice, that students facing charges of plagiarism must (i) understand properly and fully the case being brought against them, and (ii) be allowed to meet the panel in order to put their case.

MONARCH recognises that plagiarism offences are not all equally serious; they vary from quite minor cases to those that are extremely serious. If a student offends a second time, this is more serious by virtue of it being a subsequent offence. Initially, offences are divided into two broad categories, minor and serious. The procedures allow for investigation by a Programme Panel for minor offences or by a Faculty Panel for serious ones. MONARCH permits students to contest the decision of a panel if they feel it was unjust and have their case reconsidered by a higher level by the Academic and Advisory Committee.

## 6. Standardised guidance for handbooks

MONARCH is committed to fair assessment procedures for all students. These procedures are designed to help in understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. To this end, students are advised to read their handbook carefully.

Academic misconduct threatens fair assessment, which in itself can disadvantage all students and challenge the quality of awards made by MONARCH. MONARCH is committed to enabling students to avoid plagiarism through a programme of support and education at programme level. In addition to educating for the avoidance of plagiarism, MONARCH is committed to detecting and acting when a case of plagiarism is suspected.

The avoidance of plagiarism is part of education for effective academic writing and necessarily continues at all levels. Learning to write in a formal register, whilst ensuring that the work of others is acknowledged, takes time to learn and should be seen as a progression which may take considerable time to refine.

## 7. Obligations upon students to prevent plagiarism

In order to distinguish between their own work and that of others, students should ensure that:

- Phrases, sentences and passages taken verbatim from a published work are placed in quotation marks/grades, or indented, and the source is acknowledged
- Paraphrasing, ideas and arguments taken from a published work are clearly referenced



- The inclusion of any other intellectual property, for example, illustrations, diagrams, proofs, designs, computer software, in written text or project work is clearly identified and acknowledged
- The inclusion of material from electronic sources is carefully referenced and only websites freely accessible to the marker should be used
- The use of the work of others is not of such volume or importance to the submitted work as to compromise ownership of the work
- No significant collaboration has occurred where there is a requirement to submit the work as an individual piece. Where work is done collaboratively and a single piece of work is submitted, the collaboration must be permitted by the programme director and it must be declared on the work
- They have not presented previously or simultaneously for assessment in MONARCH or elsewhere, any work, or any substantial amount of such work, that is submitted

## 7.1 Citations, references and bibliographies

When writing a report or an essay, it is important that each time someone else's ideas from a book, article, TV programme, newspaper report or conference proceeding are used, readers are informed immediately in the text. This is called a 'citation'. The citation links to a reference usually provided as a bibliography at the end of the work (failure to provide a reference may expose a student to charges of plagiarism).

Citations are normally used to:

- Give support for arguments used in essays or dossiers, and/or
- Acknowledge a writer who has influenced the writer's thinking.

References provide details for the reader of:

- The source of particular ideas and models
- The source of quotations
- The source of statistics or other data
- The sources of diagrams, pictures or charts

Expectations of standards of citation and referencing should conform to those agreed institutionally. MONARCH has adopted the Harvard style of bibliographical citation and referencing.

MONARCH recognises that some disciplines require alternative systems, eg. To meet professional standards at a national level. Where this is the case, guidance will be given on using the alternative system equivalent to that provided for MONARCH standard.

## 8. Obligations upon staff to minimise plagiarism

### 8.1 Designing out plagiarism in assessment

It is important that assessment practices allow for the designing out of plagiarism, that is, to create and to implement specific programme and course assessment initiatives which are known to reduce the incidence of inadvertent and/or deliberate plagiaristic activity. Some of these strategies involve placing emphasis on certain kinds of well-known summative assessment techniques, for example terminal examinations, but there is a range of possibilities in designing assessment tools which are both formative and plagiarism-resistant. In addition to specific assessment tools, courses and programmes can also factor in specific anti-plagiarism procedures. A combination of tools and procedures might include the following):



## 8.2 Reworking assessments on a continuing and randomised basis

This ensures that questions are not recycled. The editing out of 'essay banks' is also useful in this area. Cosmetic changes to assignment drafts should be avoided, as they are easily spotted by students. This technique should apply not only to essays and analogous coursework examples, but also to practical assignments, reports, reviews and case-studies.

## 8.3 Avoiding obvious links between learning outcomes and essay setting

Assessors should make analytic tasks more three-dimensional, and use information-gathering more widely in assessments.

## 8.4 Individualising tasks whenever consistent with good pedagogy.

The use of poster work is particularly helpful in this area, as is tutorial-based essay-title planning. Some tutors may find that abandoning 'set' essay titles on the one hand, and disallowing wholly student- created titles on the other, helps in resisting the temptation to plagiarise, as well as providing other assessment benefits, eg. Tailoring tasks to specific skills and interests of students.

## 8.5 Building in specific plagiarism-moderation procedures

The principle of checking assignments should be embedded within programme or course documentation and made clear in handbooks and other information material.

## 8.6 Using specific assessment tools

Assessors should use methods which are known to reduce the incidence of plagiarism, for example academic reviews and information searches, posters and annotated bibliographies. Variety in assessments tends to reduce plagiarism.

## 8.7 Creating a collaborative research environment

This will tend to reduce plagiarism through peer pressure, for example, group written projects moderated by peers and/or tutors. The challenge of peer evaluation tends to reduce plagiaristic activity, as does group assessment.



# ACADEMIC REFERENCES FOR STUDENTS

It is the responsibility of the Academic Head to ensure that staff who may respond to requests for references in respect of past or present students are aware of and abide by this procedure.

## 1. The legal position

An inaccurate or defamatory reference can be the subject of an action for negligence or defamation against MONARCH and/or the individual author and therefore the author of a reference owes a "duty of care" to the person about whom it is written. Where the author of a reference is proven to have acted negligently, the subject of the reference does not have to prove "actual loss" of employment, but only that he/she has lost a "reasonable chance" of employment and thereby sustained loss.

A duty of care is also owed to the recipient of the reference who may be able to sue the individual referee and/or MONARCH if the information contained in the reference is inaccurate or misleading and causes some loss or damage to the recipient.

Case law also indicates that there can be a legal obligation to provide a reference, as a refusal to do so may damage the individual's opportunity of gaining employment. If any member of staff or the Head of Institution has a concern about writing a reference for a current or past student, he/she should contact the HOI.

## 2. Aims of the reference

There are two principle aims of a reference:

- To confirm the accuracy of statements made in an application by the student (which means, of course, ascertaining what those statements are)
- To give the referee's opinion as to the student's suitability for the post/course in question and his/her potential for the future.

## 3. The substance of the reference

Members of staff who provide a reference in respect of a present or past student should make clear in what capacity they are providing the reference. If the reference is provided in relation to the student as a student (or former student) of MONARCH and on behalf of MONARCH, the reference should be given on MONARCH headed paper.

If the reference is provided in a private, personal or non- MONARCH capacity, MONARCH headed paper should not be used, and the relationship of the referee to the student concerned and the fact that it is given in a personal capacity should be made clear.

In writing a reference the author should always indicate for how long he/she has known or knew the student and in what capacity, and should ensure that the facts stated about the student are correct. If information about a student's programme/history/study profile is needed, the Campus Administrator should be consulted.

In a reference the facts about a student's career and any opinion of his/her ability should be differentiated. If an opinion is offered regarding a student's abilities or potential, the referee must be qualified to give such an opinion and the reasoning for such a view should be made clear. If challenged, the author would need to provide evidence to support his/her view.

Fact and opinion should not be confused: *"On her performance to date I would be surprised if X did not get a first-class degree"* is clearly an opinion; *"She will get distinction"* suggests that the method of classification is such that the issue is beyond doubt.



Opinions stated should be based on facts known to the referee and referees should not make statements they are not qualified to make: for example, *"I consider X to be well suited to the post for which he/she has applied, and am happy to support his/her application"* is better than *"X will be a success in the post of . . ."*

Particular care should be taken where a reference is provided about someone who is not known to the person providing the reference (for example, if the student's tutor or supervisor is absent or has left MONARCH ). Opinions should not be given which are not those of the author of the reference.

There may be issues on which an opinion is invited or requested about which the referee has limited knowledge, e.g. The honesty and integrity of the student. In these circumstances it may be necessary to say, for example, *"I know nothing which would lead me to question X's honesty."*

In the event of being challenged over a reference, the referee must never admit liability as this may invalidate MONARCH `s insurance policy. The matter should be referred to the Head of Institution.

References should be marked "Confidential" to the addressee.

A copy of any reference on behalf of MONARCH should be kept on the relevant student file.

#### 4. Liability and disclaimers

A reference should contain the following disclaimer in its final paragraph:

*In accordance with MONARCH , normal practice, this reference is given in good faith and in confidence, without legal liability on behalf of the author or MONARCH .*

As there is no guarantee that a disclaimer will not be successfully challenged in court, due care must be exercised when preparing a reference. MONARCH has insurance that covers members of staff (and ex-members of staff) who have written references in the course of their employment, if these guidelines have been followed. MONARCH insurance does not cover references by a member of staff in his/her private capacity. In the event that a member of staff is challenged over the content of a reference, he/she should refer the matter immediately to MONARCH Head of Institution.

#### 5. Confidentiality, disclosure and Data Protection Act matters

The Data Protection Act gives individuals the right to see a reference written about them. Those writing references should take this into account.

All references are considered to be given in confidence, but MONARCH or the recipient may be required to disclose a reference under certain circumstances, such as a Data Protection Subject Access Request or a request for disclosure by an Employment Tribunal or a Court dealing with a negligence or defamation case. If MONARCH does become a Defendant in a Tribunal or Court case, the decision about what documents to disclose is a question for MONARCH `s legal advisers and not one for individual referees, who should not therefore volunteer any documents to a litigant or its legal advisers.

#### 6. Protocols relating to confidential references

##### 6.1 References given by MONARCH employees

Confidential references given by MONARCH , including references written by employees in their formal capacity, or as part of a standard procedure, (for example, as Head of Departments, as part of a promotions exercise) are exempted from subject access requests



where those references concern the:

- Education, training or employment of the data subject
- Appointment of the data subject to any office
- Provision by the data subject of any service

## 6.2 References received by MONARCH

Confidential references received by MONARCH are not exempt from the right of access, but consideration must be given to the data privacy rights of the referee. Information contained in, or about, a confidential reference need not be provided in response to a subject access request if the release of this information would identify an individual referee unless:

- The identity of the referee can be protected by anonymising the information
- The referee has given his/her consent
- It is reasonable in all the circumstances to release the information without consent
- In cases where a confidential reference discloses the identity of an organisation, but not an identifiable individual, as referee, disclosure will not breach data privacy rights.

When faced with the question of subject access to a reference received in confidence from a referee, MONARCH must consider what steps to take to try and obtain consent, whether the referee has expressly refused to give their permission for the information to be made available, and whether the disclosure might result in harm to the referee.

MONARCH may not refuse to disclose references received in confidence from third parties without providing reasons.

MONARCH staff requesting and giving references should consider:

- Routinely informing third parties who will be providing references of this MONARCH procedure with regard to disclosure of confidential references
- Requesting that third parties who will be providing references state unequivocally whether or not they object to the reference being released to the data subject in the event of a subject access request
- Providing guidance to their staff as to acceptable form and content in references
- Providing advice as to appropriate avenues of action in circumstances where staff do not feel that an applicant is suited to the job/course

## 6.3 References internal to MONARCH

There may be circumstances where a confidential reference is written on behalf of a data subject by an individual in one department of MONARCH, to be used by an individual in the same institution or even the same department. There is no obvious justification for differentiating between confidential references received from external third parties and confidential references received from within MONARCH as regards any consideration of data subject access.

Upon receipt of a subject access request, MONARCH Data Protection Officer will apply the same criteria to a reference sent and received internally, as they would to a reference received from an external third party.

## 7. Telephone or verbal references

Although requests for telephone or verbal references are frequently received, such requests should be declined other than in exceptional circumstances, since information given in this



way may be misinterpreted in its transmission to the interview panel. If, exceptionally, a verbal reference is given, steps should be taken first to verify the identity of the enquirer and notes should be kept of the conversation. Where a verbal reference is given on behalf of MONARCH, the person giving the reference should not make any statements he/she would not be willing to make in writing.

## 8. Unsolicited references

It is generally inadvisable to provide unsolicited references addressed "To whom it may concern". If, exceptionally, such references are provided, they should be limited to factual statements such as dates of the student's registration, programme of study, and, if relevant, date and title of award.

Criminal convictions and disciplinary or other such sanctions: Care should be taken not to mention in references spent criminal convictions. Any query on this should be referred to the Academic Registrar.

If MONARCH has taken disciplinary or examination irregularity proceedings, against the subject of the reference or if such proceedings are pending, advice should be sought from the Academic Registrar as to how this may be mentioned in the reference, if at all.



## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

### Contents of this procedure

1. Disruption of study due to mental ill health or substance misuse
2. Procedure in the event of a student death
3. Interruption of study
4. Barring students from examinations and other issues

### 1. Substance use and misuse amongst students

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, MONARCH is required to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of its employees, students and others at work. Misuse of drugs and alcohol poses serious risks to the health and general well-being of misusers and those with whom they come into contact; this situation also raises disciplinary issues for MONARCH. In addition, substance misuse presents a potential threat to MONARCH's reputation.

The Head of Institution aim of this statement is to foster student awareness of MONARCH's attitude and position in relation to the misuse of illicit drugs and alcohol within MONARCH premises.

#### 1.1 Use of drugs and alcohol

Under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, it is a criminal offence for MONARCH knowingly to permit the use, production or supply of any controlled drugs on its premises. In the case of drug misuse, MONARCH will take appropriate disciplinary action which may include referral to the police.

Whilst alcohol is not illegal and its consumption, subject to the Licensing Act 1964, is permitted on MONARCH premises, MONARCH is concerned about the detrimental effects of excessive alcohol consumption on the welfare of students. MONARCH seeks to discourage the inappropriate use of alcohol particularly during the day and the excessive consumption of alcohol during social events. The additional serious risk to health occasioned by the combination of drugs and alcohol is also noted. Students who are found to be acting in an inappropriate manner under the influence of alcohol may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 1.2 Advice and information

MONARCH will provide relevant information and advice for students about health and other risks that may result from the misuse of drugs and alcohol. MONARCH will also ensure that information about support and treatment services, both within MONARCH and outside, are made readily available. Students seeking help for drug and/or alcohol misuse are as having a health problem and will be treated accordingly. Confidential issues will be respected.

### 2. Disruption of study due to mental ill-health or substance abuse

Experience has suggested that some students who have to interrupt their programme of study because of illness are not themselves the best judges of when they are fit to return to study. MONARCH will take reasonable steps to satisfy itself that students who interrupt for health reasons are indeed fit to return to study.

Any student interrupting their course of study for reasons of ill-health must provide evidence that they are fit to return to study before they are re-instated on their programme



of study. The evidence should take the form of a letter from a medical practitioner responsible for their care, stating that they are fit to return to study: a statement of diagnosis and treatment is not sufficient. In the event that such a letter is not forthcoming or is equivocal, MONARCH should require the student to submit to examination by an MONARCH-appointed doctor in order to seek the evidence that they are fit to return to study.

Administratively, the Campus Administrator will be the responsible officer for implementing this policy, with advice from the Academic Head where necessary.

### 3. Procedure in the event of the death of a student

The Campus Administrator is MONARCH officer responsible for coordinating arrangements in the event of the death of a student, and must be notified immediately of the death.

It is essential that the Head of Institution and Directors be given any relevant information about the circumstances of the death, especially where the death appears to be by other than natural causes or to involve any kind of violence, whether the death took place on MONARCH premises or not.

The Head of Institution will draft a letter of condolence and a copy of that letter will be placed on the student's file. The Campus Administrator will circulate notification of the student's death to appropriate lecturers, tutors, advisors and relevant administrative staff. Those notified are asked to disseminate this information to colleagues who may need to know.

In the event of death by suicide or violence, it is normally the responsibility of the police to inform next of kin of the death, and the Academic Head should be notified whether the police have been informed or be asked to notify them.

If a student death is discovered on MONARCH premises, the Campus Administrator, Academic Head or Head of Institution will dial 15 or 1122 and request the immediate attention of an Ambulance and the Police.

If the student was from overseas, the Campus Administrator will inform the police whose responsibility it is to tell the Embassy or High Commission concerned. The Embassy or High Commission will inform the student's next of kin. Funeral arrangements for an overseas student are a matter for the Embassy or High Commission to take up with the student's next of kin.

The Head of Institution and Directors will write a personal letter to the next of kin of a deceased overseas student offering to assist in any way possible. The Administration Department will keep on file a record of student deaths.

### 4. Interruption of study

Interruption of study is for students who require a temporary break from their studies and plan to resume their studies at a future date.

#### 4.1 Making an application

Applications must be made in advance of the proposed interruption for both undergraduate level and postgraduate level students

1. Applications for first interruptions or those less than one calendar year will require the approval of the Academic Head, Campus Administrator and Head of Institution
2. Applications for repeat interruptions or those in excess of one calendar year will be require the approval of the of the Academic Head, Campus Administrator and Head of Institution Executive Director (Operations)



3. The Academic Head must forward the form to the Campus Administrator within 24 hours of effective date of interruption. If received later, the effective interruption date will be the date of receipt, not the date on the form

4. Modular/flexible programmes cannot be interrupted

#### **4.2 Resuming studies after a period of interruption**

Students must email the Campus Administrator one month prior to the expected date of return to confirm that they intend to re-enroll. The Campus Administrator must then confirm their intention to re-enroll to the Academic Head and Head of Institution in advance of the proposed return date so that MONARCH can re-instate the student record. Students will not be able to re-enroll until confirmation has been received from the Academic Head and the record has been reinstated.

Students must re-enroll in person at the Administration Office within one week of the date of return. Failure to bring the appropriate fees to enroll may result in the closure of the student record.

#### **4.3 Dealing with students in debt**

It is a condition of enrollment that tuition fees are paid on time and students are expected to arrange prompt payment to meet the required deadlines. Students are deemed to be debtors when there is an overdue, outstanding balance on any of their student accounts. These debts can relate to tuition fees, residence fees, examination re-entry fees, late submission fees, or library fine.

Students in debt to MONARCH will receive a series of e-mail reminders informing them of overdue balances and warning of possible future sanctions. Continued non-payment will lead to the prevention of access to selected services and facilities (library, computer access, building access) and may ultimately result in a suspension or expulsion of registration. All students in debt have a flag applied to their account, this prevents the release of any official documentation the student may require (e.g. Council tax certificates, transcripts, official examination results). An account flag also prevents a student enrolling for a future session and from being awarded a qualification. Once a student has settled their debt, the flag and sanctions are removed, usually within 24 hours.

Students are responsible for payment of all fees including those invoiced to a sponsor. Default flags are applied to unpaid sponsor invoices and liability may be transferred from the sponsor to the student.

Debtors no longer enrolled will be contacted by post and e-mail. Continued non-payment of an undisputed debt may result in the use of external agencies for collection.

#### **4.4 Arrangements for students with disabilities**

Special arrangements can be made for any student who is unable to sit in an examination room for one of the following reasons: disability or ill health or dyslexia.

MONARCH will automatically assemble a committee on special assessment arrangements to consider applications for special provision as well as to advise on policy matters relating to candidates with dyslexia, disabilities or ill health.

The arrangements will vary depending upon the circumstances and needs of each individual student. These needs must be identified as early as possible in order to make appropriate provision for them. Academic and support staff must advise the Academic Head at the earliest opportunity where students with additional needs are identified.



#### 4.5 Special facility for sick students and those with disabilities

MONARCH will set up a room where medical attention is available and where question papers and stationery are provided. When a student is taken ill on the day of the examination or comes out of an examination space after starting the paper, they may also sit in this special facility.

#### 4.6 Special facility for students with dyslexia

Students who are diagnosed with dyslexia and granted additional writing time, sit their examinations in a special room which is organised and invigilated at the direction of the Academic Head.

#### 4.7 Other special arrangements

Students will be granted with special study skills, with or without additional time, sit their examinations in a special cluster room which is organised and invigilated at the direction of the Academic Head.

### 5. Barring students from examinations and related issues

The following procedures cover five key areas:

- 5.1. Barring
- 5.2. Academic insufficiency
- 5.3. Repeat study
- 5.4. Termination of studies
- 5.5. Suspension and termination for non-attendance at mandatory faculty interviews

#### 5.1. Barring

At the start of their course, students must be clearly informed about the procedure on barring, together with clear definitions of what will constitute “unsatisfactory performance” [MONARCH `s minimum requirement for engagement is 85%, but course organisers may stipulate a higher percentage if this is appropriate]

Arrangements are in place for the monitoring and recording of attendance at seminars, classes and other formal sessions, for the submission of required coursework, and for the reporting by individual lecturers of any serious deficiencies by the Head of Institution, who has overall responsibility for instigating the barring process.

Students who are clearly falling short of any course requirements in any particular course(s) MUST be informed in writing that their performance is currently less than satisfactory and that, if the situation continues, they may be barred from the assessment of the course(s) in question, together with the consequences that this may bring with it. A copy of this letter/e-mail should be sent to the Campus Administrator and Head of Institution for information). Such warning MUST be given to students in sufficient time for them to be able to rectify the situation during the remainder of the session, i.e. No later than half-way through the course(s), or part of a course where appropriate, in question. The Head of Institution may also decide at this point to interview the student concerned.

If the problem persists, and if the student has been given the prior written warning detailed above, MONARCH may then move towards barring the student. The student should first be interviewed, so that (s)he has the opportunity to explain any reason there may be for underperformance. If the barring is to be implemented, all staff should be informed of the intention to bar and the reasons for it.



The decision on barring from individual examinations/assessments ultimately rests with the Head of Institution, and must be made on the basis of a written record of attendance, performance, etc. Any decision to bar students must be made by no later than the end of the relevant Term (for undergraduate level) or 4 weeks before the relevant examination/assessment (for postgraduate level students and affiliates, where appropriate).

The programme coordinator's role will normally be to monitor any MONARCH decision, and to ensure that the above procedures have been adhered to. However, where a decision to bar a student from an examination will de facto result in non-progression (e.g. With regard to the overall number of units required, or units that are compulsory), the Head of Institution and academic programme co-ordinators must interview the student before confirming (or not) the final decision.

Students have the right to appeal against the decision to bar. Such appeals must be made by the student in writing to the Head of Institution within 7 days of the date of notification of the department's or Faculty's decision.

The programme coordinators will deal with any appeal there may be against a departmental decision where progression is not at stake within 5 working days of receipt of the written appeal.

Appeals against a decision by the Head of Institution which results in non- progression or classification difficulties for the student will be dealt with by the Head of Institution within 5 working days of receipt of the written appeal.

Should a student be dissatisfied with the outcome of their appeal, they may then go through MONARCH 's standard grievance procedures, but they must accept that a final outcome is unlikely to be reached before they are due to take the examination(s) in question.

## 5.2 Academic insufficiency

This occurs when a student's overall performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory by the department, either with regard to attendance or production of required work, or both, and as such it is neither realistic nor viable for them to continue with their studies for the remainder of the session.

All such cases must be referred to the Head of Institution for a final decision. The expected outcome will be that the student's studies are suspended (for up to one year, as appropriate), and that they must repeat the year of study in which the insufficiency occurred.

Should a student wish to appeal against this decision, they may do so using MONARCH 's standard grievance procedures.

## 5.3 Repeat study

Students who fall into any of the above two categories may expect to be permitted to have repeat study (full-time or part-time, as appropriate, and, depending on the individual circumstances, either for the whole or just part of a session). It is only in this way that students can make good their previous "insufficiency".

It is expected that such repeat study will be in the immediately following session. It is likely that repeat study will be taken alongside and in addition to the standard courses a student is expected to take in a given year and will not exceed the equivalent of one course unit in an undergraduate programme.

If a department does not wish to offer repeat study to a student, it must provide good, well-documented grounds for not doing so. In such circumstances, the department must make their



recommendation to the Head of Institution, and it is the Head of Institution that reaches the final decision and informs the student of it in writing, together with the reasons for the decision. Should the decision be that repeat study is not available to the student, this in effect prevents the student from ever completing the relevant course (which may affect progression – see below).

Should a student wish to appeal against the Head of Academic's decision, they may do so by writing to the Head of Institution within 7 days of the date of notification of the decision.

The appeal will be dealt with by the Head of Institution within 5 working days of receipt of the written appeal.

Should the Head of Institution's decision effectively result in a student not being allowed to progress with their programme of study (e.g. No repeat study permitted, and the course is compulsory), the student may appeal against it using MONARCH's standard grievance procedures.

#### 5.4 Termination of studies

A student's registration may also be terminated on the grounds of academic insufficiency; in such cases, the academic insufficiency must be deemed to be irretrievable.

For any student whose studies are to be terminated in this way, it is essential that (s)he has previously been referred by the Department to the Head of Institution for a formal interview and written warning that their studies are at risk of being terminated should the insufficiency continue.

Should the insufficiency continue, or any conditions that were made at the above interview for the continuation of the student's studies not have been met, the student must be interviewed again by the Head of Institution and issued with formal written notification of the termination and the reasons for it. Only the Head of Institution and Head of Institution are empowered to terminate a student's registration on the grounds of academic insufficiency.

#### 5.5 Suspension and termination for non – attendance at mandatory meetings

Should any student not attend a mandatory meeting (eg. An end-of-term interview arranged to discuss poor academic performance), they will be written to by the programme coordinators informing them that if they fail to make, and keep, an alternative appointment by a specified deadline their registration will be automatically suspended.

When such a suspension has to be invoked, the student must be sent a formal letter by the Administration Department confirming the suspension, and warning them that their studies will be terminated should they not attend for interview by a specified deadline.

When such a termination has to be invoked, the Head of Institution must write a further letter to the student informing them of this, together with their right to appeal against the decision.

Should a student wish to appeal against this final decision, they may do so using MONARCH's standard grievance procedures.

## STUDENT FEEDBACK AND THE STUDENT STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE

Monarch regards your feedback as an important element in the cycle of programme improvement and development. As part of the quality assurance processes, you will



be asked to complete an online feedback questionnaire at the end of each unit. Your suggestions and feedback is greatly valued and will be used for programme development for future students.

If you wish to provide feedback outside the formal processes, you are welcome to contact the Head of the Centre at any time. In addition, to end of unit surveys for feedback, student representatives on course meetings we also have places on the staff student liaison committee and appoint student representatives. This is to ensure that students have the opportunity for formal input into the management of the programmes.

The main function and responsibility of the student staff liaison committee is to enhance the students learning experience. It aims to:

- Provide student involvement in the planning and development of programs
- Provide a student voice at all levels of the program management
- Voice problems suggestions or requests raised by members of the student body
- Act as channels of communication to, and representatives on, relevant course committees
- Feedback to the student body on issues discussed during relevant meetings

If you are interested in becoming a student representative please email student support for further details.

## **AVAILABLE RESOURCES, INCLUDING HN GLOBAL**

In the delivery of your course, you will have access to resources created by your tutor in the delivery of each unit. These will be available electronically to you to access 24 hours a day. In addition, as part of each unit, there is a recommended reading list, websites, PODCASTS, TV programmes and videos to develop your wider knowledge and understanding.

You will have access to online library. In addition we recommend free websites to help you find additional information which are identified in each unit assessment. There are also High Impact Skills guides. These guides cover subjects such as 'How to make decisions', 'Mind tools', 'What is problem solving' and 'Understanding communication skills' to help you develop your educational and Computing skills so you can study and work more productively.

In addition, you have FREE access to the Computing Course textbook to support you in your studies. You will need to go to <https://hnglobal.highernationals.com/> and create an account on HN Global. It also includes online study skills units, forums to chat with peers globally and access to a Career Centre with templates and advice on creating your CV and job interviews. Make sure you have your own account and access the e-textbook for Computing Course textbook.

Source: <https://hnglobal.highernationals.com/>

## **RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL)**

If you have completed previous achievements and awarded qualifications, you may be able to claim for RPL. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met (through evidence that the relevant unit learning outcomes have been met by a students' prior learning), the use of RPL is



acceptable for accrediting a unit, units or a whole qualification. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable. This means that Monarch will make use of RPL and is acceptable for accrediting a single unit, a group of units or a whole qualification. If you wish to make a claim for accreditation of prior learning, then this should be discussed first with Monarch Recruitment team.

## **ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE AND FEEDBACK**

There will be an assignment for each course unit. Each assignment will consist of a number of tasks (usually three or four) and, in dealing with these tasks, you will have the opportunity to use a variety of methods to develop and present your responses. These methods include independent research, written reports, presentations, and practical project work. The assessment process is designed to reflect the vocational aims and objectives of HNC/HND level work and includes both formative and summative feedback.

## **DEADLINES, EXTENSIONS, DEFERRALS, AND MITIGATION**

Submission dates for assignments are available in the Assessment Handbook. If you are unable to meet a coursework, dissertation proposal or dissertation assessment deadline after you have submitted the Intent to Submit form, you may apply for an extension.

Extensions to deadlines will only be granted to candidates who complete the Extenuating Circumstances Form with a legitimate reason for being unable to produce their work on time. Your first point of contact, should you find yourself in a position where you may need an extension, is your Student Support Team. Extensions must be requested in advance of the assessment deadline.

At the discretion of the Head of the Centre, and subject to appropriate evidence, an extension to the assessment deadline may be granted, normally not exceeding 2 weeks, or a deferral. In the event of a deferral being granted, you will be required to elect to take the assessment at the next available assessment date. Details of the assessment submission dates are available in the Assessment Handbook.

Failure to meet deadlines (or extension deadlines) will result in a grade penalty or in your work being awarded a mark of zero. You will also be liable to complete a new assessment. It will not be appropriate for you to submit your original assessment. It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit the correct assessment for your chosen assessment period.

Incorrect submissions will be awarded a mark of zero.

Formative assessment is provided by your assessor to support you to achieve each unit. It is developmental with feedback on your progress with an action plan. It is linked to draft work submitted for feedback at the stated interim deadline.

Summative assessment is completed at the end of each unit, after you have achieved the learning outcomes for each course unit. This work is graded and contributes to the overall grade you will achieve at the end of your HNC/HND programme.

You need to note that, according to BTEC rules, you must achieve a pass grade for each element and task separately. If even just one element is Referred, then the overall grade for the assignment will be Refer until you resubmit and achieve a Pass



grade. Referrals are to be submitted with the re-done tasks only. Referrals are to be submitted on the resubmission dates published for each unit.

Each unit has two attempts. If you still have not passed on your second attempt, you must seek advice immediately. The normal BTEC system does not use a Fail grade. The only time an assignment is graded as Fail is in cases of plagiarism, collusion or any other form of student malpractice.

All units require assignments to be uploaded to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and will go through an automatic checker for plagiarism before being released for marking. It is your responsibility to upload your assignments on the VLE before the final deadline.

The hand-in date and resubmission dates are shown clearly on the front of every assignment. All assignments are to be uploaded onto the online VLE website by the published deadline, which creates an e-portfolio of your evidence for your Pearson Level 4/5 HNC/HND Computing course.

You are naturally encouraged to use the Internet, HN Global Computing e-text books and journals to research your assignment topics. It is essential that the assignment is written in your own words and when you submit an assignment, you are required to declare that it is your own original work, in accordance with the Academic Conduct and Practice (student malpractice procedure). If, an assessor suspects that work submitted is your own work, then you may be required to attend a viva (an oral examination) in front of a panel of assessors for which dates will be given.

Serious Malpractice will be reported to Pearson. Examples of serious malpractice are:

- Serial falsifying of submitted work
- Attempts to manipulate results by forging documentation

You should note that assignment hand-in dates are final. If you are unable to submit your work on time due to illness or any other emergency, you must complete the Extenuating Circumstances Form at least 72 hours before the deadline and provide written evidence (e.g. A medical certificate). Please return the completed form to the Student Support Team.

You will be told within 48 hours by the panel if your extension has been granted. Please note, you should continue to work on your assignments in case your request for extension is not accepted. If this is the case, you must submit your work by the original deadline date. Take note that the Extenuating Circumstances Policy is for exceptional, unexpected, short- term events which are outside of your control and have a negative and direct impact upon your ability to prepare for or submit an assignment for assessment by the deadline.

All failed units will be capped at a PASS.

Please note, all marks are provisional until approved by the BTEC External Examiners who visit the College once a year. External Examiners have the authority to change a grade which would then be discussed with the Lead Verifier. Your grades must be approved by the EE's before your certificate can be claimed. The BTEC HNC/HND programme delivered by Monarch are accredited by Pearson and



All units are internally assessed. This means that the assessment programme is Planned and designed by Monarch to ensure that the level and content of all assignments is consistent with Pearson's general specifications for student learning at Level 4/5. We also comply with the specific learning outcomes set separately by Pearson for each individual course unit.

All colleges delivering Pearson programmes work in the same way, to the same learning outcomes. This approach ensures that, while we have the freedom to design an assessment program that meets the specific needs of its students, you can be confident that your end qualification will be at a nationally recognised standard and therefore a valuable, long term, addition to your CV.

A further quality check is provided through the Pearson system of external verification through annual visit and sampling from a Pearson External Examiner (EE) .

You will find the detailed specifications for your own HNC/HND programme under Course Information on your VLE. There are also individual unit specifications on HN Global <https://hnglobal.highernationals.com/>.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY**

Special consideration can be applied after an assessment if there is a reason you might have been disadvantaged during the assessment. See Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy on the website. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the student at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation.

## **REFERENCING - THE HARVARD REFERENCING SYSTEM**

When producing academic work, you are required to acknowledge the work of others by citing references in the text and creating a list of references or bibliography at the end. This is done using the Harvard system. In your written work, you will need, for example, to back up your facts, statistics, and information.

Wherever you refer to or quote someone else's words (directly or indirectly) you should write the surname of the person quoted or referred to in brackets and the date of the publication.

When you quote directly you should also add the page number, for example: (Harris, 2001, p.17)

At the end of the assignment all references used should be set out as follows: Author(s) surname(s), initial(s) (date) title, publisher's location: publisher's name

For example:

Pearson. (2017) Higher Nationals in Computing Core Textbook – BTEC Level 4 HNC and Level 5 HND in Computing . Published by Pearson Books, UK.

All reading included in the references at the end of the assignment should be referred to at some point in the text, to show that you have used the information. Any books, websites or journals included which are not cited in your work is irrelevant. For further information, refer to your Course file for a guide on the Harvard Reference System with examples.



## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND APPEAL PROCEDURE (INCLUDING THE ROLE OF PEARSON AND THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR).**

Monarch is committed to providing the highest quality of education possible for our students, to ensure that you benefit from the academic, social and cultural experience. Where you feel your expectations are not being met, whether it is an academic or non-academic matter, you have the right of access to the Complaints Procedure and Academic Appeals Policy. This is contained in the Assessment Handbook in the induction section although it is hoped that most complaints can be settled at a local level through their personal tutor and the student support team.

Monarch also has a policy for dealing with appeals from students. These appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or assessment not being conducted fairly. The assessment plan should allow time for potential appeals after assessment decisions have been given to students. If there is an appeal by a student, these need to be documented with a resolution. Where students feel that their legitimate expectations are not being met, whether it is an academic or non-academic matter, they have the right of access to the Complaints Procedure and Academic Appeals Policy contained in the Assessment Handbook in the induction section although it is hoped that most complaints can be settled at a local level through their personal tutor and the student support team.

Students have a final right of appeal to Pearson, if the procedures have not been followed. Further details of the Pearson policy on enquiries and appeals is available on the support section of the website (<http://qualifications.pearson.com/>). If a HND or HNC student is still dissatisfied with the final outcome of their appeal they can make a further appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) by emailing: [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk).

## **ANNUAL STUDENT SURVEY**

As part of enhancing the quality of the teaching and learning of the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals, you will be asked to complete the Pearson Annual Survey in April of each year. The purpose of the survey is to enable Pearson to evaluate the student experience as part of the quality assurance process. The annual Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals Student Survey has been designed to provide valuable and quantifiable feedback on the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals to inform the future design of the qualifications, to triangulate other aspects of the quality assurance mechanisms, and to support the development of resources for Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals students globally. The survey will also provide a global perspective of student opinion from around the world and will be detailed in an overview report each year. We welcome your participation in this survey.

**Good luck in your course.**









**MONARCH**  
INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
STUDIES

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