Progression Policy (HND)

POLICY DETAILS	
Policy Category	Academic
Version Number	V5
Approving Authority	Results Consortium Executive Team
Approval Date	October 2026
Date Reviewed	October 2026
Date of next review	October 2027
Author	Quality Manager
Owner (if different from above)	Principal
Version Changes	1. Purpose updated: Pearson's requirements and OfS conditions B3 and B4 (1.1, 1.3). 2. Progression rule clarified: at least 90 credits at Level 4 before starting Level 5 units (4.1). 3. Retake of a unit after an unsuccessful resubmission, capped at a Pass, in line with Pearson's rules (4.3). 4. Approved extenuating circumstances taken into account when deciding whether a student is making sufficient progress (4.5, 6.2). 5. Right to be told in writing, to respond and to appeal before registration is terminated (6.4). 6. New section 7: returning to study after a study restriction, as promised in 1.2.
Related Policies / Procedures	Student Registration and Certification Policy Attendance and Engagement Policy Assessment Policy Progress Board Assessment Board Extenuating Circumstances Policy Student Complaints Policy Academic Appeals Policy Academic Misconduct and AI Use Policy
Effective Date	October 2026

1. Purpose

1.1 To deliver its strategic policy aims of excellence in: Curriculum Innovation; Learning, Teaching and Assessment; and the Student Experience, Results Consortium Ltd ('the College') implements structured processes for managing student progression to ensure that academic standards are met and that the value of qualifications awarded is in line with sector-recognised standards and Pearson's requirements, in line with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

1.2 The policy sets out how a student can progress from Level 4 to Level 5, how that progress is monitored, whether sufficient academic progress is being made by individual students and how the College applies study restrictions to those students who experience repeated difficulties in successfully completing their study. The policy also explains how students can apply to return to study following a study restriction (section 7).

1.3 This policy supports the College's compliance with the Office for Students (OfS) conditions of registration, in particular condition B3 (student outcomes) and condition B4 (assessment and awards).

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled on Pearson Higher National Certificate (HNC) and Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes delivered by the College. It governs the principles, criteria and procedures for academic progression between levels, eligibility for awards and monitoring of academic performance. The policy applies to all teaching staff, academic support staff, Progress Board and Assessment Board members involved in delivering, supporting or assessing HNC and HND provision.

3. Definitions

3.1 Assessment Board: A formal body responsible for confirming progression decisions and final awards after external moderation.

3.2 HNC (Higher National Certificate): A Level 4 qualification made up of 120 credits.

3.3 HND (Higher National Diploma): A Level 4 and Level 5 qualification made up of 240 credits.

3.4 Progress Board: A panel that monitors student academic progress and identifies students at risk of not making sufficient academic progress.

3.5 Progression: The process by which a student moves from Level 4 to Level 5 of the HND programme, subject to meeting specific credit and assessment requirements.

3.6 Study Restriction: A formal decision by the College to prevent or pause a student's further study due to repeated academic failure or lack of progress.

3.7 Valid Combination: A set of units that meets Pearson's requirements for credit, level and unit type (mandatory or optional) for a specific qualification.

3.8 Unclassified: A grade of 'U' awarded when a student has not achieved a pass in a unit and has either exhausted all assessment attempts or received compensation for the unit.

4. Principles of Academic Progress

4.1 To progress to the next year of the programme, a student must normally have achieved at least 90 credits at Level 4 before starting Level 5 units. The student can then complete the remaining 30 credits at Level 4 alongside their Level 5 study.

4.2 If a student's assignment does not pass after the first assessment, they must have the opportunity to resubmit the assignment for reassessment and the grade is capped at a pass. Students can have the assignment reassessed once only. Reassessment of coursework, project or portfolio-based assignments usually involves carrying out the original activity again. For examinations, reassessment involves completing a new activity.

4.3 If a student does not pass a unit after resubmission, the Assessment Board can allow the student to retake the unit once, in line with Pearson's rules. The grade for a retaken unit is capped at a pass.

4.4 If an HND student does not complete the full qualification, they can be awarded an HNC if they meet the conditions in 5.1.

4.5 Students are not making sufficient academic progress if they have not successfully completed three consecutive units as part of their HND study, unless approved extenuating circumstances apply.

4.6 A student has not successfully completed a unit if they cancel their registration, defer from the unit after it begins or receive an Unclassified result for the unit in their first attempt or resubmission attempt.

4.7 Progression decisions can only be agreed by Assessment Boards after external moderation.

5. Conditions for the award of Certificate and Diploma

5.1 To achieve a Pearson BTEC Level 4 Higher National Certificate qualification, a student must have:

- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at Level 4
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at Level 4.

5.2 To achieve a Pearson BTEC Level 5 Higher National Diploma qualification, a student must have:

- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at Level 5
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at Level 5
- completed units equivalent to 120 credits at Level 4
- achieved at least a pass in 105 credits at Level 4.

5.3 Students who have attempted but not achieved a pass in one of their Level 4 15-credit units can still be awarded an HNC if they have completed and passed the remaining units.

5.4 Students who have attempted but not achieved a pass in one of their Level 4 15-credit units and one of their Level 5 15-credit units can still be awarded an HND if they have completed and passed the remaining units at both levels, in line with the rules of combination for the qualification.

5.5 A student's overall qualification grade is based on their performance in all units. They are awarded a pass, merit or distinction using the points gained through all 120 credits, at Level 4 for the HNC or Level 5 for the HND. The overall qualification grade is calculated in the same way for the HNC and the HND. For HND, the overall qualification grade is based on student performance in Level 5 units only.

5.6 Students must have attempted all units in a valid combination for each qualification. The conditions of award and compensation arrangements apply as explained above. If a student has been granted compensation for a unit attempted but not achieved, that unit appears as Unclassified (a 'U' grade) on the notification of performance provided with their certificate.

Points per credit

Grade	Points
Pass	4
Merit	6
Distinction	8

Point boundaries

Grade	Point boundaries
Pass	420 to 599
Merit	600 to 839
Distinction	840 or more

6. Monitoring Academic Progress

6.1 The Progress Board monitors the progress of all students.

6.2 Students who have not completed three consecutive units, without approved extenuating circumstances, are 'at risk' of not making sufficient academic progress and must be contacted to agree a plan to improve their study. They can continue into the next term while they follow the plan.

6.3 Students who have a low attendance rate are at risk of not making sufficient academic progress and are contacted in line with the Attendance and Engagement Policy.

6.4 A student's registration can be terminated if the student is not making sufficient academic progress as defined in this policy and the Attendance and Engagement Policy. Before this happens, the student must be told in writing and given the opportunity to respond.

7. Returning to Study after a Study Restriction

7.1 A student whose study has been restricted or terminated can apply in writing to the Programme Lead to return. The Progress Board decides and gives its reasons in writing. The student can appeal under the Academic Appeals Policy only if the decision was not made in line with this policy, for example because of a procedural error. The student cannot appeal against the Progress Board's academic judgement.