المعهد العالي للإنجليزية
Higher Institute of English

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026–2027

Assessment Handbook

For Teachers • Licence in International Communication Studies

DEGREE PROGRAMME

HIGHER INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH
Nouakchott

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01 Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide clear rules and guidance on assessment within the degree programme at HIE. So that all assessments are fair to all students, all members of teaching staff are required to adhere to the rules given in this handbook unless told otherwise by a member of the Academic Team. If you have a question which is not addressed by the information in this handbook, please ask a member of the Academic Team.

> Please ensure that a copy of the Exam Regulations (Appendix) is visible in your classroom. A laminated copy can be provided – please speak to a member of QA.

Regulatory framework

Assessment and examinations in the degree programme are governed by Joint Order No. 598-2025/MDAREM-MESRS of 3 June 2025, which sets the criteria for access to training and the regime of studies and examinations at the Higher Institute of English (Title III, Arts. 31–74), and by Decree No. 2016-044/PM of 21 March 2016 on the Licence-Master-Doctorate (LMD) system. Article references in this handbook refer to the Joint Order unless stated otherwise.

Students receive the same rules in the HIE Student Handbook 2026–2027. Teachers should be familiar with both documents.

Roles and responsibilities

Body	Responsibilities in assessment
Academic Team	Approves all assessments before use; advises on pass marks and assessment reviews; refers suspected cheating to the Assessment Committee; considers late submissions and missed tests (this handbook).
Director of Studies / Department of Initial Training	Proposes the annual exam calendar for approval by the Commandant, after consultation of the Pedagogical, Scientific and Research Council (Art. 34; Art. 26, Decree No. 2016-044); reviews and approves exam papers before they are administered (Art. 64); reviews module descriptors periodically and refers them to the Pedagogical, Scientific and Research Council for its opinion (Art. 29).
Head of Department	Responsible for the conduct of examinations (Art. 65).
Examination and Evaluation Committee	Anonymises exam papers before marking; deliberates on results, credits and the award of the Licence (Arts. 60–71).

Body	Responsibilities in assessment
Assessment Committee	Investigates suspected cheating and plagiarism and decides the penalties (this handbook and the Student Handbook).
Teachers	Develop, administer and mark assessments; inform students and give feedback; invigilate; keep records (this handbook).
Academic Administrator	Archives copies of tests and coursework (this handbook).

02 Assessment Framework

Every module is assessed through a combination of continuous assessment and a final exam, marked out of 20. A module is passed with a mark of 10/20, and each semester is validated with 30 credits.

Assessment methods and weighting

Assessment is a combination of theory, application and research. It may involve assignments, projects, presentations, quizzes and exams, all relevant to the module. Most modules are assessed as follows:

60%	40%
Continuous assessment	**Final Exam**

The methods of continuous assessment and the final exam, and the weighting of each component, are set out in the HIE Module Descriptors (Art. 54). The final mark for each module is the weighted average of these components (Art. 55).

Credits and workload

- Students are enrolled for 30 ECTS credits per semester (Art. 26); the Licence comprises 180 credits over six semesters (Art. 45).
- Each credit corresponds to a workload of 25 to 30 hours, including classes, assignments, timed exams, group projects and simulations. As a rule, each credit includes at least 10 taught hours (Art. 26).
- A semester is validated when the student obtains 30 credits by adding the credits of all its modules (Art. 56).

Grading scale

Continuous assessment, summative assessment and final exams are marked with whole numbers from 0 to 20. Marks from 10 to 20 are passing marks; marks from 0 to 9 are failing marks (Art. 36). Grades are as follows:

18 or 20	Exceptional
16	Excellent
14	Very good
12	Good
10	Satisfactory
9	Just sufficient (borderline fail)
7	Insufficient (fail)
5	Insufficient (poor fail)
3	Insufficient (very poor fail)
0	Zero

Compensation

- A student may compensate a mark of 9/20 with a mark above 10/20 elsewhere, provided the average of the two modules concerned is 10/20 or higher (Arts. 37, 51).
- Compensation is possible only between related modules in the same semester: for example, between two English language modules, between two elective modules, or between Arabic and French (Art. 38).

Validation and resits

Module mark	Outcome
10/20 or above	The module or element is validated (Art. 50).
9/20, compensable	The module may be validated by compensation (Art. 51).
9/20, not compensable	The student retakes the module or element in the resit session (Art. 52).
Below 9/20	The module can be neither compensated nor resat (Art. 53).

Students who have not taken part in continuous assessment cannot sit either the main session or the resit session (Art. 47). Students must also attend at least 70% of lessons to obtain any grade or credit for a module; those who do not meet this requirement are not admitted to exam week assessments (Student Handbook, Attendance).

Progression

Situation	Outcome
L1 → L2	The student progresses if they validate 60 credits, or at least 39 credits with an average of 10/20 or above. They are automatically enrolled in all Semester 3 and 4 modules and re-enrol in the failed Semester 1 and/or 2 modules; a re-enrolled student may take no more than 5 modules (Art. 39).
Repeating L1	The student repeats L1 if they have not validated the 60 credits of S1 and S2 and have validated fewer than 39 but at least 30 credits (Art. 40).
Fewer than 30 credits in L1	The student is referred back to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research with a letter explaining their situation (Art. 41).
L2 → L3	The student progresses if they have all 120 credits of L1 and L2, or all 60 L1 credits plus at least 39 L2 credits with an average of 10/20 or above for S3 and S4 (Art. 42).
Year completed	Obtaining all credits of the two semesters of a year leads to a certificate of validation (Art. 30).

The maximum period for completing the Licence is nine semesters, including three reserve semesters (Art. 19).

Degree award and classification

The Licence is awarded to students who have validated all modules of all six semesters, i.e. 180 credits (Arts. 45, 57). The final average is calculated as follows (Art. 58):

> *(GPA Year 1 x 1) + (GPA Year 2 x 2) + (GPA Year 3 x 4) / 7*

Final average	Class (Mention)
≥ 10 and < 12	Passable
≥ 12 and < 14	Assez bien
≥ 14 and < 16	Bien
≥ 16 and < 18	Très bien
≥ 18	Excellent

Classes as set by Article 46 of the Joint Order.

03 Developing Assessments

You may be asked to create new assessments or to develop existing ones. All assessments must measure the module outcomes and be approved before use.

Approval and design

- All assessments need to be approved by the Academic Team before being used.
- All assessments should be designed to measure the module outcomes. At module level, objectives are generally expressed as 6 to 8 of the programme's 12 learning outcomes (Arts. 22, 25).
- Exam papers are examined and approved by the Director of Studies and/or the Department of Initial Training before they are administered. In this process, they ensure that the way the exam will be conducted is clear (Art. 64).
- Marking follows criteria and standards agreed within the marking committees (Art. 49).

Pass mark

> The pass mark for all modules and assessments is 10/20, as set by Joint Order No. 598-2025 (Arts. 36 and 50). It may not be adjusted.
>
> If an unusually high number of students fail or do well, the assessment should be reviewed with the Academic Team before it is used again.

Late submission penalties

Assessment developers may not introduce their own system of penalties for late submissions unless this is agreed by the Academic Team.

04 Informing Students and Feedback

Students should always know how they will be assessed, when, and how their final grade is reached. Continuous assessment should be used to improve student performance.

Informing the students

- At the beginning of the academic year, students should be shown the relevant pages of the Student Handbook so that they have a clear idea of how assessment at HIE works overall.
- At the beginning of each module, students should be informed what the assessments for that module are, when they will take place and what represents a pass. This information should be provided both orally and in writing. The examination regulations are made available to students, who are informed of them at the start of each module (Art. 32).
- Students should be clear about what grade a mark corresponds to. For example, in most cases in the degree programme, a mark of 70% is equivalent to a 12.
- How a final grade is arrived at should be transparent to the students.
- Exam dates are published in the HIE Academic Calendar (Arts. 27, 34).

Providing feedback

- All continuous assessment results should be shared with the students after each assessment, and students should be able to learn from their mistakes through the teacher's feedback.
- Test papers should not be returned to the students. Instead, the teacher should give general feedback to the class and invite each student to look at their paper with the teacher. In practice, set the class some work and, while the students are busy on a task, individual students can come up to your desk to look at their paper.
- Students are not allowed to take photos of any test materials, including answer sheets.

Record-keeping

- All copies of tests and coursework need to be kept and handed over to the Academic Administrator for archiving. Exam papers are kept for at least three years and examination minutes permanently (Art. 34, Decree No. 2016-044). Digital copies of assessments submitted electronically are acceptable.
- Full details of every test used should be kept and entered into the course report form at the end of the module. This is very important to ensure, for example, that a student retaking a module is not inadvertently given the same test as before.
- Exam marks and results minutes are sent to the secretariat of the Examination and Evaluation Committee no later than 72 hours before deliberation (Art. 66).

05 Examinations

Examinations are organised in a main session, held in the exam week at the end of each semester, and a single resit session held after the results of the year's last semester are announced. Papers are anonymised before marking.

Exam sessions and calendar

- Each semester lasts 18 weeks: 15 weeks of teaching, a mid-semester break for independent study, and one week reserved for official examinations (Art. 24). The 15 teaching weeks and the examination week make up the 16 weeks of teaching and evaluation required by Article 9 of Decree No. 2016-044.
- The Director of Studies/Department of Initial Training proposes the exam dates each academic year and submits them to the Commandant for approval (Art. 34). The Commandant approves them after consulting the Pedagogical, Scientific and Research Council (Art. 26, Decree No. 2016-044). They are published in the Academic Calendar.
- Exams take place in a main session, followed by a single resit session held at least one week after the results of the main session for the last semester of the year are announced (Art. 35).
- Exams are written and may include an oral part or a practical task. They take place on HIE premises and may exceptionally be held online (Art. 33).

Anonymity

Students write their name and student number on their exam papers. Before the papers are passed to teachers for marking, the Examination Committee replaces names with anonymous codes, so that examiners cannot identify candidates. Access to the link between student identities and codes is limited to authorised administrative staff.

Exam regulations

The following regulations apply in all exams. The students' copy is in the Appendix and in the Student Handbook.

In the examination room

- Any items that are not required for the exam (such as bags, coats and mobile telephones) are to be placed in the designated area according to the instructions of the invigilator.
- The invigilator may choose to allocate seats to students before the exam begins and may ask students to change seats at any point in the exam if they deem it necessary.
- Students must bring all the stationery they need for the exam.
- No talking and no exchange of material between students is permitted during the exam.
- All smart devices must be switched off completely and placed in the designated area.
- Cheating is not allowed and is considered a disciplinary offence.

- Students are required to obey the rules and the invigilator's instructions. Failure to do so can result in a student being asked to leave the examination room by a member of the Academic Team.
- Students must finish writing when instructed to do so. Ignoring the invigilator's instructions will be considered a disciplinary offence. It may result in a reduction in marks.

Students entering and leaving the examination room

- Students should not enter the room unless an invigilator is present.
- Students are not permitted to leave the room during the first half of the exam.
- No toilet breaks are permitted during the first half of the exam. Students are subsequently able to visit the toilet at the instruction of – and under the supervision of – a member of staff.

The examination materials

- Students must complete any paperwork as requested by the invigilator.
- Students are not permitted to remove any question or answer papers from the exam room. No photographs of test material are allowed.

06 Invigilation

Invigilators make sure that exams are fair, that the exam regulations are followed, and that any irregularity is recorded and reported.

Preparing and checking the venue

- Please make sure that the room is laid out for an exam. The normal arrangement is for two students to share a table with one at each end and for there to be sufficient space between the tables. If you are not sure how the room should be laid out, contact a member of the Academic Team.
- There should be a clock or a projected time in the room so that students can pace themselves. The clock or timer should be visible to all students. If this really is not possible, the invigilator should give regular updates on the time remaining (in addition to the time warnings below).
- If more than one class is taking the same test, the test must be taken at the same time. If you are asked to invigilate a test at a later time than another teacher has invigilated the same test with a different group, please contact the Academic Team.

Before and during the exam

- Make sure that the exam regulations are followed and note any non-compliance with the rules (see also Cheating and suspicious behaviour below).
- Remain vigilant throughout the exam. Invigilators should be solely focused on monitoring the students and should not mark papers, check emails or prepare lessons.
- Follow any specific procedures agreed for the exam. For example, if it has been agreed that an audio will be played only once, it must not be played twice for any reason. Report any disturbance which may have affected students' performance to a member of the Academic Team.
- Time limits must be adhered to. If a student arrives late, they must finish the test at the same time as everybody else. No extra time is allowed.
- Do not comment on the content of the exam in any way. If asked questions, simply refer students to the instructions in the exam paper.
- If you notice a serious mistake in the exam paper, contact a member of the Academic Team immediately. The Academic Team member will decide what to do. Do not explain or discuss the mistake with the students unless instructed to do so.
- Check attendance and record late arrivals.
- Actively monitor for unauthorised materials or equipment. It is very important to check that students do not record any of the exam material.
- Hand out question papers and answer sheets carefully at the start, telling students not to look at any papers or start writing before being instructed to do so. Collect all material at the end, including notes and rough drafts.

- For tests of more than 25 minutes, give a ten-minute, five-minute and one-minute warning, and with the ten-minute warning remind students to answer every question. For shorter tests, a five-minute and one-minute warning are sufficient; with the five-minute warning, remind students to answer every question.
- If students wish to leave early, check that they have answered all parts of the exam before giving permission. If a student wishes to leave despite being told that they have not answered all parts, they may do so, but record this.
- If a student does not stop writing when instructed to do so, record how many times they were asked to stop and how long it took them to stop.

Cheating and suspicious behaviour

- If you notice cheating or suspicious behaviour, ask the student to stop, while maintaining awareness of what is going on in the rest of the room.
- If a student refuses to follow your instructions, is disturbing the class, or is repeatedly cheating or behaving suspiciously, contact a member of the Academic Team so that they can deal with the situation.
- Keep a full record of any cheating or suspicious behaviour.

07 Academic Integrity and Penalties

Cheating and plagiarism are disciplinary offences. Penalties are decided by the Assessment Committee, not by individual teachers.

Cheating

- Cheating is any dishonest behaviour intended to gain an unfair advantage in academic work, for example using unauthorised materials, copying or allowing others to copy, submitting work completed by someone else, unauthorised collaboration, writing a memorised essay in an exam, or fabricating data (Student Handbook, Cheating).
- Exams are monitored through access control, a ban on unauthorised materials and, where necessary, technical detection methods. Cheating, impersonation or collusion leads to disciplinary sanctions, from cancellation of the exam to more serious measures.
- Suspected cases are referred to the Assessment Committee for investigation. The Assessment Committee decides the penalty after reviewing the evidence. You should not deduct marks for cheating unless asked to do so by a member of the Academic Team.
- As set out in the Student Handbook, the penalty for cheating is a mark of zero for the exam or assignment and a formal written warning that goes into the student's file.

Plagiarism

- Written work is checked with similarity-detection software, notably Turnitin. Students are required to cite their sources properly and to produce original work.
- Plagiarism includes presenting work without appropriate attribution, paraphrasing without acknowledgement, and using any AI application to produce any part of written work (Student Handbook, Plagiarism).
- Assignments (essays, reports, presentations etc.) which are heavily plagiarised are passed to the Assessment Committee for review. If, in its opinion, less than 50% of the assignment is the student's own work, the assignment is given a grade of zero and the student receives a formal written warning, noted on their student record.

Absence and late submissions

- If students do not attend scheduled tests, they are not permitted to take them at a different time unless, exceptionally, this has been agreed by the Academic Team.
- Ordinarily, students are not permitted to submit coursework late. If they can provide evidence of why their work was not or will not be submitted on time (for example, hospitalisation or bereavement), the Academic Team may consider their case individually.

08 Deliberation and Results

Results are validated by the Examination and Evaluation Committee at the end of each semester, then posted for students.

Examination and Evaluation Committee

- The Committee is made up of representatives of the Directorate of Studies, the Department of Initial Training and/or Continuing Training, Student Affairs and the internal quality assurance unit (Art. 60). Its membership is fixed one week before the start of exams (Art. 61).
- It meets at the end of each semester to review and give its opinion on the results of the semester's work, and may meet in extraordinary session if needed (Art. 62). It appoints a secretariat from among its members each semester (Art. 63).
- Attendance of members at deliberations is compulsory (Art. 67). The Committee may deliberate only when at least two-thirds of its members are present (Art. 68).
- It deliberates on the validation of elements and modules, the award of the corresponding credits and the award of the Licence (Art. 69).
- Decisions are taken by majority vote; in a tie, the designated chair has the casting vote. Abstention is not allowed (Art. 70). Decisions are reasoned and recorded in minutes (Art. 71).

Publication of results

- Successful students are ranked by group and in order of merit in two separate sets of minutes, one per session (Art. 59).
- The results of deliberations (L1 validation, L2 validation, Licence validation or deferral) are posted by the Committee's secretariat (Art. 72) on the main notice board on campus. They are also published on the official HIE Facebook page.
- Within 15 days of the announcement of results, graduating students receive a certificate of success and a transcript (Art. 73).
- L1 and L2 students who want a transcript must request it from Student Affairs within 15 days of the announcement of results (Art. 74).

A Appendix: Exam Regulations

Students' copy. Please make sure that a copy of this page is visible in your classroom. Laminated copies are available: please contact a member of QA.

In the examination room

- Any items that are not required for the exam (such as bags, coats and mobile telephones) are to be placed in the designated area according to the instructions of the invigilator.
- The invigilator may ask you to sit in a particular seat and may ask you to change seats at any point in the exam if they deem it necessary.
- You must bring all the stationery you need for the exam.
- No talking and no exchange of material between students is permitted during the exam.
- All smart devices must be switched off completely and placed in the designated area.
- Cheating is not allowed and is considered a disciplinary offence.
- You are required to obey the rules and the invigilator's instructions. Failure to do so can result in you being asked to leave the examination room by a member of the management team.
- You must finish writing when instructed to do so. Ignoring the invigilator's instructions will be considered a disciplinary offence. It may result in a reduction in marks.

Entering and leaving the examination room

- You should not enter the room unless an invigilator is present.
- You are not permitted to leave the room during the first half of the exam.
- No toilet breaks are permitted during the first half of the exam. You are subsequently able to visit the toilet at the instruction of – and under the supervision of – a member of staff.

The examination materials

- You must fill in your name and student number as required.
- You are not permitted to remove any question or answer papers from the exam room. No photographs of test material are allowed.
- Deliberately making your answers visible to other students is cheating.