BTEC International

Centre Guide to Managing Quality 2023-24

Contents

Introduction

This guide is designed for BTEC programme teams and provides essential guidance on planning, assessment and implementation of internal verification of BTEC qualifications.

The majority of BTEC units are assessed through internal assessment, which means that you can deliver the programme in a way that suits your learners and relates to local need. The way in which you deliver the programme must also ensure that assessment is fair and that standards are consistent over time.

IMPORTANT: Please note that changes to our guidance are highlighted in ***orange italic print***.

What is quality assurance?

Quality assurance is at the heart of vocational qualifications:

- you use quality assurance to ensure that standardised decisions are made by your managers, Internal Verifiers and Assessors

- we use quality assurance to check that all centres are working to BTEC standards. It gives us the opportunity to identify and provide support where it is needed in order to safeguard certification. It also allows us to recognise and support good practice.

- Every year we publish an updated BTEC International Quality Assurance Handbook to explain our quality assurance processes for the coming academic year. Along with the BTEC qualification specification, this handbook ~~should~~ provides Assessors and Internal Verifiers with the information they need to ensure quality assurance is undertaken successfully.

Which qualifications does this guide cover?

This guide covers all BTEC qualifications at all levels, from Entry Level - Level 7. For qualification delivery at levels 4-7, you should also refer to the BTEC Higher National Centre Guide to Quality Assurance and Assessment levels 4-7 <u>here</u>.

While the principles of internal verification are the same for all BTECs, there are slight differences in terminology between BTEC Entry Level - Level 3 and BTEC Level 4 - 7. Where relevant, these are identified throughout this guide. **Please note:** Centres delivering BTEC Level 4 - 7 must also follow the guidance in the **QAA Quality Code for Higher Education**: <u>https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code</u>

BTEC qualification specification

The specification for each BTEC qualification is the document that programme leaders and teams must use as first point of reference for all planning and assessment. Specifications are accompanied by important assessment and delivery guidance which provide instructions and advice for each unit in the qualification. All BTEC specifications are freely available on our website.

Forms and templates

We publish a range of useful forms and templates for you to use in your centre on our website. These forms are not mandatory, but we strongly recommend using them by suitably amending them for the qualifications you are delivering to help ensure that you are meeting requirements. They include:

- Assessment plan
- Assignment brief
- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assessment record
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Tutor observation record / witness statement
- Learner declarations.

Quality assurance

As a significant amount of BTEC qualifications are internally assessed, it is important that you have systems in place for ensuring that accurate assessment decisions are made and recorded properly. This helps ensure that the standards and integrity of BTEC is upheld.

Approval

If your centre wants to deliver a BTEC qualification, you first need to get centre approval from Pearson. If your organisation is already an approved centre, you need qualification approval to deliver and assess a BTEC programme. You will only be able to register students if you are an approved centre, running an approved programme. It is important that we know that you are delivering BTEC programmes so we can provide all the necessary support to help you with delivery and assessment.

Approval is a two-step process:

Approval type	Purpose
Centre Approval	Ensuring that you have the human, physical and financial resources to deliver Pearson qualifications
Qualification Approval	Ensuring that you have appropriate systems in place to assure the delivery and assessment of the qualification

The requirements for managing BTEC programmes are found in the approval declarations (see Appendix). Please contact your Regional Development Manager for further support with the BTEC Approvals process.

BTEC International quality model

We will appoint a subject specialist Standards Verifier/External Examiner who complete standards verification on your programmes twice per year. This may be completed remotely or via a physical visit. During the sample, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will review delivery, assessment, internal verification, resources and centre quality assurance documents. The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will also offer support and guidance to ensure that delivery is in line with UK national standards. Standards Verification/External Examination applies to all BTEC programmes with internally assessed units.

Full guidance on the International Quality Assurance model can be found in the **BTEC International Quality Assurance Handbook** on our website.

Centre roles

How you manage your BTEC programmes depends on the size and nature of your provision, but there are certain roles that should be involved in maintaining and improving the quality of BTEC programmes within your centre.

- Senior Managers
- Quality Nominees
- Examinations Officers
- Lead Internal Verifiers
- Programme Leaders
- Internal Verifiers
- Assessors

Depending on the size and nature of your centre, an individual may take on more than one of these roles. Full guidance on all of these roles and responsibilities can be found in the BTEC International Quality Assurance Handbook on our website.

Edexcel Online

Edexcel Online is a secure section of our website for use by centres.

- You can see all of your approved programmes on Edexcel Online including the units that are part of the qualification structure

- All learner information can be registered and accessed on Edexcel Online

- The site provides important information for centres' staff, enabling you to make learners' registrations, report learner achievement and claim certification.

- To use Edexcel Online, you will need an account. Your regional representative will assist you in setting up your account on EOL.

- If your centre is already registered for Edexcel Online, you should contact your Edexcel Online administrator (usually your exams officer) and ask them to create a user account for you, allowing the relevant access levels. You will need a unique and valid email address.

- It is extremely important that the details of your Quality Nominee are kept up to date, as we contact the Quality Nominee with important BTEC messages

Suggested format for maintaining quality assurance documents

You must have:

- Functioning quality systems appropriate to your centre's size that enable quality management, review and improvement

- Sufficient records that demonstrate the use of the quality system and the outcomes of key monitoring activities

- Effective internal and external communications

- Systems that are compliant with current BTEC and regulatory requirements.

Documents will vary between centres and may be stored electronically. All quality assurance documents must be reviewed and revised regularly. Below is a suggestion of how they can be organised at centre and programme level:

Centre Handbook
Centre-wide quality assurance policies and processes that are applicable to all BTEC programmes

Programme
File 1
Day-to-day management file for BTEC programmes

Programme
File 2
Etc...

Learner Handbook
Relevant programme information for BTEC learners
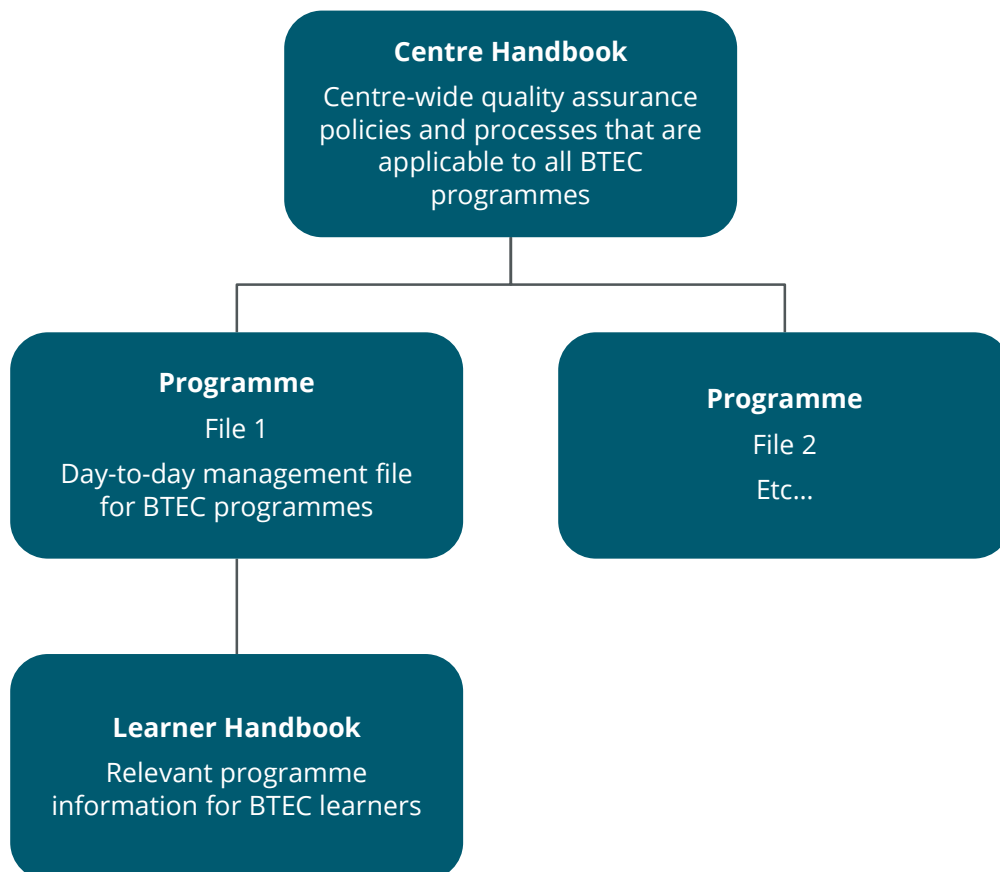
Centre handbook, programme files and learner handbooks

- Holding centre policies and procedures electronically makes them easier to access and update

- These documents will contain much of the information required for standards verification

- Standardised documentation helps the accuracy, consistency and audit of records

- Content varies according to the size and type of each centre. For example, small centres may use a combined centre/programme file.

The following lists are suggestions, rather than prescriptive. Only use records that are useful and effective:

Centre Handbook

Centre-wide quality assurance processes that are applicable to all BTEC programmes

Suggested Centre Handbook Contents:
- Approval Documents
- Assessment Policy/Procedures
- Internal Verification Policy/Procedures
- Appeals Policy/Procedure
- Assessment Malpractice Procedures
- Registration & Certification Procedures
- *Special Considerations Policy*
- *Distance or Blended Learning Policy*
- Quality Assurance Form Templates:
  - IV of Assignment Briefs
  - Tracking Sheet – Grading Criteria
  - Year Plan Overview
  - IV of Assessment Decisions
  - Tracking Sheet – Unit Achievement

Programme File

Day-to-day management file for BTEC programmes

Suggested Programme File Contents:

Programme Management & Organisation
- Programme Details
- Programme Team
- Programme Timetable
- Assessment Plan
- Internal Verification Schedule
- Agendas/Minutes/Meeting Notes
- Relevant Correspondence

Teaching & Learning
- Current Programme Specification
- Schemes of Work/Lesson Plans
- Work Placement Info (if appropriate)

Assessment & Learner Records
- Class Lists/Absence Reports
- Assignment Briefs/Calendar
- Tracking Sheets – Grading Criteria
- Tracking Sheets – Unit Achievement
  - Records of Assessment/Appeals/Key Skills
  - Other Info (SATs, Predicted Grades, etc.)

Learner Support
- Recruitment Criteria/Leaflets
- Pre-programme Guidance
- Diagnostic Testing/Learning Styles, etc.
- Induction Arrangements/Checklist
- Consultation/Parents' Evening Docs
- Tutorial Records

Quality Assurance
- IV Records
- Copies of Standards Verifier Reports
- Withdrawal/Transfer Data
- Programme Review/ Evaluation
- Learner Questionnaires/ Satisfaction Surveys
- Retention/Achievement Data
- Destination Data
- Staff Review & Development

Learner Handbook

Relevant programme information for BTEC learners

Suggested Learner Handbook Contents:
- Qualification Details
- Programme Overview
- Registration & Certification Information
- Induction Timetable/Checklist
- Health & Safety Information
- Programme Timetable
- Year Plan
- Unit Details
- Key Skills/Functional Skills Information
- Assignment Schedule
- BTEC Assessment Information
- Plagiarism/Malpractice
- Independent Learning
- Appeals Procedure
- Tutorial Arrangements

BTEC Level 4 to 7: programme specifications

As required by the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education, BTEC programmes at Level 4 to 7 must have a programme specification, which is a concise description of both the intended outcomes of learning from a programme and the means by which these outcomes are achieved and demonstrated.

The programme specification should not be confused with the standard Pearson BTEC qualification specifications that include the full guidance and units for each qualification.

Guides to developing policies and procedures

This section looks at quality assurance policies and procedures to stimulate ideas and inform the structure of programme learning and assessment. Each procedure follows this format:

- **Purpose/Scope:** outlines the procedure's basic purpose and its operational context

- **Definitions/Terminology:** explains the terms used within the section

- **Responsibilities:** allocates people to procedures and roles and responsibilities

- **Procedures:** provides a basic overview of the activities as well as specific requirements

- **Examples:** this is what a specific policy may look like. It can be customised by you. When using any of the sections make sure that you insert the specific information required (this is in the areas identified by asterisks). You may need to add sections

- **Links:** identifies related sources of information for each section.

Policies and procedures need to be communicated appropriately. It should be noted that the policies, procedures and practices you use to manage BTEC assessments are linked: they do not operate in isolation from one another (see the up-to-date policies and procedures on our website).

Learner Recruitment, Registration and Certification Policy

Purpose/scope

- To make sure that there is a fair and consistent approach to recruiting with integrity across Pearson qualifications

- To ensure that accurate, up to date and auditable learner registration, achievement and certification records are maintained with Pearson

- That these records are kept for **3 years after certification**, in line with Pearson requirements.

Definitions/terminology

- **Recruit with integrity**: means that learners are enrolled onto qualifications that will benefit them and that will meet their aims and aspirations. You should enrol learners onto qualifications that they have the capability and opportunity to achieve.

- **Registration:** informs Pearson about learners at the **beginning** of a programme of study

- **Key dates & actions:** deadlines for registration and certification appear in the Information Manual on our website

- **Certification claim:** the process of informing Pearson of learner achievement

- **Unit certification:** learners who have not completed sufficient number of credits to receive the full qualification can be certificated for the units that they have achieved.

Responsibilities

- **Exams Officer:** responsible for timely, accurate and valid registration, transfer, withdrawal and certificate claims for learners

- **Programme Leader:** responsible for ensuring learner details held by Pearson are accurate and that an audit trail of learner assessment and achievement is accessible

- **Quality Nominee:** responsible for coordinating and monitoring the learner details held with Pearson

- **Senior Management:** responsible for overseeing the registration, transfer, withdrawal and certificate claims for learners to ensure that Pearson's deadlines are met

Procedures

- **Registration:** registration starts our Quality Assurance processes. Exams Officers and delivery staff are required to make sure that learners are registered on the correct programme at the beginning of their programme of learning. Learners following a UK standard academic year are registered by 1st November. Learners enrolling into flexible start programmes are registered within one month of enrolment. Your procedures need to make sure that there is accurate and timely registration.

- **Transfer:** learners can transfer their registration and achievement to date between centres. Transfer between programmes is also permitted. Procedures need to ensure transfers are accurate and timely. You must ensure that adequate information about the transferee's position and progress is communicated both to the learner and to Pearson.

- **Withdrawal:** you should let us know when a learner leaves before completion. Withdrawals can be made via Edexcel Online and a withdrawn learner may be reinstated at a later date
- **Certification Claims:** full qualification certification or credit certification is claimed via Edexcel Online. Claims can be made at any time of year. Your claims procedures should prevent fraudulent or inaccurate claims.

Example: Learner Recruitment, Registration and Certification Policy

This is what a Learner Recruitment, Registration & Certification Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy. Use the sections that are relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Learner Recruitment, Registration & Certification Policy

Aim:

- To make sure that there is a fair and consistent approach to recruiting with integrity across Pearson qualifications
- To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Ensure learners recruited meet the eligibility criteria if there is any set
- See that learners are given correct information and advice on their selected qualifications so that they choose qualifications that will meet their needs and aspirations.
- Register each learner within Pearson's requirements
- *Register each learner on the appropriate programme code, at the start of teaching and prior to any assessment activity.*
- Provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- Make each learner aware of their registration status *and registration number*
- Inform Pearson of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details
- Ensure that certificate claims are timely and based only on internally verified assessment records
- Audit certificate claims made to Pearson
- Audit the certificates received from Pearson to ensure accuracy and completeness
- Keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification *in line with Pearson Terms and Conditions*.

> This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

Information manual: this is published by Pearson each year and provides detailed information for Exams Officers about registration and certification procedures for all Pearson programmes.

Assessment Policy

Purpose/scope

- That assessment of BTEC programmes is to the required standard

- That there is equal and fair access to assessment for all learners

- To ensure that learners are given realistic targets and informed of their progress

- That achievement is accurately recorded and tracked

- To ensure that assessment leads to accurate and valid certification claims.

- To ensure a regular cycle of review of BTEC qualifications and resources that promote improvements.

Definitions/terminology

- **Assessor:** the person responsible for making decisions about whether learners' work achieves the standard required for certification

- **Assessment:** the definitive assessment decision of the learner's achievement and must be to the required standards. This assessment contributes to achievement and informs a unit grade (where applicable)

- **Resubmission:** Allowing learners to provide improved evidence. Please note there are different rules for allowing resubmission at different levels and different qualification frameworks.

- **Standardisation:** a method of comparison that enables centre assessors to review the consistency and accuracy of their assessment decisions with those of other assessors

- **Learning aims/outcomes:** what the learner should know, understand or be able to do as a result of completing the unit

- **Unit content:** the unit content gives you the information to devise and plan the programme of learning needed for the learning outcomes to be achieved:
  - All elements of the unit content must be taught, except for anything preceded by 'e.g.' which is merely an example of what can be selected to teach
  - For assessment, a learner is not required to provide evidence for all of the unit content
  - To achieve the unit, learners are required to provide sufficient evidence to address the assessment and grading criteria
  - Assessment guidance is given in each unit to support the achievement of individual grading criteria

- **Unit grading grid:** each unit grading grid contains statements of the assessment criteria used to determine the standard of learner evidence. Merit and Distinction grading criteria refer to a qualitative improvement in the learner's evidence, and not a quantitative one. Please note the big difference in how to award grades between Levels.

Responsibilities

- **Programme Leader:** responsible for managing programme delivery and assessment of the learners, to ensure coverage of all units and grading criteria

- **Assessor:** responsible for carrying out assessment to the required standards. The assessor provides feedback to learners; assures the authenticity of learner work; records and tracks achievement

- **Internal verifier:** a member of staff able to verify assessor decisions and validate assignments. The Internal Verifier records findings, gives assessor feedback, and oversees remedial action

- **Lead Internal Verifier:** The Lead Internal Verifier must agree and sign off assessment and internal verification plans. **For Levels 2-3 only;** the Lead Internal Verifier will play an important role in authorising resubmissions and retakes.

Procedures

- **Learner induction:** should inform learners about how assessment works. Learners must also be informed about how their progress will be monitored. Reference should be made to the qualification specification, assessment deadlines, the need for authentic work, and how the learner can make an appeal against an assessment decision

- **Assignment design:** should have a practical vocational focus and reference the grading criteria. A variety of assessment methods is encouraged. A schedule of assignments and assessment dates should be planned and monitored during delivery of the programme

- **Assessment Plan:** At the start of the programme the assessment plan needs to be agreed and signed off by the Lead Internal Verifier. The assessment plan is an important document which is required for standards verification. At the start of the Standards Verification process, the Standards Verifier will request a copy. The plan should include:

  - A list of all Assessors and the units they are assessing
  - A list of all Internal Verifiers and when Internal Verification will take place
  - Confirmation of the learners registered on the programme

- **Assessment of learner work:** should be to the published unit assessment and grading criteria only. Capping or limiting of learner grades is not allowed if work is submitted late and accepted for assessment.

- **Tracking assessment:** a secure audit trail must be maintained. It should record assessment decisions; internal verification documentation for assignments and learner work; learners' achievement both at unit level and at qualification level. These records will be held securely for 3 years after certification

- **Certification claims:** need to be based on accurate, audited records.

- **Annual Review:** of BTEC Qualifications including assessments and resources at centre.

Example: Assessment Policy

This is what an Assessment Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Assessment Policy

Aim:

- To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals

- To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to the required standard

- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

- To ensure a regular cycle of review of BTEC qualifications and resources that promote improvements.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are relevant and fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment

- Produce a clear and accurate assessment plan at the start of the programme/academic year

- Provide clear, published dates for handout of assignments and deadlines for assessment

- Assess learner's evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria

- Ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable

- Not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late

- Develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for *plagiarism & assessment* malpractice

- Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions

- Maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure

- Provide samples for standards verification as required by Pearson

- Monitor standards verification reports and undertake any remedial action required

- Share good assessment practice between all BTEC programme teams

- Ensure that BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all BTEC staff

- Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately.

- Ensure a regular cycle of annual evaluation and review of BTEC provision should focus on achievement and address delivery, assessment and operational issues and promote improvements that will have a positive impact on the learner experience.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

- **BTEC qualification specifications:** these provide guidance on assessment for each BTEC qualification. All staff teaching on BTEC programmes should have access to the relevant specification. They are published on our website

- **BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Assessment**: this provides guidance on internal assessments for First and Nationals

- **BTEC Centre Guides to Assessment:** Valuable resources for centres in planning, quality assuring and delivering BTEC programmes.

Internal Verification Policy

Purpose/scope

- That assessment is accurate, consistent, current, timely, valid, authentic and to BTEC standards

- That the assessment instruments (assignment briefs) are fit for purpose

- To quality assure the assessment of all BTEC programmes delivered by a centre

- To be part of an audit trail of learner achievement records

- To provide feedback to inform centre quality improvement.

Definitions/terminology

- **Internal Verification:** a centre devised quality assurance process which assures the assessment against the BTEC unit grading criteria. It ensures that assignments are fit for purpose

- **Standards Verification:** an external verification process used by Pearson to check that centre assignments, assessment decisions and internal verification processes are reaching the required standard

Responsibilities

- **Quality Nominee:** the Quality Nominee ensures that centre internal verification and standardisation processes are operating effectively. S/he acts as the centre coordinator and is the main point of contact for Pearson. The Quality Nominee ensures Pearson quality assurance reports are monitored and any required action is carried out

- **Lead Internal Verifier (BTEC Entry Level –Level 3):** a member of the programme team who oversees the implementation of an effective internal verification centre system in their subject area.

- **Internal Verifier:** a member of staff able to verify assessor decisions and validate assignments. The Internal Verifier records findings, gives assessor feedback, and oversees required action

Procedures

- **Staff briefing:** all Assessors, Lead Internal Verifiers and Internal Verifiers require regular briefing and updating on BTEC processes

- **Verification schedules:** annually agreed to cover all Assessors, units and assignments. Schedules should be drawn up at the beginning of the programme and monitored through the year

- **Internal verification of assignments:** carried out before the assignment briefs are given to learners, to ensure that they are fit for purpose, and that any recommendations are acted upon. Records of effective internal verification must be kept

- **Internal verification of assessment decisions:** must verify a sufficient sample of Assessor assessment and grading decisions to ensure accuracy. Assessors do not internally verify their own work. Assessor feedback and support should be given

- **Internal verification records:** must be correctly maintained and kept securely for 3 years after certification. We recommend that you use our standard templates for internal verification available on our website

- **Standards verification:** you should have in place monitoring and review procedures for Standards Verification outcomes. Procedures are required to deal with unsuccessful standards verification samples

Example: Internal

This is what an Internal Verification Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre

Internal Verification Policy

Aim:

- To ensure there is a Lead Internal Verifier in each principal subject area for Level 1-3 qualifications

- To ensure that Internal Verification is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and programme activity.

- To ensure that the Internal Verification procedure is open, fair and free from bias

- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

In order to do this, the centre will ensure that:

- Where required by the qualification, a Lead Internal Verifier is appropriately appointed for each subject area and *has completed standardisation with the Programme Team*

- Each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective Internal Verification systems in their subject area

- Staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures

- Effective Internal Verification roles are defined, maintained and supported

- Internal Verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff

- Standardised Internal Verification documentation is provided and used

- All centre assessment instruments (assignment briefs) are verified as fit for purpose

- An annual Internal Verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place

- An appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and Assessors is Internally Verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to the required standard

- Secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained

- The outcome of Internal Verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

- **BTEC qualification specifications:** These provide guidance on assessment for each BTEC qualification. All staff teaching on BTEC programmes must have access to the relevant specification. They are published on our website

- **BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification:** A valuable resource for centres in planning, quality assuring and delivering BTEC programmes available on our website

Appeals Policy

Purpose/scope

- That there are clear procedures for learners to enable them to enquire about, question or appeal an assessment decision

- That any appeal is recorded and documentation is retained for 18 months following the resolution of the appeal

- That the Head of Centre facilitates the learner's ultimate right of appeal to Pearson, once the centre's appeal procedure is exhausted.

Definitions/terminology

- **Appeal:** a request from a learner to revisit an assessment decision which s/he considers to disadvantage him/her

- **Appeals procedure:** a standard, time limited, sequenced and documented process for the centre and learner to follow when an appeal is made.

Responsibilities

- **Learner:** responsible for initiating the appeals procedure, in the required format, within a defined time frame, when s/he has reason to question an assessment decision

- **Assessor:** responsible for providing clear achievement feedback to learners. If assessment decisions are questioned, the Assessor is responsible for processing the learner's appeal within the agreed time

- **Internal Verifier/Lead Internal Verifier/Senior Management:** responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased

- **Head of Centre:** responsible for submitting an appeal in writing, to Pearson if the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the centre's internal appeals procedures.

Procedures

- **Learner induction:** Should inform the learner of the appeals procedure

- **Learner appeals procedures:** A staged procedure to determine whether the assessor:
  - used procedures that are consistent with Pearson's requirements
  - applied the procedures properly and fairly when arriving at judgements
  - made a correct judgement about the learner's work

- Appeals procedure stages:
  - **Stage 1 – Informal:** Learner consults with Assessor within a defined period of time following the assessment decision, to discuss an assessment decision. If unresolved, then the issues are documented before moving to stage 2
  - **Stage 2 – Review:** Review of assessment decisions by Manager and/or Internal Verifier/Lead Internal Verifier. Learner notified of findings and agrees or disagrees, in writing, with outcome. If unresolved, move to stage 3

- **Stage 3 – Appeal hearing:** Senior Management hears the appeal: last stage by the centre. If unresolved, move to stage 4
- **Stage 4 – External appeal:** The grounds for appeal and any supporting documentation must be submitted by the centre to Pearson within 14 days of the completion of Stage 4: a fee is levied
- **Recording appeals:** each stage should be recorded, dated and show either agreement or disagreement with decisions. Documents must be kept for a minimum of 18 months
- **Monitoring of appeals**: undertaken by Senior Management to inform development and quality improvement.

Example: Appeals Policy

This is what an Appeals Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Appeals Policy

Aim:

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision
- To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the Assessor at the earliest opportunity
- To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to Pearson, where appropriate
- To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure
- Record, track and validate any appeal
- Forward the appeal to Pearson when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted
- Keep appeals records for inspection by Pearson for a minimum of 18 months
- Have a staged *internal* appeals procedure
- Take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results
- Monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

- **BTEC qualification specifications:** These provide guidance on assessment for each BTEC qualification. All staff teaching on BTEC programmes should have access to the relevant specification.

- **Enquiries and Appeals Policy about Pearson Vocational qualifications and end point assessment:** This policy is for mainly centres and learners who want to make an appeal against a decision relating to internal assessment for our vocational qualifications or End Point Assessments for Apprenticeships

Plagiarism and Assessment Malpractice Policy

Purpose/scope

- That centres have policies and procedures in place to deal with malpractice

- To ensure that issues are dealt with in an open, fair and effective manner

- That centres provide appropriate deterrents and sanctions to minimise the risk of malpractice.

Definitions/terminology

- **Learner malpractice:** any action by the learner which has the potential to undermine the integrity and validity of the assessment of the learner's work. (plagiarism, collusion, cheating, etc.)

- **Assessor malpractice:** any deliberate action by an Assessor which has the potential to undermine the integrity of BTEC qualifications

- **Plagiarism:** taking and using another's thoughts, writings, inventions, etc. as one's own

- **Minor acts of learner malpractice:** handled by the Assessor by, for example, refusal to accept work for marking and learner being made aware of malpractice policy. Learner resubmits work in question

- **Major acts of learner malpractice:** extensive copying/plagiarism, 2nd or subsequent offence, inappropriate for the Assessor to deal with.

Responsibilities

- **Centre:** should seek proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages learners to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others

- **Assessor:** responsible for designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice and for checking the validity of the learner's work

- **Internal Verifier/Lead Internal Verifier:** responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work

- **Quality Nominee:** required to inform Pearson of any acts of malpractice

- **Heads of Centre or their nominees:** responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice.

Procedures

- Addressing learner malpractice:

  - Promote positive and honest study practices
  - Learners should declare that work is their own: check the validity of their work
  - Use learner induction and handbook to inform about malpractice and outcomes
  - Ensure learners use appropriate citations and referencing for research sources
  - Assessment procedures should help reduce and identify malpractice

- Addressing staff malpractice:

  - Staff BTEC induction and updating should include BTEC requirements
  - Use robust Internal Verification and audited record keeping

- Audit learner records, assessment tracking records and certification claims
- Dealing with malpractice:
  - Inform the individual of the issues and of the possible consequences
  - Inform the individual of the process and appeals rights
  - Give the individual the opportunity to respond
  - Investigate in a fair and equitable manner
  - Inform Pearson of any malpractice or attempted acts of malpractice, which have compromised assessment. Pearson will advise on further action required
  - Penalties should be appropriate to the nature of the malpractice under review
  - Gross misconduct should refer to learner and staff disciplinary procedures.

Example: Plagiarism and Assessment Malpractice Policy

This is what an Assessment Malpractice Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Plagiarism and assessment Malpractice Policy

Aim:

- To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
- To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
- To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
- To report all alleged, suspected, and actual incidents of malpractice to Pearson
- To protect the integrity of this centre and BTEC qualifications.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- *Foster a culture in which all learners and staff feel able to report any concerns of wrongdoing by anyone*.
- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- Ask learners to declare that their work is their own
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- *Advise learners of the centre's rules regarding whether AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) can be used and, if so,*

- *Require learners to acknowledge the use of artificial intelligence (AI) sources and provide copies of any interactions with AI tools made in the production of their work*

- *Where required, gather information for an investigation in accordance with Pearson instructions. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre / Principal / CEO and all personnel linked to the allegation.* It will proceed through the following stages:

  ***

- Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven

- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made

- Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made

- Document all stages of any investigation.

- *Report to Pearson all alleged, suspected and actual incidents of malpractice in accordance with JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures* **JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures**

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the following penalties / sanctions:

***

Links

Centre guidance dealing with malpractice and maladministration: This guide is for all Pearson approved centres delivering vocational qualifications to use as a basis for their own internal malpractice policies. It includes advice on how to prevent malpractice and maladministration and what action we will take where there is alleged or suspected malpractice and maladministration.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy including exemptions

Purpose/scope

- To set out how and when Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be used as a method of assessment for Pearson's vocational qualifications.

- To provide guidance on how the RPL and exemption process can be managed so that evidence of learning meets standards.

- To provide guidance on claiming exemptions

Definitions/terminology

- **Recognition of Prior Learning:** a method of assessment that considers whether students can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through knowledge, understanding or skills they already possess, and so do not need to develop through a course of learning.

- **Exemptions:** the facility for a learner to claim credits from some of the achievement requirements of a qualification, using evidence of certificated achievement deemed to be of equivalent value.

Responsibilities

- **Programme Leader:** responsible for ensuring that centre has expertise of managing RPL and exemption, learner is informed about the process and learner evidence is accessible for quality assurance.

- **Assessor:** the person responsible for making judgements about a learner's past learning and experience in relation to unit standards and using further assessments to fill any gaps in learner's evidence in case of an RPL.

- **Internal verifier:** a member of staff able to verify assessor decisions and validate assessment methods for RPL.

Procedures for RPL

- Awareness, information and guidance

- Explain to learners the process of claiming a unit using RPL and how long the process will take.

- Pre assessment, gathering evidence and giving information

- To help the learner in gathering evidence create an assessment plan or tracking document so that evidence gathered meets the standards of the unit, or part of a unit.

- Assessing and documenting evidence

- Evaluate all the evidence using the standards set in qualification or unit being claimed. If there are gaps in the learners work through RPL, then further assessment methods must be used to create enough evidence to be able to award unit. Keep records of assessment against prior learning.

- Quality Assurance

Evidence collected through the RPL process will be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures that is used for any other internal assessment methods.

Procedures for Exemptions

- Check Pearson qualification specification if any unit exemptions are specified for learners having certificated achievement from other awarding bodies.
- If not, then verify that the credits claimed for exemptions are of equivalent value to the unit credits of a Pearson qualification.
- Verify that the unit credits fall within the rules of combination of Pearson qualification.

Example: Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) including exemptions

This is what a Recognition of Prior Learning Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) including exemptions

Aim:

- To set out how and when Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) can be used as a method of assessment for Pearson's vocational qualifications.
- To provide guidance on how the RPL process can be managed so that evidence of learning meets standards
- To ensure there is a record of learner evidence against prior learning and that these are available for quality assurance.
- To set out how to use exemptions to claim credits from some of the achievement requirements of a qualification, using evidence of certificated achievement deemed to be of equivalent value.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Explain to learners the process of claiming a unit using RPL and how long the process will take.
- Check that the evidence provided by the learner for RPL has been achieved before the start of their course of study
- Register learner as soon as they officially start to gather evidence of past learning and experience.
- Help the learner in gathering evidence by creating an assessment plan or tracking document.
- Evaluate all the evidence using the learning outcomes and assessment criteria from the qualification or unit being claimed.
- Ensure if there any gaps in the learners work through RPL, then further assessment methods must be used to create enough evidence to be able to award the learning outcome for the whole unit.

- Keep records of assessment against prior learning and so that these are available for verification.

- Evidence collected through the RPL process will be assessed and verified through the same quality assurance procedures that is used for any other internal assessment methods.

- Explain to learner the process of exemptions

- Check Pearson qualification specification if any unit exemptions are specified for learners having certificated achievement from other awarding bodies.

- If not, then verify that the credits claimed for exemptions are of equivalent value to the unit credits of a Pearson qualification. To verify this, check the following:
  - Unit level
  - Credit value
  - Qualification and subject content.

- Verify that the unit credits fall within the rules of combination of Pearson qualification.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process: This policy is about prior learning and recommends ways a learner can meet any requirements while avoiding repetition of learning and assessment.

Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Purpose/scope

- To provide guidance on how to apply special considerations and reasonable adjustments to internally assessed units.

Definitions/terminology

- **Reasonable adjustments**: is an allowance applied to a Pearson vocational internally assessed unit or qualification to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty which would place a learner at a disadvantage in an assessment

- **Special considerations**: is a post-assessment allowance to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment.

Responsibilities

- **Head of Centre:** Apply and manage any reasonable adjustments for your learners, in line with Pearson policy "Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units'.

- **Assessment Board:** Apply special consideration for BTEC Higher National learners in line with above Pearson Policy

Procedures for Reasonable adjustments

- Identify and apply actions to be taken

- As each learner's circumstances are different, each case needs to be reviewed separately so that the best type of support can be put in place for the learner.

- Assessment

- The work produced following the application of a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners and be available for external quality assurance, where required.

- Recording

- Record the reasonable adjustment using appropriate form and store it with the learner records for three years. The record needs to be available for Pearson or a regulator, if requested.

- Procedures for Special Considerations

- Application

- Apply to Pearson by completing an appropriate form.

- Certification

- Claim certificates only after Pearson has approved special consideration

Example: Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

This is what a Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Aim:

- To support access to qualifications for learners who are eligible for reasonable adjustment and/or special consideration in internal assessments, without compromising the assessment of the skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured

- To reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty which would place a learner at a disadvantage in an assessment.

- To ensure there is a record of reasonable adjustment and approval for special consideration

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Identify in advance whether any action is needed to help reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which will place a learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment.

- Ensure that the reasonable adjustment does not affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes or give a learner an advantage over other learners undertaking the same or similar assessments.

- Put in place Reasonable adjustment before the learner starts the assessment.

- Need to record the reasonable adjustment using form RA1, and store it with the learner records for three years.

- The record needs to be available for Pearson or a regulator, if requested.

- The work produced following the application of a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners and be available for external quality assurance, where required.

- Request for a special consideration through form C1 to Pearson to apply to an assessment result.

- Not claim Certificates until the outcome of the special consideration has been confirmed by Pearson.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Links

Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internal assessed units: This guide is for centres that are seeking to apply a reasonable adjustment to a Pearson vocational internally assessed unit or qualification to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty which would place a learner at a disadvantage in an assessment. Where these reasonable

adjustments have not been successful, we have provided information about how to request for a special consideration to be applied to an assessment result.

Equal Opportunities Policy

Purpose/scope

- There should be equal opportunities for all those wishing to access the qualifications.

- To ensure BTEC qualifications are available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards

- To ensure BTEC qualifications are free from any barriers that restrict access and progression

Definitions/terminology

- **Equal Opportunity**: involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, students with and without disabilities are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive qualification design.

Responsibilities

- **Senior Management:** responsible for overseeing that the policy is implemented in line Pearson's expectations.

- **Head** of **Centre: P**utting actions in place to ensure access to BTEC qualifications to everyone who is capable of reaching standards.

Procedures

- Recruit students with integrity.

- Take account of the support available to the student within the centre during their programme of study and any specific support that might be necessary to allow the student to access the assessment for the qualification.

- Consult Pearson policy documents on students with particular requirements.

- Review Equality of opportunities throughout the learning experience of a student.

- Have an appeals procedure

Example: Equal Opportunities Policy

This is what an Equal Opportunities Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Equal Opportunities Policy

Aim:

- Ensuring qualifications are accessible to the learners taking our qualifications

- Ensuring equality of opportunity for learners to access our internal assessments

- Ensuring fairness in our application of access arrangements

- Ensure we fulfill our duties under the Equality Act 2010 (UK) and any other equalities legislation relevant locally

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Always consider a request relating to access to qualifications that we receive, except where acceptance of the request is not logistically possible or where acceptance would undermine the criteria for the assessment.

- Monitor and review of equality throughout the process of recruiting and certification of learners.

- Examine and monitor data relating to candidate achievement in order to detect and mitigate accidental bias.

- Strive to improve the accessibility of customer-facing IT systems, or to introduce new systems.

- Fulfill obligation to meet the access arrangements requested for our learners in a way that does not disadvantage either them or their peers

- Have an effective and inclusive appeals procedure

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose/scope

- Define what is meant by conflict of interest.

- This policy provides guidance to all individuals at centre including those involved in delivery and assessment of BTEC qualifications, on how to deal with possible conflicts of interest.

- Sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at each level in the organisation.

Definitions/terminology

Conflict of Interest: is a situation in which an individual, or organisation, has competing interests or loyalties. In the case of an individual, the conflict of interest could compromise or appear to compromise their decisions if it is not properly managed.

Responsibilities

- **Senior Management:** The ultimate responsibility for this policy, dissemination of the policy and management of potential and actual conflicts of interest rests with the senior management.

- **Centre Head:** Log and Resolve conflict of interest and escalate to Senior Management issues which are not resolved.

- **Assessors/IV:** Disclose any potential conflict of interest while designing/internally verifying/checking assessments.

- **All Staff including Senior Management:** Familiarise themselves with the policy and disclose any potential conflict of interest.

Procedures

- Disseminate policy to all staff.

- All staff to familiarise themselves with Policy at induction and annually.

- Everyone at Centre to disclose potential conflict of interest

- If someone is unsure whether a conflict of interest might arise, they should discuss this with their superiors first

- Set responsibility to log and resolve or escalate issues of conflict of interest.

- Review procedures in all departments to anticipate areas of potential conflicts of interest

Example: Conflict of Interest Policy

This is what a Conflict of Interest Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Conflict of Interest Policy

Aim:

- Ensure everyone at centre understands what is meant by conflict of interest.

- Ensure that everyone understands that the policy applies to all individuals including those involved with any aspects of the delivery, assessment, or any other activity connected with BTEC qualifications

- Ensure individuals should disclose any activity that might create a potential conflict of interest.

- Provide guidance to individuals at centre, on how to deal with possible conflicts of interest that may arise

- Sets out the responsibilities for managing conflict of interest at each level in the organisation.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Define Conflict of interest

- Communicate policy to everyone and conduct training to familiarise all with policy and meaning of conflict of interest

- Check that the contracts with their employees set out the obligations on them to report to their managers conflicts of interest arising from activities that they undertake.

- Ensure that all staff including Senior Management declare at the start of a cohort if any learner at the centre is a family member or relative or friend.

- Head of centre must log and resolve the issue or escalate to Senior Management for resolution of any conflict of interest issue faced by staff involved in delivery and assessment of BTEC Qualifications.

- Review procedures in all departments to anticipate areas of potential conflicts of interest

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Guidance to Centres on Complaints

Purpose/Scope

To support centres with their responsibility to:

- have a clear written procedure in place for learners to raise concerns and complaints about examinations or assessment and have these addressed

- ensure learners are aware of the procedure and know where to find a written copy

- ensure complaints and all related correspondence are recorded and documented for an appropriate time period. This should be based on a centre's document retention policy.

Definitions/Terminology

- **Complaint**: An expression of concern or dissatisfaction from a learner which needs to be investigated and addressed by the centre via a formal complaints channel.

- **Complaints procedure**: a standard, time-limited, sequenced and documented process for the centre and learner to follow when a complaint is made

Responsibilities

- **Learner**: responsible for invoking the complaints procedure, via the appropriate channel, when s/he has a complaint.

- **Centre**: to address the learner's concerns in accordance with its published complaints procedure, which should include timescales for acknowledgement and resolution of the complaint and at least one point of escalation for the learner if they are not happy with the first review of their complaint. The centre should update the learner if it is not able to meet the timescales published in its complaints procedure, and set a new expectation on the time frame for a response

Procedures

- **Learner induction:** the learner should be informed of the centre's complaint procedure and where it is available.

- **Learner complaints procedure:** The procedure which will allow a centre to address its learners' concerns or complaints. The centre should have the opportunity to investigate and respond to a learner's concerns before Pearson becomes involved (with the exception of malpractice cases).

Possible complaints procedure stages:

- **Stage 1 - Informal:** learner lets an appropriate member of centre staff (e.g. teacher or exams officer) know about their concerns and the member of staff attempts to satisfactorily resolve any issues. The outcome should be documented and if unresolved, move to Stage 2.

- **Stage 2 - Formal review**: learner submits their complaint through the formal centre complaints channel and appropriate manager at the centre investigates and addresses their concerns. Learner notified of findings and outcome in writing. If remain dissatisfied, move to Stage 3.

- **Stage 3 - Formal review at a point of escalation:** learner escalates their complaint through the formal complaints channel and appropriate senior manager at the centre investigates and

addresses their ongoing concerns. Learner notified of findings and outcome in writing. If remain dissatisfied, move to Stage 4.

- **Stage 4 - Formal review at final point of escalation**: learner escalates their complaint through the formal complaints channel and Board of Governors reviews the case to address the learner's ongoing concerns. Learner notified of findings and outcome in writing. If remain dissatisfied, move to Stage

- **Stage 5** - Escalation to Pearson for information on next steps*. Information on the Pearson complaints procedure can be found at qualifications.pearson.com/complaintsandfeedback

Please note that once a learner has exhausted a centre's complaints procedure, there will only be certain matters Pearson can then assist with. We cannot assist with matters which are between the centre and learner, for example, fee disputes or complaints about the delivery of a qualification.

- **Recording complaints**: all complaints correspondence should be recorded in writing and dated. Letters of complaint and their responses should be kept for the appropriate time period based on the centre's own document retention policy.

- **Monitoring of complaints and outcomes:** undertaken by senior management at the centre to inform development and quality improvement.

- **Support with the resolution of complaints**: At any point during the investigation of a complaint, a centre can contact Pearson for information, support or advice. We would not normally get involved with a complaint until the centre complaints procedure has been fully exhausted, and there are some centre matters which we are not able to support with, for example, fees. A centre should also forward Pearson a copy of all complaints received related to Pearson qualifications, which are not resolved within 28 days of receipt, and co-operate with Pearson in respect of any action Pearson needs to take to resolve such matters.

Example: Complaints Policy

This is what a Complaints Procedure Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy by using those sections relevant to your centre. Customise and badge it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Complaints Policy

Aim

- To give learners the opportunity to raise matters of concern about their examinations or assessment via a formal and documented process.

- To protect the interests of all learners.

- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of complaint to Pearson, where it is appropriate.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- inform all learners of the complaints procedure at induction and make it accessible to all learners

- have a staged complaints procedure

- record, track and respond to all complaints in line with the complaints procedure

- take appropriate action to try and resolve learner concerns

- monitor complaints to inform quality improvement

- forward the complaint to Pearson, should it not be resolved within 28 days of receipt

- keep complaints records for the appropriate document retention period.

Procedure*

Please refer to the 'possible complaints procedure stages' outlined above for an example of what your procedure may look like.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Contingency and Adverse Effects Policy

(to include withdrawal of centre approval status and protection of the Learner Interest in the case of such a withdrawal)

Purpose/scope

- To protect the interest of learners on BTEC programmes in the event of any disruption to their course of study

- To always maintain the integrity of BTEC programmes despite the disruptions

Definitions/terminology

- **Contingency:** a possible but not very likely future event or condition. A contingency arrangement is one that is intended to be used if a possible event actually occurs.

- **Adverse effects:** are harmful or abnormal results of an event.

Responsibilities

- **Senior Management:** overall responsibility of implementing this policy and promoting a culture of contingency planning in the centre. Report any serious disruptions to Pearson.

- **Head of Centre:** report any disruption to senior management and take mitigating action as per policy.

Procedures

- Ensure contingencies that may affect learners are determined

- Arrangements are in place to deal with such contingencies

- Centre staff are aware of contingency arrangements so that their response is consistent

- Review and update the appropriateness of such arrangements

- Notify Pearson of any issues which put at risk the centre's ability to meet Pearson's centre approval criteria

- In case of withdrawal of centre approval centre will take all steps to protect learners' interest

Example: Contingency and Adverse Effects Policy

This is what a Contingency and Adverse effects Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy. Use the sections that are relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Contingency and Adverse Effects Policy

Aim:

- That in the event of any disruption to delivery, assessment and certification of BTEC programmes, contingency arrangements are in place to manage adverse effects.

- To protect learners' interest as far as possible

- To always maintain the integrity of BTEC programmes

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Promote a culture of contingency planning in all processes

- Ensure contingencies that may affect learners are determined

- Ensure arrangements are in place to deal with such contingencies

- Ensure centre staff are aware of contingency arrangements so that their response is consistent

- Evaluate the appropriateness of such arrangements

- Update contingency arrangements

- Report to Pearson any serious disruptions which may impact safe certification

- Notify Pearson of any issues which put at risk the centre's ability to meet Pearson's centre approval criteria

- Take all steps to protect learners' interest in case of withdrawal of centre approval.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Policy (including public liability cover)

Purpose/scope

- To ensure a safe and healthy working environment for employees, learners and others.

- To ensure all learners and members of centre staff develop health and safety awareness

- To comply with local health and safety regulations.

Definitions/terminology

- **Risk Assessment:** the evaluation of the risks to health and safety that arise in the working environment and then putting in place measures to control them.

- **Public Liability cover:** it's an insurance intended to protect centre from third party claims made by a learner or another member of the public if they are injured or their property damaged at the working environment.

Responsibilities

- **Senior Management:** overall responsibility of implementing this policy and promoting a culture of Health and Safety. Define individual responsibilities for health and safety matters

- **Head of Centre:** undertake personal responsibility for the assessment and subsequent control of health and safety risks.

- **Centre Staff and Learners:** including temporary staff to develop awareness of working safely.

Procedures

- Conduct Risk Assessment

- Promote standards of health and safety

- Provide and maintain appropriate systems to ensure a safe and healthy working environment

- Make available resources to fulfil this policy.

- Provide all employees and learners, including temporary staff, with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision that they need to work safely and efficiently

- Ensure that all work placement providers or external partners are checked for suitability in terms of health and safety,

- Define individual responsibilities for health and safety matters.

- Conduct periodic reviews and revise the policy where necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

Example: Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Policy (including public liability cover)

This is what a Risk assessment and Health and Safety (including public liability cover) Policy might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy. Use the sections that are relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Policy (including public liability cover)

Aim:

- To fulfill duties as an employer and learning provider to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees, learners, visitors and others who may be affected by its undertaking, in so far as is reasonably practicable.

- To proactively manage health and safety within the workplace not only as a legal duty but also as good practice which will prevent work related incidents/accidents and ill health, and increase employee and learner morale and motivation.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Conduct Risk Assessment for continual improvement of health and safety management and performance and prevention of injury and ill health.

- Promote standards of health and safety that will, as a minimum, comply with the provisions and requirements of the local acts, all other statutory provisions as well as our own standards.

- Provide and maintain appropriate systems to ensure a safe and healthy working/learning environment and to protect employees, learners and others from harm, in so far as is reasonably practicable

- Make available such resources to fulfil this policy; in the form of finance, equipment, personnel and time as are necessary

- Define individual responsibilities for health and safety matters.

- Provide all employees and learners, including temporary staff, with sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision that they need to work safely and efficiently.

- Ensure that all work placement providers or external partners are checked for suitability in terms of health and safety,

- Provide and maintain a system to ensure that accidents and 'near misses' are fully investigated and appropriate action taken to reduce the likelihood of their reoccurrence.

- Conduct periodic reviews and revise the policy where necessary to ensure it remains relevant and effective, and to make policies easily available to all employees and learners.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Safeguarding Learners Policy Template

Introduction

This policy has been developed by [Name of school/ college]

Key objectives

Our primary consideration is to ensure that no learner is at risk of abuse or is harmed.

Our key objectives are:

- Do all that we can to ensure that learners are not at risk of abuse in our school/college,

- Do all that we can to ensure that all learners are free from sexual harassment while within our school/college or while receiving a service from us; whether the harassment is from employees, peers or contractors; and

- Recognise and take appropriate action, when a child, young person or vulnerable adult might have been abused, including in the community or family.

To meet our objectives, we commit to:

- Comply with all relevant laws and regulations,

- Set overarching principles to help our employees think about our safeguarding / child protection responsibilities

Responsibilities

- Define procedures and provide guidance on the safeguarding/child protection standards we expect and the actions our people should take to avoid risk and to respond to cases of abuse,

- Communicate our Policy and guidelines to our employees, contractors, parents and others interested in our approach including through publishing our policy,

- Ensure all our people are offered training to build their skills in avoiding, identifying, responding and reporting cases of harm,

- Monitor and document performance and apply any learning from these Safeguarding / Child Protection Learning Principles.

[Name of school] has developed a Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy [Date] and as part of that policy, we have defined a set of procedures to follow as well as guidelines on other issues. We will also signpost other policies and procedures that are complementary to safeguarding /child protection.

Our Safeguarding/Child Protection learners' principles

- Best interests of the learner are paramount and shall be the primary consideration in our decision making.

- We are learner centered and have adopted a rights-based approach. This helps us keep the rights of students, children and vulnerable adults to care, nurturing and equality of protection sharply in focus in all our activities

- Equality of protection to ensure that students have the same positive opportunity and to engage in our activities safely regardless of their gender, ability, race, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, circumstances or age.

- Vulnerable children and adults require attention to optimize their safety needs and promote their access to important opportunities.

- We take responsibility to meet our obligations regarding our duty of care to all our students. This means ensuring our products are safe and that we protect children and vulnerable adults across all our activities and facilities.

- We reject the use of child or forced labor in our educational activities and in our business relationships.

- We make clear our standards to contractors and suppliers and audit those we identify as being high risk.

- We recognise and acknowledge an element of risk can exist in many learning situations, and while we may never be able to eliminate this completely, we will do all we can to reduce or limit its impact.

- We are honest and transparent in our approach and publicly disclose both this policy and the way we work to try and protect all our students and children and vulnerable adults.

- In general, excepting where there is an apparent immediate threat to life or limb, all personally identifiable information concerning students should only be shared and handled on a need to know basis and where we have the express consent of the data subject for the nominated purpose. Access to the information must be necessary for the conduct of a role relevant to our School / college Only individuals who have legitimate reasons to access the information can receive it.

- We support and train those working within [School/ College] to recognise and respond to student concerns, to concerns in relation to child and vulnerable adult protection risks and incidences.

- We have a dedicated person (s) in place to take responsibility for the protection of children and vulnerable adults

- We work with others to protect children and vulnerable adults. This could include law enforcement or child welfare agencies where necessary. We require incidents relevant to this policy in respect of all students to be reported in a timely way both internally and to the appropriate authorities, linked to proper recording of the relevant details.

- Independent monitoring of the implementation of the policy is important to us, and we would share our policy with all relevant people and agencies.

Learner Support Policy

Purpose

- To provide a supportive learning environment responsive to learner needs
- To provide appropriate resources to learners who need additional learning support
- To provide pastoral support in addition to academic support to learners

Definitions/terminologies

- **Additional Learning support**: additional support provided by the Centre during the learner's studies but outside of an assessment situation (for which see Special Considerations and Reasonable adjustments policy).
- **Pastoral Support**: support for overall wellbeing of the learner.

Responsibilities

- **Head of Centre:** responsible that systems, facilities and staff are in place for learner support
- **Centre Staff:** are aware of their responsibilities

Procedures:

- Commit resources for learner support
- Provide information to learners about resources available
- Conduct learner sessions at the start of the programme for orientation.
- Identify learners needing additional support and put in place resources for them
- Regularly Monitor learner academic and pastoral needs by tutors and centre staff

Example: Learner Support Policy

This is what a **Learner Support Policy** might look like. You may use this as a starting point for your own policy. Use the sections that are relevant to your centre. Customise it for your centre. Specific procedures, based on your policy and relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Your centre:

Learner Support Policy

Aim:

- To provide a supportive learning environment responsive to individual learner's academic and pastoral needs
- To identify those who need additional learning support

- To inform learners of the resources and facilities available for their successful completion of the programme.

In order to do this, the centre will:

- Make available to learners sufficient general and specialist resources.

- Publish clearly resources available for successful completion of the programmes

- Regularly monitor all resources to ensure they are sufficient, fit for purpose and safe to use.

- Carry out comprehensive learner induction/orientation

- Ensure that all external partners are checked for suitability in terms of resources

- Regularly Monitor learner academic and pastoral needs by tutors and centre staff

- Identify learners who may need additional support and put in place the required support.

This policy will be reviewed every *** months by ***.

Appendix: BTEC Approval Criteria

The criteria of approval are mentioned in the following forms:

- **Pearson International Vocational Centre Recognition Form**
- **Pearson International Vocational Qualification Approval Form**

    Contact your Regional Development Manager for further support with the BTEC Approvals process.

In addition, the Head of centre will confirm that the centre will comply with the following terms and conditions.

International Vocational Centre and Qualification Approval Terms and Conditions

1. These terms & conditions

1.1 This document sets out Pearson terms & conditions for approved centres &, together with your centre approval application form, forms our contract with you.

1.2 From time to time we may need to amend these terms & conditions. We will inform you when a change has been made & publish any amended terms & conditions on our website.

1.3 These terms & conditions shall be governed by & interpreted in accordance with English law & the parties shall submit to the jurisdiction of the English courts.

2. Pearson service levels

2.1 Pearson has set out in its Customer Pledge information about the service levels offered by Pearson & the timescales within which centres can expect delivery of the services. The JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, published annually on JCQ's website & linked below at section 3.3, also includes information on the services your centre can expect from awarding organisations.

General requirements I confirm my centre will:

3.1 Take all reasonable steps to ensure that Pearson is able to comply with its General Conditions of Recognition as required by the qualifications, examinations & assessments' regulators for England, Wales & Northern Ireland, & where appropriate with SQA Accreditation's regulatory requirements.

3.2 Adhere to all of Pearson's policies & procedures including those set out in the Pearson information manual as amended from time to time.

3.3 Adhere to JCQ (& where applicable, Ofqual, SQA, Qualifications Wales, CCEA &, OfS & QAA) policies & procedures as amended from time to time.

3.4 Cooperate with Pearson in respect of any quality assurance processes, malpractice investigations & the management of complaints.

3.5 Deliver qualifications in accordance with the law including any relevant safeguarding, diversity, copyright, & data protection laws. Notify Pearson of any issues which might affect my centre's ability to meet Pearson's requirements, including any issues which have the potential to harm the interests of any learner.

3.6 Deliver Pearson approved qualifications only at the address & in the country notified in the approval application, unless notified to & approved by Pearson;

3.7 Ensure that its staff & representatives at all times treat Pearson staff & representatives respectfully & without threat of or actual verbal or physical abuse.

3.8 Take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of learners in the event that my organisation withdraws from qualification delivery for any reason.

4. Data Protection & Information Security

4.1 My centre will comply with all of its obligations as a Data Controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 & General Data Protection Regulations.

4.2 Pearson, as an awarding organisation, is also a Data Controller for the purposes of that legislation but relies upon my centre to provide candidates with the appropriate transparency information. My centre will provide candidates with the JCQ document Information for candidates – Privacy Notice, General & Vocational Qualifications, at the point of registration or examination entry.

4.3 My centre will share candidate personal data, including name, address, gender, date of birth & academic performance with Pearson so that Pearson can perform its role as an awarding organisation. My centre will also provide Pearson with sensitive personal data such as race & health where it is appropriate.

4.4 Pearson will use the personal data supplied by my centre to examine & award qualifications, to maintain a comprehensive archive of candidates' examination results & may also share that information with educational agencies & regulators such as the Department for Education, local authorities, UCAS & the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

4.5 My centre will ensure that only authorised persons who have been trained on & understand their obligations in connection with the processing of personal data shall have access to Pearson services used for the management of learner information.

4.6 Pearson & my centre shall each retain the data they hold in accordance with their data retention policies & are each responsible for responding to any requests from an individual in connection with any shared personal data they hold.

4.7 As data controllers in common my centre & Pearson shall each be responsible for notifying regulators & affected data subjects in the event of a data security breach in connection with any personal data in their possession which requires notification in accordance with applicable data protection legislation. However, in the event of such a breach affecting shared personal data the centre & Pearson shall also inform each other of that breach as soon as is reasonably practicable.

4.8 As controllers in common my centre & Pearson are each responsible to individuals & to regulators for the processing of personal data in their care & shall explain that to any individuals who wish to complain about the handling of personal data or to a regulator if appropriate.

5. Marketing

5.1 My centre will not undertake any activity or advertising that could bring the name of Pearson into disrepute.

5.2 My centre will not use any JCQ (or where applicable Ofqual, SQA, Qualifications Wales, CCEA, OfS or QAA) name or logo without consent from the owner.

5.3 My centre will only use logos belonging to and/or licensed to Pearson with Pearson's written consent or in accordance with Pearson's branding & marketing guidelines.

6. Grant & Withdrawal of Approval

6.1 I understand & accept that Pearson is not obliged to grant approval status to my centre & may at its discretion decline to grant centre approval without giving any reason for this. I further understand & accept that there is no right of appeal in respect of any decision by Pearson not to grant approval to my centre.

6.2 I understand that Pearson reserves the right to withdraw centre approval and / or qualification approval if Pearson considers, in its absolute discretion, that any of the events set out in Pearson's Policy on the Removal of Centre & Programme Approval entitling Pearson to withdraw approval from a centre has occurred.

6.3 I understand & accept that Pearson might be required to notify other awarding organisations & other parties as necessary such as regulatory authorities of any withdrawal of centre approval.

7. Financial Arrangements

7.1 Pearson's fees list is published on Pearson's website here.

7.2 More general information about Pearson fees can be found here.

7.3 My centre will comply with Pearson's terms & conditions for payment of invoices & with any minimum spend requirements Pearson communicates to it from time to time.

7.4 Each party's aggregate liability to the other in respect of any loss or damage suffered by either party arising out of or in connection with the centre approval agreement, whether in contract, tort (including negligence) or in any other way shall not exceed the amount of the fees paid by your centre to Pearson in the twelve months preceding the breach.

7.5 Neither party shall be liable for any loss of profits, business or opportunity, loss of goodwill or reputation or any indirect or consequential loss or damage suffered or incurred by the other party or any third party arising out of or in connection with the centre approval agreement.

7.6 If VAT is payable on Pearson's services, this will be chargeable in addition to the fees.

8. Vocational Centres Only

The following provisions apply exclusively to centres approved to or applying for approval to offer vocational qualifications:

I confirm my centre:

8.1 Is fully committed to employing, training & updating a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff to ensure appropriate management, delivery, assessment & quality assurance as per qualification requirements;

8.2 Understands the need to clearly define & allocate the roles, responsibilities, authorities & accountabilities of the assessment & verification team across all sites;

8.3 Will operate required internal/external assessments in full accordance with Pearson, JCQ &, as applicable, Ofqual, SQA, Qualifications Wales, CCEA, QAA, OfS & other relevant standards setting body policies & procedures;

8.4 (a) Will retain evidence of learner work for a minimum period of twelve (12) weeks following certification of a learner. Before this end of this 12 week period Pearson may request that centres retain learner work until the next verification cycle

(b) For qualifications that operate under the work-based learning quality assurance model (I.e. operate on a Direct Claims Status system) centres must retain all learner evidence (including assessment & verification documentation) for learners that have been certificated in between standards verifications (in some cases this could be up to a year);

8.5 Will retain records of assessment & internal verification for a minimum period of three years following certification of the learner;

8.6 Will monitor the approval & accreditation period for all of the qualifications approved & seek re-approval as and when required;

8.7 Understands that learners will be informed by Pearson of their registration & certification status.

9. Higher National Qualifications Only

The following provisions apply exclusively to centres approved to or applying for approval to offer Higher National qualifications:

I confirm my centre will:

9.1 Complete Pearson's Distance Learning Self-Assessment Form & submit it to Pearson alongside our completed Declaration if we wish to deliver by way of distance learning;

9.2 Annually register all active Pearson BTEC Higher National students on HN Global (or other such resources platform as stipulated by Pearson) within the timeframes as set by Pearson;

9.3 Register all Pearson BTEC Higher National students with Pearson via Edexcel Online;

9.4 Ensure that all Pearson BTEC Higher National students are registered on the correct mode of study within Edexcel Online;

9.5 Pay the annual student registration administration fee for each student, from their second year of study, & for each subsequent year whilst the student remains on programme;

9.6 Comply with the requirements as set out in the Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals Quality Handbook(s);

9.7 Fully support Pearson's centre/qualification monitoring process incorporating timely annual completion & submission of Pearson's BTEC Higher Nationals Annual Programme Monitoring Report (APMR), & including, but not limited to, allowing nominated representatives of Pearson, full access to all relevant records, premises & students, which in exceptional circumstances can include short notice & or unannounced visits;

9.8 Facilitate the engagement of Pearson BTEC Higher National students in Pearson's Annual Student Survey;

9.9 Inform Pearson BTEC Higher National students that they might in some circumstances be able to refer certain complaints that are not resolved by my centre to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA);

9.10 Accept that approval to deliver Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals programmes will have a student number cap, be time bound & mode bound

10. International Centres Only

The following provisions apply only to all types of centres located outside the United Kingdom applying for centre or qualification approval or re-approval:

10.1 My centre will research the need for & obtain, prior to the delivery of any programme, at its own responsibility & expense, all necessary licences, permissions or other form of authorisation required to operate as a centre in the jurisdiction in which the centre seeks approval. Pearson disclaims all liability in connection with & arising from the need for & procurement of or failure to procure any & all such licences, permissions or authorisations.

10.2 I understand that circumstances might arise during the approval application process or during the centre approval itself in respect of economic or political sanctions placed on individuals, companies or countries, or acts or threats of military conflict or terror which make it impossible for Pearson to grant approval or to continue with the centre approval. In such a case, I understand that Pearson will not be held liable for any harm, losses, costs or damage arising from the need: to suspend or abandon the centre approval application or the approval itself; or, at its discretion, to request that the centre re-apply at a later date.

10.3 In some countries there may be a requirement to deduct an amount of tax (often called 'withholding tax') from payments to overseas jurisdictions. Where my centre is required by law to make a deduction or withholding from a payment to Pearson for any taxes, my centre will be liable to gross up any amount due as if the withholding were not required. Should my centre require assistance obtaining a standard Pearson certificate of residence to provide to the relevant Governmental Authority to support that payments by my centre to Pearson:

-are exempt from such deductions or withholding; or

-benefit from reduced rates (for example under a double taxation treaty),

10.4 Pearson shall endeavour to provide such standard Pearson certificate of residence. Should my centre legally require valid documentation over & above a standard Pearson certificate of residence to obtain such exemption or reduction from withholding tax, my centre will be obligated to provide proof of such legal requirements under local legislation.

10.5 For the avoidance of doubt, Pearson will not be liable for indirect taxes required by law in jurisdictions outside of the UK; my centre will be liable for compliance with & payments for indirect

taxes in such overseas jurisdictions, where applicable. If VAT is payable on Pearson's services, this will be chargeable in addition to the fees. In the event that you are liable to self assess VAT on Pearson's fees under the reverse charge mechanism, you agree to undertake the necessary calculations & declarations due under local tax laws.

11. Signature & Declaration

11.1 I am the Head, Principal or Chief Executive of the centre, or am authorised by my centre to enter into this binding Agreement.	
11.2 My centre will notify Pearson immediately if there is a change in the head of centre or ownership of the centre.	
Authorised signature*	
Print name	
Position within organisation	
Date of submission	

*your email address will be accepted as confirmation of your agreement