



Guide to adopting HN Flex

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Contents

1

How to choose and build your programme

2

Quality assurance for HN Flex

3

Programme Approval

4

Registering Learners (Edexcel Online)

5

Certification

6

Progression after completing Flex units

How to choose and build your programme

Selecting your units

You can browse and choose 15 credit units from the RQF Higher National qualifications on the Pearson website. This lets you build a short course or modular programme that fits the needs of your learners.

HN Flex is available in four credit sizes:

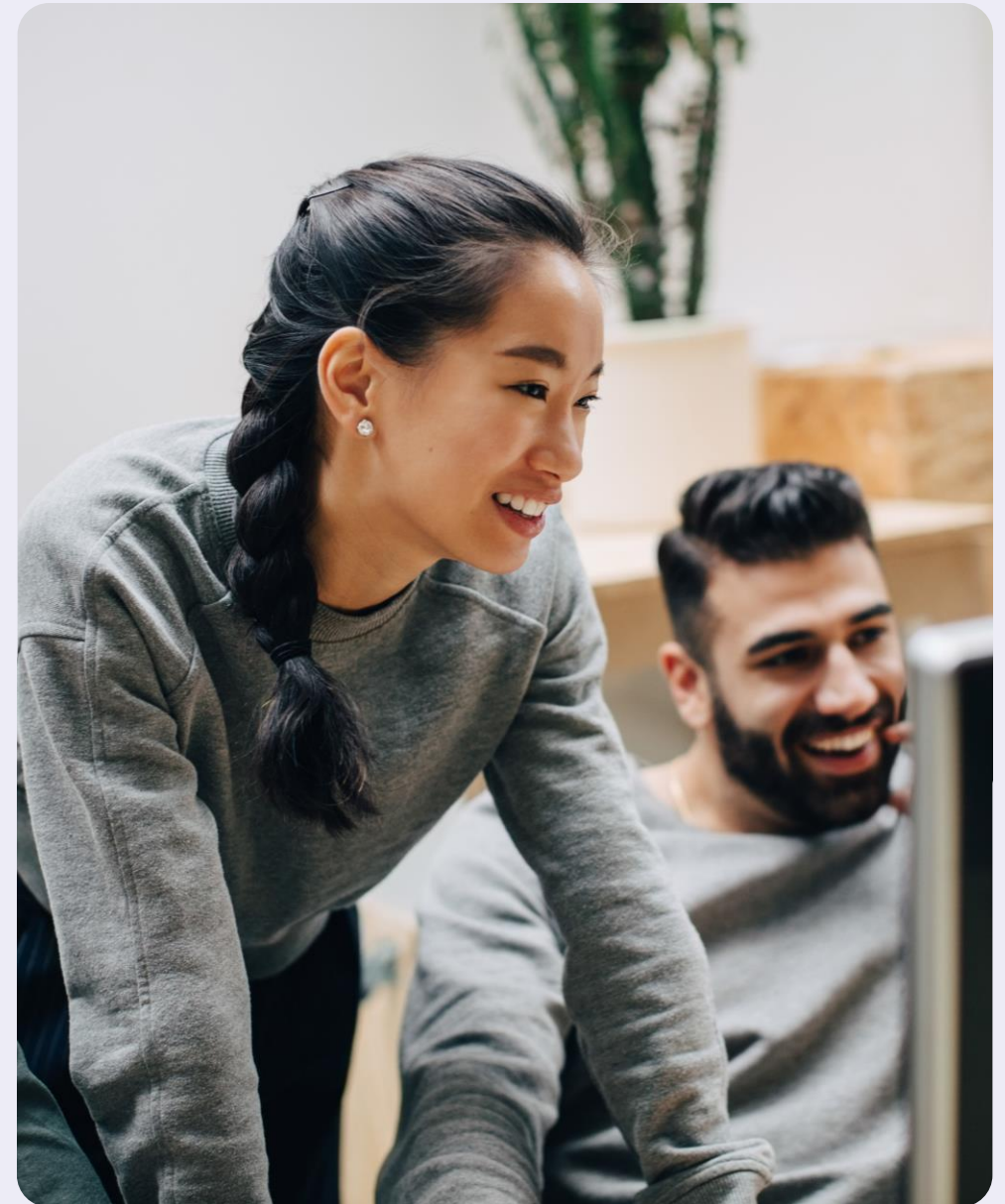
- 15 credits
- 30 credits
- 45 credits
- 60 credits

Combining Units

Students can study a mix of units, including up to four units selected from across the full range of RQF Higher National qualifications listed on the Pearson website. This flexibility allows centres to design programmes that genuinely meet the needs of learners and employers.

Designing for Progression

There are no formal rules of combination, so you can tailor unit choices around local skills needs or employer requirements. If a student aims to progress to a full qualification later, make sure this is considered when designing their HN Flex pathway.



How to choose and build your programme

Guidance for England: Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE)

If you are delivering in England and want students to be able to draw down student loan funding for their short courses, be mindful of the LLE module design rules when choosing units. Only units from HTQ approved Higher National qualifications are eligible for LLE modular funding.

Clarifying HN Flex Status

When discussing HN Flex with students or employers, ensure it is clear that:

- HN Flex is not an Ofqual regulated qualification.
- It does not appear on the Ofqual Register of Regulated Qualifications.
- Learning completed through HN Flex can still count towards future achievement, such as progression to an HNC or HND.

This helps set the right expectations while highlighting the value and flexibility of the offer.



Quality Assurance for HN Flex

Your quality assurance requirements will depend on whether you are new to delivering Pearson qualifications or already an approved centre.

If you are new to Pearson

New centres will complete the full centre and programme approval process. Once your centre is approved and learners are ready to certificate, a Pearson appointed occupational expert will carry out a sampling activity.

This review looks at:

- your management systems
- centre recognition
- learner support
- assessment and internal verification practices
- record keeping

To help you stay consistent with Pearson requirements, we plan **a minimum of two sampling interactions each academic year.**



Quality Assurance for HN Flex

If you are an established Pearson centre

If you already deliver Pearson qualifications, you must make sure you hold programme approval for the units included in your HN Flex offer.

- If you **already have programme approval** and a **sampling outcome of Release** (dated within the last 12 months), your allocated External Examiner will work with you to agree a sampling plan. This will include observing short course delivery, reviewing samples of assessment and verification decisions, and checking records such as standardisation and ongoing CPD.
- If you **do not** hold a Release outcome, your External Examiner will conduct a wider sample. This will include reviewing your management systems, centre recognition, learner support, assessment and verification practices, and record keeping.

Supporting timely certification

To ensure certification is released without delay, it is important that expected completion dates are recorded accurately in Edexcel Online when learners are registered.

This allows Pearson to allocate occupational experts at the right time. As a guide, External Examiners typically complete sampling within **six weeks** of learners finishing their programme.



Programme Approval

To deliver HN Flex units, centres must already be approved to deliver the full Higher National qualification those units come from. HN Flex uses the existing approvals process for vocational qualifications.

You can apply through **Edexcel Online**:

Edexcel Online → **Log in** → **Qualifications** → **BTEC** → **Request for Qualification Approval** → **Qualification Approval** → **Click the 'Approval Application Form' link**

- **UK centres:** complete the online application form.
- **Non-UK centres:** use the link provided for international applications.
- Or, if preferred, you can apply using the offline form from Customer Services.

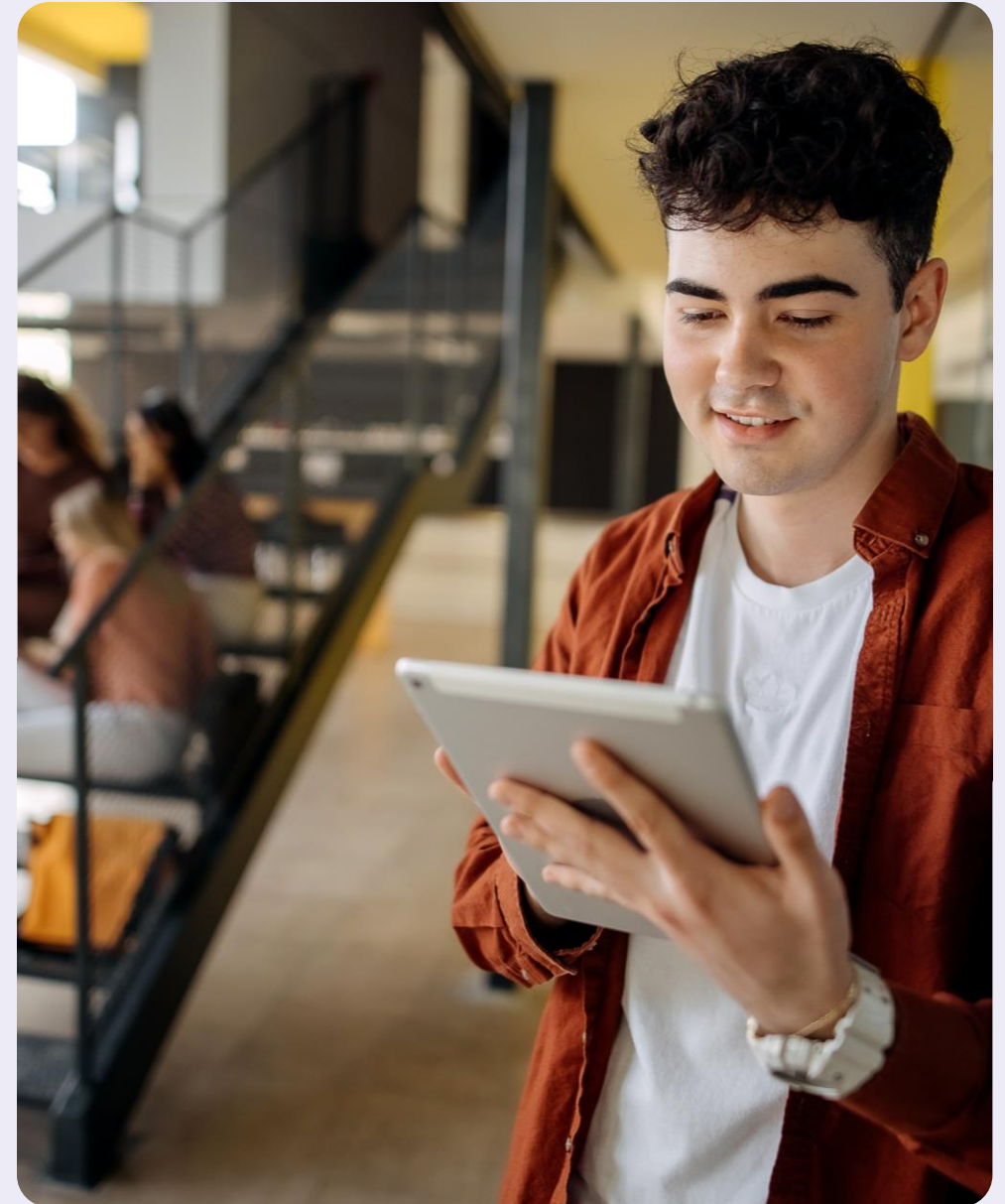
Once submitted, your application is logged as a **CRM case** with a unique reference number. It is then reviewed by our Approvals team, who will keep you updated throughout. You will receive an outcome **within 23 days** of submitting a completed application.



Registering Learners (Edexcel Online)

To register learners for HN Flex, follow these steps:

- Log in to Edexcel Online using your usual credentials and authenticator app.
- Go to **Qualifications** → **BTEC**.
- Select **Candidates** → **Register Candidate**.
- Choose **Full Award** and enter the **Enrolment Date**.
- Select the correct **HN Flex programme** and credit size from the dropdown list, then click **Next**.
- Choose **Register Online** (or **Register via Upload** if registering learners in bulk).
- Enter the required learner details:
 - First name(s)
 - Last name
 - Sex
 - Date of birth
 - Planned completion date
- Add the **Unique Learner Number (ULN)** if available (recommended) and a centre reference if needed.
- Click **Add** to move the learner into the “Candidates to be Registered” list.
- When all learner details appear in the list, select **Register** to finalise.



Claiming Certification

Certification can be claimed once all quality assurance requirements have been met.

When submitting claims for HN Flex units in the EOL system, delivery centres must select *“Fallback certificate”*.

This ensures the correct **Certificate of Unit Achievement (CoUA)** is issued.

Claim Type

Full Award Interim Fallback [Unselect](#)

[Detailed Fallback Claim Process](#)

[Bulk-Claim-Process](#)

HN Flex units are not regulated as standalone qualifications. As a result, the CoUA does not display the Ofqual logo.



Progression after completing Flex units

A learner can't be registered on the same Flex programme code twice, so if the intention is for a learner to complete Flex titles of the same size sequentially, they should be transferred onto the next bundle size up and not certificated.

If a learner has been certificated on a Flex title e.g. a 30-credit title, to support completion of another 30-credit Flex title they must then be registered on the 60-credit HN Flex title.

A student may be able to use their evidence of learning to progress on to study a full HNC/HND. Students must be able to meet the rules of combination as detailed in the HN subject specification.

You can use your Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process to progress students to a full HNC or HND, or top learners up via the standard Higher National topping up process.



Using certificated achievement toward further study

Once a certificate is issued by Pearson that result is final.

It is important to note that once a student is certificated, having followed the published Pearson guidance regarding resubmissions and repeats, then there is no further opportunity to improve that grade without them having a new qualification registration and all units concerned being repeated in full.

Students should be aware that retakes of units are likely to require additional student loan funding and will impact on their total pot of available funding.

If students are intending to continue their studies onto HND level they should also be aware that as per our published guidance, HNC units do not count to the overall HND grade, which is based on performance with the HND only.



Speak to us
about HN Flex

 Pearson