



Pearson BTEC Higher National Approval – Guidance

Background

In order to support the revised quality assurance measures for the **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications, so that they are closer aligned with Higher Education expectations, the Programme Review and Approval (PRA) is a revised element for programme approval. For existing providers, we will carry out a review of the existing BTEC Higher National provision within your approved centre, before granting approval to deliver the **NEW** BTEC Higher Nationals. The PRA process will be compulsory for all existing approved providers seeking to offer the **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications from 2016. Approval to deliver the **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications will specify the following:

- The title of each **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National programme that your centre is approved to deliver;
- The maximum number (which will include up to 50% growth) of students your centre can register on the approved **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National programme each year, before seeking additional approval for increased growth;
- The length of your approval (usually between 3 - 5 years) for each **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National programme; and
- The approved mode(s) of programme delivery.
- The language of assessment.

The PRA process will also set out the terms and conditions for delivery of the new Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications, which will need to be accepted before approval can be granted. If you are new to delivering Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications, or you do not currently have approval to deliver BTEC Higher Nationals in Business (including related pathways) and you are either in the process of applying for approval, or you intend to apply for approval, then the Vocational Qualification Approval form will be used. If your application is successful, the terms of your approval will also specify all of the above details.

How will the approvals process work now?

For the **NEW Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications in Business for first teach from September 2016**, the approval process that applies to your centre will depend on your current status. We have categorised centres in four ways:

Approved centres already actively delivering Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Business	Approved centres not actively delivering Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Business	Centres going through the process of seeking approval to deliver Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals in Business	New centres that have not yet started an application seeking approval to deliver Pearson BTEC Business Higher Nationals
New PRA process applies	New PRA process applies	Vocational Qualification Approval form to be completed	Vocational Qualification Approval form to be completed

If the PRA process applies to your centre, we have created three stages in order to recognise that, for the majority of our providers, we will only need a 'light touch' approach to approval, while for some of our other providers will we need to conduct a more detailed analysis before programme approval can be granted.

1. **Automatic Approval** – we will internally apply predefined criteria (See diagram below) and if your centre meets the criteria you will be automatically eligible for approval to deliver the **NEW** Pearson BTEC Higher National qualification(s). If your centre is eligible for automatic approval you will receive a letter from us confirming your eligibility. The letter will invite you to accept our new terms and conditions by signing the enclosed declaration, and to confirm you will pay the approval administration fee. The declaration will include the new terms and conditions and your estimation of the **maximum** number of students you intend to register each year and mode of delivery. Please remember that your maximum number will need to include your planned percentage growth, which can be up to 50% each year. The figure of up to 50% growth will provide your centre with the scope for manageable growth.

Once we receive your signed declaration, your planned student registrations for the duration of your approval, mode of delivery and language of assessment, we will then consider your registration plans and if appropriate, we will issue your approval letter. Automatic approval will be granted based on your current mode(s) of delivery and an acceptable estimation of your intended student registrations. You will then be invoiced for the administration fee. Programme approval is **provisional** until the fee invoice has been settled in full.

If you wish to substantially increase your student registrations or if you would like to seek to deliver the programme by other modes of delivery, for example by distance learning, then you will need to contact us separately to discuss this, as further enquiries may be necessary.

2. **Desk-based review** – if your centre is ineligible for automatic approval then you will be given the option to go through a desk-based review. Before the desk-based review can commence you will need to indicate that you wish to proceed, and the fee will need to be settled in full in advance. Pearson will then carry out an in-depth approval analysis including, for example, a review of Standards Verifier/External Examiner reports and other internal data held by Pearson. Your centre may be asked to provide further information. A Pearson reviewer will fully consider the information before recommending one of the following outcomes:
 - 2.1.1. Approval granted
 - 2.1.2. Approval granted provisionally subject to clear actions being successfully met within a set time period
 - 2.1.3. Further enquiries required and a full visit needed.

We will advise you in writing of the outcome of the desk-based review and if approval has not been granted, then you can decide if you would like to proceed to a full visit.

3. **Full visit** - if approval is not granted after a desk-based review, then Pearson may judge that it needs to carry out a full centre visit in order to determine if your centre is eligible for programme approval. Once you have indicated your intention to proceed, you will be invoiced the fee (which will be made available upon request) in advance if a visit is needed. However, if your centre has had a Standards Verification (External Examiner) visit within 10 weeks prior to the desk-based review, then the details of that visit will be considered rather than conducting another visit. If a visit is not required then you will not be invoiced further. The outcomes following a full centre visit could be:
 - 3.1.1. Approval granted and letter issued including declaration and new terms and conditions
 - 3.1.2. Approval granted provisionally subject to clear actions being successfully met within a set period, confirmed in writing
 - 3.1.3. Refusal of approval confirmed in writing

We will advise you in writing of the outcome of the visit. It is not possible to appeal against a decision by Pearson to refuse approval.

What happens now?

We appreciate that you will be keen to find out your approval status as soon as possible, so we will be conducting a rigorous analysis of our centre data. If you are an existing provider of the BTEC Higher Nationals in Business then you will be contacted by **28.04.16**, so that you will know whether you are eligible for automatic approval based on our analysis. If your centre is ineligible for automatic approval, then you will also be notified by **28.04.16**, and asked if you wish to seek approval to deliver the **NEW** Pearson BTEC Business Higher National qualifications, by way of a desk-based review.

If you are **not** currently approved to deliver the current QCF BTEC Business Higher Nationals (2010) and you wish to seek qualification approval, then you will need to submit a supported application for Vocational Qualification Approval. Your Pearson regional representative can advise you in relation to this. Please contact your local regional Pearson office for more information.

Questions?

We will be compiling a set of FAQs, but if in the meantime you have any queries then you can direct them to the following email inboxes:

Approved Providers already actively delivering Pearson BTEC Business Higher Nationals	Approved Providers not actively delivering Pearson BTEC Business Higher Nationals	Providers going through the process of seeking approval to deliver Pearson BTEC Business Higher Nationals	New Providers that have not yet started an application seeking approval to deliver Pearson BTEC Business Higher Nationals
hnqa@pearson.com	hnqa@pearson.com	pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com	pqs.internationaleo@pearson.com

Programme Review and Approval overview

