

# Higher Nationals

International Centre

Onboarding Roadmap

Your step-by-step guide  
to delivering a HNC / HND

Go Higher ^





Welcome to your  
step-by-step guide

We've developed this guide to explain 

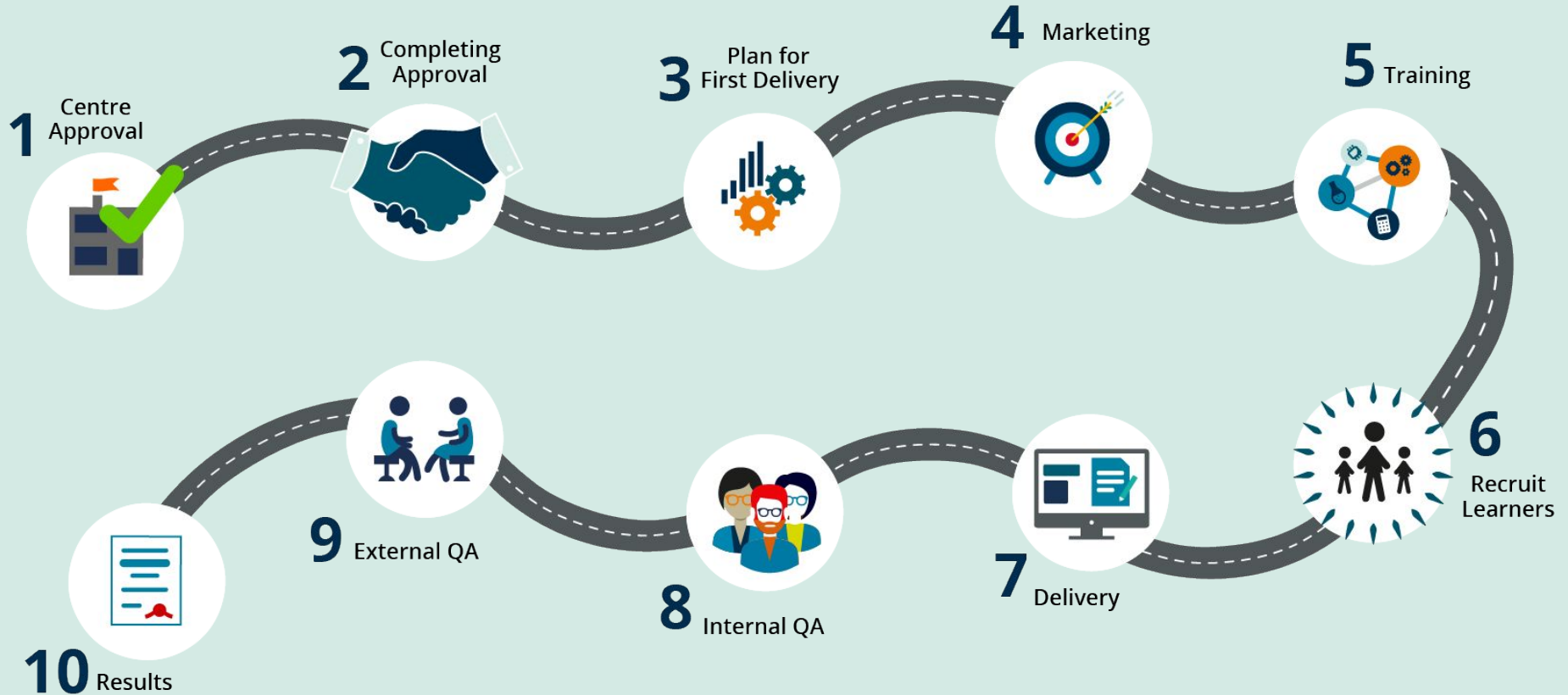
The processes involved in ensuring your Higher National experience runs smoothly once your centre has been approved.

The steps you need to take to make sure you start off on the right foot.

We'll take you through the processes, explain why they're important, and point you in the direction of all the support we offer to help you deliver your Higher National with confidence.



# Getting started with Higher Nationals



Go Higher ^



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# Choose your Higher National

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[Our centre guide to Higher National qualifications](#)

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[Level 4 - Higher National Certificates](#)

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[Level 5 - Higher National Diplomas](#)

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[Commissioned and Professional qualifications](#)

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[Expression of Interest form](#)

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[Visit our introductory pages for more information](#)

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# Apply for centre & qualification approval >

**To deliver any Higher National qualification your organisation will need to complete our Centre Approval process before teaching begins.**

Quality assurance is a set of processes and procedures we have in place to ensure that students are issued a fair grade based on their performance. Your local Pearson contact will help you complete your application, submit it to Pearson and help you prepare for your approval visit. This stage will take 1-3 months depending on the qualification(s) you wish to deliver and when the approval visit can be scheduled.

## Your application form

Our guides provide essential information to support your application:

- Quality Assurance [Handbook](#) and [Guides](#) to Managing Quality
- Plagiarism [factsheet](#)
- Our [policy pages](#) explain the quality assurance, management systems, student support and other requirements for successful delivery

## Approval visit

A half day centre approval audit based on your application followed by two days' implementation training.

## Next steps

After a successful visit your organisation will be invited apply for Qualification Approval.



# Your approval visit >

**Once your Centre Approval application has been submitted we will contact you to arrange your approval visit and implementation training.**

You will hear from your Pearson contact within 2-3 weeks to start arranging the visit. Your Pearson contact will help you prepare for your approval visit and may attend the training. The visit has two parts and lasts 2.5 days:

- Approval
- Implementation training

You will need to make sure that the staff responsible for teaching and assessing your programme attend the training.

## Approval - Day 1

On the first day, the Approval Officer will look at your premises and resources to ensure they are appropriate for your chosen qualification.



They will also meet your senior management team to review your organisation's policies and procedures, administration and management systems.

## Training - Day 2 & 3

Implementation training covers the process from planning to delivery, assessment, QA and how to record student achievement.



## Report

The Approval Officer will write a report with their recommendation. Centre Approval will be confirmed once the report has been reviewed and signed off by our Approvals team.



# Qualification approval >

## Approved Pearson centres also require Qualification Approval before teaching begins.

Newly approved centres must submit their Qualification Approval application within 6 months or their provisionally approved status will expire. Your local Pearson contact will help you complete your application and submit it. This stage will take about 1 month depending on the programme you wish to deliver. Once approved there are several resources available to help support your Higher National journey.

## Support resources

Our general Pearson teaching [support resources](#) are developed with teachers who understand the challenges of finding new and engaging ways to deliver your programme, which means you can be sure the guidance is relevant and achievable.

## HN Global

You can find **specific** Higher National resources on [HN Global](#). You can download all these documents from the subject area for your chosen qualification including our Example Assessment Briefs (EABs).

## Training

Pearson is committed to making sure that all centres are well equipped to deliver the new RQF BTEC Higher Nationals. Topics and formats include:

- Subject launch and Getting Ready to Teach, face-to-face and Online events available
- Training on Assessment Planning and Assignment Writing, Quality Assurance and Preparing for an External Examiner visit

Centre based training is also available upon request. More information on Pearson training events can be found on the [Training from Pearson webpage](#).

## Re-approval >

**For centres that already have approval for an expiring qualification we will apply predefined re-approval criteria. If your centre meets the criteria you will be automatically eligible for re-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 a declaration, and confirming you will pay the £105.00 auto-approval fee. The declaration will include the new terms and conditions and your estimation of the number of maximum number of students you intend to register each year.

### Declaration

Once we receive your signed declaration and your planned student registrations for the duration of your approval, 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. If you wish to substantially increase your student registrations then please contact us so that further enquiries can be made (hnqa@pearson.com).





# Getting started: First steps >

## Plan for first delivery

The very first step to creating a successful course is to select which units you're going to teach, and when and how you're going to assess them.

Your specification covers everything you need to know to deliver and assess your qualification:

- Overview of every unit
- Learning aims
- Assessment criteria
- How to grade the overall qualification



[Subscribe](#) to the BTEC Higher Nationals Monthly Newsletter

## BTEC Higher Nationals Newsletter

> Sign up today



Also, our Delivery Guides contain ideas for practical activities, realistic scenarios and independent learning, helping to bring the unit content to life.



## Getting started: Exemplars >

**Our exemplars and templates are available to help you create your BTEC assignments and check that they are ready for your students.**

### Schemes of Work

A scheme of work is an overview of what you need to cover for each unit, broken down by topic, and how each topic meets the learning aims.

### Example assessment briefs

Our examples can help you make the most of your planning time and give you the opportunity to add in your own activities. These are downloadable from the [subject](#) area of your chosen qualification.

### Building your assessment plan

At the start of your course you will create this timetable for how you will deliver and [assess](#) your programme – which units you'll teach and when you'll teach them.

It provides a calendar for delivery, and means your External Examiner (EE) can plan sampling to fit around your delivery.

[Higher National assessment and internal verification forms](#)

### Writing assignments

BTEC assignments are written to meet the learning aims set out for each unit and should be industry related.

Our free [Assignment Checking Service](#) offers extra support with internally verifying assignments.

You can submit two assignments per subject area per academic year. A subject expert will review them and provide feedback.

# Marketing: Your toolkit >

**Use our recruitment materials to explain the benefits of skills-based learning and help students to understand how they can progress.**

Our success [resources](#) contain fascinating facts, quotes, case studies and [videos](#) from our ambassadors (employers, entrepreneurs, universities and qualified students) who share their experiences, and explain why they advocate the learning model.

You can also hear more about what students, teachers and Ministries of Education across the world think about [Pearson qualifications](#). Our [Degree Course Finder](#) lets you see which universities recognise HNs for HE progression, and our [employability pages](#) list professional and employer endorsements.

## Marketing toolkit

All the information you need to effectively promote your qualifications to parents and students. Under each of these sections you'll find print and web ready logos, posters, brochures, presentations, sample certificates and other useful material:

- Higher National qualifications (for centres)
- Qualification guides (for centres)
- Sector guides (for centres)
- Marketing material for parents/students
- Brand guidelines and logos
- Parent and student FAQs
- Sample certificates
- Progression Plus Degree Course Finder
- Case studies

**Case studies:** Student [success stories](#) from the UK and around the world.

# Your new students >

**It's important to enrol the right student on the right programme so that there's a reasonable expectation they will be able to reach the standard required, having completed the relevant programme of learning.**

You can find out more about this requirement in our [guide to recruiting with integrity](#). For Higher Nationals, students must also meet specific English [language requirements](#).

Once you have enrolled students onto an approved programme or units, they must be formally registered with Pearson so that their achievement can be tracked and the correct award made at the end of their course. It also allows us to allocate your External Examiner.



## How to register students

Your students can be registered using [Edexcel Online](#) or [EDI](#). This is usually carried out by your Exams Officer.

Find out more from our [video guides](#).

Customer Services run regular online training, but your Account Specialist can also arrange to give you personal training as required.



**Your students should be registered within 90 days of enrolment or you will be charged a late fee.**

# Delivering your Higher National >

Online subject pages for each qualification offer resources to support teaching, assessment and administration throughout your course delivery. We also have specific resources for [Exams Officers](#).

## Teaching

We offer a range of publications from various publishers for all qualifications: use our [online tool](#) to search by qualification and subject or visit our [online shop](#).

Details of Pearson published resources for each qualification can be found on every specification page. You can also find news and updates, contact our subject experts, ask the expert via EOL and join Pearson teacher [communities](#). Throughout the year we offer a global programme of free [training sessions](#).

## Assessment

All units are assessed against the assessment criteria set out in the specification. [Our forms and templates](#) to help you plan, record and track student activities and achievement.

Download our guides to assessment:

- Internal assessment [guide](#)
- Plagiarism [fact sheet](#)
- We have devised four short tutor support [videos](#) covering research, investigations, problem solving and portfolio based assessment

## Administration

Our [video library](#) for Exams Officers follows the qualification lifecycle to make it easy to find the tutorial most relevant to you during the academic year.

We also offer free online Exams Officers [training events](#) and publish a weekly [International Exams Officer newsletter](#) to keep you up to date. During the course, your [registered students](#) can be moved on to a different size of qualification, 'top up' or a completely different one. A [transfer fee](#) may apply.





## Internal quality assurance: Your team >

Your team will maintain quality throughout the delivery of your Higher National programmes.

Quality Nominee:

The main point of contact for information related to quality assurance and all aspects of delivery. They are the initial point of contact for the EE and will ensure that Standards Verification can take place.

Programme Leader:

Has overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of the qualifications. They also ensure [assessment records](#) and student work are retained for sampling and will work with the External Examiner to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place.

Internal Verifier:

Ensures that assessment decisions are consistent across the programme by checking that assignments are fit for purpose, standardising assessors and sampling assessment decisions. They ensure that assessors take appropriate action based on their feedback. Anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme can be an Internal Verifier, but you can't internally verify your own assessment. A large centre may have a Lead Internal Verifier to standardise and co-ordinate IV team activities.

# Internal quality assurance: Roles >

## Quality Nominee:

### At the start of the course:

Check programme approvals and programme expiry dates on EOL  
Check programme and QA updates

### Semester One:

Check new students are registered  
Act as the point of contact for External Examiner (EE).

### Semesters Two and Three:

Organise EE process (visits/postal)  
Acts on and responds to EE reports

### End of academic year:

Programme Review and Evaluation  
Acts on and responds to EE reports

## Programme Leader:

### At the start of the course:

Sign off Assessment Plans  
Check assignment briefs for whole course  
Check resources and train team

### Semester One:

Check progress against Assessment Plan  
Sign off resubmissions  
Manage EE sampling / visit  
Act on EE feedback

### Semesters Two and Three:

Sign off resubmissions  
Support EE sampling and visit  
Act on EE feedback

### End of academic year:

Programme Review and Evaluation  
Manage appeals process

## Internal Verifier:

### At the start of the course:

Agree Assessment Plans  
Internally verify (IV) assignment briefs  
Standardise assessors

### Semester One:

Sample and IV assessment decisions  
Prepare EE samples  
Act on EE feedback

### Semesters Two and Three:

Sample and IV assessment decisions  
Prepare EE samples  
Act on EE feedback

### End of academic year:

Programme Review and Evaluation  
Attend updates and training

# External quality assurance: Overview >

**External Examiners (EEs) are subject specialists who confirm that you're assessing students to the standards outlined in the specification. They also check that processes for internally verifying and recording assessment decisions are effective.**

EEs sample student work for evidence of fairness, consistency and that assessment decisions are based on the qualification criteria for achievement.

Your EE will visit twice each year.

Providing your registrations are up to date, the first visit takes place within four months of the start of your course.

The second visit usually takes place about 3 months later. Our visit window is November – August.

## Quality Assurance Handbook

Planning ahead for the visit allows the EE to use the time effectively and provide you with support and guidance, and helps you to understand what will be required on the day.

The Quality Assurance Handbook is an essential document to keep handy.

[Pearson Enhanced Quality Assurance and Assessment Handbook.](#)

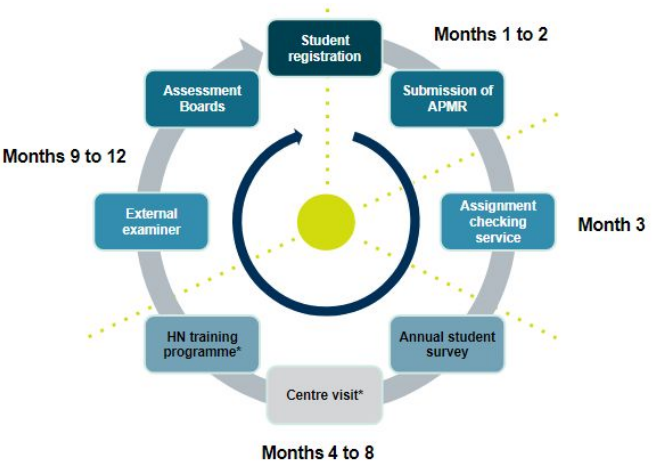
## QA Process

This [guide](#) details what we require from your team and how to sample student work.

## EE Visit

The [EE visit](#) and provides many useful tips to help your planning.

# Enhanced quality assurance >



[Annual programme monitoring report](#)

APMR should be submitted to Pearson each year in February. It is an overview of HN provision and is a review of the previous year which provides valuable feedback.

It is mandatory for all centres as it enables Pearson to use the information to further enhance the QA of the BTEC Higher National programmes.

[Annual Student Survey](#)

The survey has been designed to provide valuable and quantifiable feedback on Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals.

[Assessment Boards](#)

Each provider is expected by Pearson to hold Assessment Boards for all of its BTEC Higher National programmes.

# Annual student registration confirmation >

## How does the BTEC Higher National Annual Registration work?

The annual registration and associated fee is payable for **all** BTEC Higher National (QCF/RQF/SRF) students who were registered **on or after 1 September 2019** and entered into their **second or subsequent year** from **1 September 2020 onwards**.

Centres are liable for a fee of £21 per student, per year, for those students continuing into their second/subsequent years of study. This fee is in addition to the initial qualification registration fee applicable at the start of their programme of study.

FAQs on student registrations for all Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals

Comprehensive Q&A, [here](#)





# External quality assurance: Next steps >

**At the end of the visit the External Examiner will give verbal feedback and summarise their findings and any required actions.**

You will receive a written report within 10 working days of the visit.

Your local Pearson contact will have a copy of the report and be able to help you with any questions.

You will not be able to claim certificates until all units have been sampled, so it's important to think about timing if your students are applying for HE courses.

## Actions

The report contains a summary of action points reported on in the form. This is an action plan for you to work to before the next visit. Actions from the first visit will be checked on the second. The EE may identify Essential Actions and/or Recommendations. Essential Actions are mandatory, but do not result in a certification block for programmes.

### Sample outcomes:

- Release - certificates can be claimed on EOL for the current year and will be printed
- Block for one or more programme - no certificates will be issued if claimed
- Not yet fully sampled - not all the units in your course have been sampled
- Limited certification - certificates can be issued for a small number of students but will be blocked for others

## Results and certificates >

**You need to report your students' assessment achievement to us for interim or final certification. In most cases reporting their unit grades will automatically generate an overall grade but there are [exceptions](#).**

We also provide [online information](#) to help students understand their grades. If any information is missing or incorrect or an award is withheld due to [ineligibility](#), we'll send you a 'form query' through EOL and an automatic email to your Exams Officer.

Certificates claimed by Friday are usually printed on Saturday and dispatched a few days later.

### Your application form

You should [report](#) to us:

- at the end of each year/programme stage if following the UK academic year
- immediately after completion for non-academic year programmes
- when a student transfers to another programme/centre
- when a student withdraws from the programme.

[Upgrading and amending reported achievement](#) students' performance may be upgraded while the registration is still valid and before an award has been issued. You can [submit a request](#) to do so after an award has been issued but may incur a charge.

### Next steps

Lost, damaged or incorrect certificates  
[Find out more](#)

# Getting ready for next year >

## Delivery

### Check the availability of your qualification

- Withdrawal dates
- Last certification dates

### Ensure that your schemes of work and assignments are up to date

- [Assignment checking](#) service for new units

## Quality Assurance

### Standards Verification

- Action plan implemented
- Assessment and IV tools
- Team training and updates

### Check Pearson policy updates

- Policy documents and guidance on our website

### Check you assessment and verification records are up to date

- Check progress against Assessment Plan
- Internal verification

## Administration

### Check the availability

- Withdrawal dates
- Last certification dates
- Information Manual
- Fees and charges

### Check that your approvals are up to date on EOL

- New BTEC subjects, levels
- Quality block
- Finance block

### Check your student details are up to date

- Expiring registrations
- Units, completions, withdrawals
- Appeals and EARs
- Certificates received

## Marketing and Training

### Get product updates

- Specifications and teaching support on our website
- [Subject newsletters](#)

### Check out the latest marketing materials

- Marketing toolkit

### Check out the latest training events

- We offer face-to-face and online training events



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## Contact us

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Website    <https://www.highernationals.com/>

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Email        [highernationals@pearson.com](mailto:highernationals@pearson.com)

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