

Quality Assurance Handbook

Functional Skills Maths,
English and ICT
Entry Level

Year 2021-2022



Contents

Contents	2
Introduction to this handbook.....	4
Access to this handbook and related information.....	4
Quality assurance arrangements and administration.....	5
Your communication with us	5
Quality assurance arrangements	5
Key dates and actions 2021-22	6
Qualification Structure	7
Learner and centre administration	9
Information Manual	9
Recruitment of learners.....	9
Quality assurance responsibilities for centres	9
Roles and responsibilities	10
Internal Sampling.....	15
Internal assessment and verification.....	16
Controlled assessment	16
Internal standardisation	16
Internal monitoring	16
Internal verification	17
Good practice	18
Standards Verification	18
Standards Verification Process	20
Postal sampling.....	26
Following standards verification.....	27
Retaining assessments.....	27
Support.....	28
Documentation	28
Websites	28

Pearson teams 29

Introduction to this handbook

This handbook applies from September 2021 until August 2022 and describes the administrative arrangements and requirements for quality assurance of Entry Level Functional Skills (ELFS) in English, Maths and ICT.

This document provides the key information required for your centre to meet the quality assurance requirements for 2021-22, providing information on the internal and external verification procedures for centres.

This handbook is for Examination Officers, Quality Nominees, Programme Managers, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers in centres. It explains the quality assurance processes for ELFS qualifications.

Information relating to registrations, entries and certification for these programmes is available in the Edexcel Information Manual which can be accessed via our website [here](#).

This handbook should be used in conjunction with the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment handbook, which are available [here](#).

All centre staff need to comply with these administrative requirements.

Access to this handbook and related information

The Programme Managers, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers for these qualifications should be made aware of this document, which is available on our website.

Quality assurance arrangements and administration

Your communication with us

Effective communication between us is important to ensure that time schedules for quality monitoring are maintained. We communicate with your centre by letter, telephone and email. Please ensure that you maintain accurate details of your main contacts on the Edexcel Online system. You should review all your centre contact details every 6 months to include new members of staff who will be using the centre accounts area of Edexcel Online.

Quality assurance arrangements

Your centre must appoint a Lead Internal Verifier for ELFS. Please refer to the Lead Internal Verifier section in this document for more information on the role of the Lead Internal Verifier.

For virtual sampling to take place, a Sampling Report Form needs to be completed listing 'passed' learners. Learners are classed as 'passed' if at least 25% of the assessments have been through an internal verification process and at least 10% of the assessments have been signed off by your Lead Internal Verifier.

To comply with the Data Protection Act requirements, the Sampling Report Form must be password protected when sent via email to your Standards Verifier.

Your allocated Standards Verifier will request assessments based on the Sampling Report Form for virtual verification. Please refer to both the 'Internal assessment and Verification' section together with the 'Standards verification' section of this handbook for further information on sampling.

If your centre is delivering a qualification from more than one site, the Standards Verifier allocated to your centre will need to include all participating sites within the verification sample.

Key dates and actions 2021-22

Date	Action
Throughout the academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update contact details for the Examinations Officer on Edexcel Online. ● Standards Verifiers are allocated to centres following the registration of learners. ● Standards Verifiers contact their allocated centres, in the first instance, through the Examinations Officer. The Examinations Officer should put the Standards Verifier in touch with the appropriate Lead Internal Verifier who will be the main contact for standards verification. <p>Examinations Officers should check that arrangements are in place for every programme to ensure that standards verification takes place before the set deadline.</p> <p>There are no late fees for Entry Level Functional Skills.</p>
1st July 2022	<p>Advised deadline to request standards verification if certification is required by August 2022.</p> <p>You should allow enough time between receiving the results of standards verification and intended certification for possible remedial action resulting from standards verification.</p>
31st July 2022	Last day for Standards Verification
31 st August 2022	Deadline to claim certification for candidates completing the 2021-2022 assessments

Qualification Structure

The components within the qualification are available at three entry levels: E1, E2 and E3. Pearson provides assessments for all the entry levels.

Entry Level Functional Skills		
English	3 components	Speaking, Listening & Communicating; Reading; Writing test
ICT	1 component	Test
Mathematics	1 component	Test

- Learners must achieve all components to receive full certification.
- **Please note:** these components are not units in their own right and each subject is a single-unit qualification.
- Certificates will show the qualification and level achieved as well as notification of performance and components achieved.
- The assessments are designed to be taken when the learner is ready.

Please note: to access the Guidance to Assessors documents, you need to contact your Examinations Officer who has the appropriate access to download these documents.

Marked controlled assessments must **not** be handed back to learners under any circumstances as they are live assessment materials.

The mark scheme for each controlled assessment will clearly identify which area of the specification is being tested for each question, to aid centres in giving feedback to learners who have not achieved a pass. The pass mark is stated in the Assessment Record Sheets for each controlled assessment.

Although learners should not be entered for assessment until they are ready, it is possible that a learner may be unsuccessful. Where the learner fails to reach the pass mark, the learner retakes the whole assessment from a different set of assessment materials no sooner than 14 days after taking the previous assessment.

Various assessments may be held simultaneously in the same room, provided no disturbance is caused.

You will be required to keep an audit trail of which components and levels each learner has completed. The Standards Verifier might require you to provide evidence of this during the academic year.

Completed assessments are marked by the assessor and are subject to internal verification. We will verify marked assessments through a centre virtual visit. In certain cases, a follow-up postal sample may be required.

Centre adaptation of tests

Centres are permitted to adapt the context of a task in line with the Guidance for Assessor's documentation which will be provided to centres for each test. The guidance provides clear instructions regarding what can be adapted. To ensure that assessment materials are accessible, and the contexts are appropriate for all learners, it is important that centres can make adaptations to the context if it will enable learners to access the assessment and demonstrate their skills more readily.

Adaptation of tests does not occur frequently. However, we recognise the need to have a clear process in place to ensure any adaptation a centre proposes will not compromise the assessment.

Centres will be required to agree and gain approval for any adaptations beforehand with their assigned Standards Verifier to mitigate the risk of any adaptation having any advantage or disadvantage to learners. This approval process will begin with a detailed conversation between the Standards Verifier and the centre to discuss any adaptations the centre is planning so the Standards Verifier can provide detailed guidance and support on whether any proposed adaptation is appropriate. Once the adaptation has been approved, the Standards Verifier will need to see the finalised changes to the assessment itself before the centre uses any adapted test with its learners.

Learner and centre administration

Information Manual

The Information Manual provides guidance and information regarding approval, registration and certification and is available [here](#).

In order to ensure that learner achievements can be formally recognised, you need to check the approval status of the programmes you are delivering and ensure that our registration and certification processes are adhered to.

For approval queries

Please contact the Approvals team, UKapproval@pearson.com

For registration and certification queries

Please contact the Examinations Officer Support team, examsofficers@pearson.com

Recruitment of learners

You should use integrity when recruiting learners onto your programmes. You should offer some initial assessment to establish the levels of your learners, so they are registered on the appropriate programme.

Quality assurance responsibilities for centres

You are required to:

- gain both centre and qualification approval prior to enrolling learners on to the programme
- register all new learners with us when they join the programme
- ensure all qualifications, components and levels are sampled as per your internal verification model
- ensure all certification claims are correct
- ensure all quality policies and procedures are in place as stated in the Instruction for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document.

Roles and responsibilities

Examinations Officer

Examinations Officers will receive notification and contact details for their allocated Standards Verifier for 2021-22 by January 2022. They will be requested to liaise with the appropriate person at your centre to ensure that the standards verification sampling process runs smoothly.

You may not be allocated the same Standards Verifier as you had during the 2020-21 academic year. If you urgently require standards verification to take place before your allocated Standards Verifier makes contact, please contact the VQ Deployment team who will arrange support for your centre during the interim period.

Examinations Officers normally deal with the administrative arrangements for registration and certification of learners using the guidance given in the Edexcel Information Manual available [here](#).

When registering learners on Edexcel Online, Examinations Officers should ensure that Assessors submit a complete list of learners and provide estimated completion dates.

After registering learners on a programme, only Examinations Officers and Examinations Assistants will be able to access the live assessments on our secure area of our website [here](#).

An Edexcel Online username and password are required in order to access the live assessments.

Should your examinations office experience difficulties accessing the secure website, please contact our Customer Support team. Contact details can be found [here](#).

You must deliver live assessments in line with the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document available [here](#).

This document outlines your responsibilities for conducting the live controlled assessments.

The Examinations Officer is also responsible for:

- the secure printing and copying of all assessments
- the safe and secure storage of all assessments prior to administration
- ensuring that all teaching and assessment staff are familiar with the appropriate guidance documentation and assessment information as well as the 'Guidance/Instructions to Assessors' for each controlled assessment
- ensuring all teaching and assessment staff have appropriate access to the controlled assessment materials at the appropriate time
- managing the assessment, ensuring that learner identity is checked and verified, that learners receive no help during the assessment period and that assessments last for the designated time as stated on the test
- allocating invigilators (please see Supervision arrangements in the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document)
- managing the security arrangements following completion of the controlled assessments
- managing the secure disposal of completed controlled assessment tests.

In order to conduct live assessments, centres are required to:

- follow the procedures described in the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document which outlines the process of safe storage, copying, distribution and disposal of the controlled assessments
- accept the terms and conditions on the secure assessment website
- ensure that for each assessment session:
 - the controlled assessment tests are printed from the secure site no earlier than 2 weeks before the date of the controlled assessment
 - the assessments are contextualised by the Assessor, if applicable. The Standards Verifier must approve the contextualised assessments before they are used to assess the learners
 - the assessments are sealed inside envelopes
 - the sealed envelopes are stored securely
 - the assessments are not opened until the time of the assessment

- ensure that learners who do not pass the assessment the first time and wish to sit it again, resit the whole assessment using a different set, no earlier than 14 days from taking the original assessment
- to report any breach of examination security to the Business Assurance Group at Pearson at: pqsmalpractice@pearson.com

Assessor

Assessors are responsible and accountable for:

- planning when learners are ready to take the live assessments, making the assessments available to learners and marking the assessments
- implementing assessments following the Guidance for Assessors and the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document
- contextualising the controlled assessments tests, if applicable
- ensuring that the correct and latest mark schemes are used and applied fairly and consistently
- maintaining accurate and verifiable learner assessment and achievement records.

Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier is a centre/team-based role. It is good practice to develop these skills across the team as Internal Verifiers cannot internally verify their own assessment decisions. The appropriate size of the internal verification team depends on the number of learners assessed in your centre. The absolute minimum number of staff involved in assessment and internal verification is two, as no person can internally verify their own assessment decisions.

Internal Verifiers are at the heart of the quality assurance process. The role ensures that assessments across the centre consistently meet national standards, thus Internal Verifiers must be competent in the assessment of the qualification offered.

Internal Verifiers are responsible and accountable for:

- regularly sampling assessment decisions made by all Assessors across all components, levels and sites; we advise that a minimum of 25% of assessments are sampled across all Assessors and sites

- establishing procedures to develop a common interpretation of the assessment requirements between Assessors, e.g. standardisation meetings/activities
- monitoring and supporting the work of Assessors within your centre
- maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activity and ensuring that these are available for standards verification, to monitor and ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of standards
- facilitating appropriate staff development and training for Assessors
- ensuring that the ratio of Assessors to learners is appropriate; we recommend a maximum ratio of one Assessor to 15 learners.

Lead Internal Verifier

A Lead Internal Verifier is the person designated by the centre to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of the qualification.

The Lead Internal Verifier should be:

- someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes; ideally this is the Programme Leader, as this would normally be a key part of the role
- able to co-ordinate across Assessors and Internal Verifiers.

For standards verification, the Lead Internal Verifier:

- ensures that records of assessments and tests are being retained
- liaises with the Standards Verifier to ensure appropriate sampling.

Lead Internal Verifiers must ensure that their centres have a robust system of internal verification to check that all assessments are secure. When the programme delivery is being planned, internal verification should be included. Internal verification should be carried out in a timely manner throughout the year. Effective internal verification guides and supports Assessors and feedback from the Lead Internal Verifier aids their skills development.

The Lead Internal Verifier at the centre will be required to view the exemplar videos ([Edexcel Functional Skills in English | Pearson qualifications](#)) and accompanying assessment records sheets for Speaking, Listening and Communicating. The Standards Verifier will be required to check the Lead Internal Verifier understanding of the exemplar videos to ensure they have viewed the materials and understood the assessment decisions. Following this the Lead Internal Verifier must then cascade the training within the centre to all Internal Verifiers and Assessors.

The Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for:

- Making use of the exemplar videos to train the Internal Verifiers and Assessors within the centre
- liaising with the Standards Verifier
- arranging feedback to the assessment team following sampling
- regularly sampling assessment decisions made by all Internal Verifiers across all components, levels and sites; we advise that a minimum of 10% of all assessments are sampled
- ensuring that all centre sub-sites follow the internal verification procedures set by your centre
- facilitating appropriate standardisation, staff development and training for Internal Verifiers and Assessors to ensure national standards are maintained
- ensuring that all teaching and assessment staff and those undertaking internal verification have access to:
 - the full programme specification
 - relevant information from this handbook, centre procedures and other guides and policy documents issued by us.

Centre training

Lead Internal Verifiers will be required to make use of the exemplar videos to train Internal Verifiers and Assessors within the centre. Lead Internal Verifiers will be required to advise their Standards Verifier when their internal event is taking place and to keep an accurate record of this process which can be reviewed by the Standards Verifier as a check that the training is being carried out.

As part of the internal standardisation process, Internal Verifiers and Assessors will be required to make their own judgements of the exemplar assessments. A clear record of these standardisation activities must be retained by the centre and shared with the Standards Verifier on request to evidence that these activities have taken place. The centre evidence will contain the following:

- Date Lead Internal Verifier accessed exemplar materials.
- Date of internal standardisation meeting.
- Names of individual Internal Verifiers and Assessors who attended internal standardisation training.
- Assessment records completed by each assessor.
- Record of any discussion points or clarifications required.

Once the Lead Internal Verifier has confirmed that internal standardisation training has been completed, the Pearson appointed Standards Verifier will then arrange to complete external verification for your centre.

In very small centres, with less than 15 candidates, it is acceptable to have only one Internal Verifier who is also the Lead Internal Verifier.

Please note: The Lead Internal Verifier and Internal Verifiers cannot verify their own work.

Internal Sampling

Role	Responsibility
Assessors	Assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of learner work
Internal Verifiers	Verify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a minimum of 25% of all assessments a selection of learners work per component and level all Assessors all sites a sample based on risk
Lead Internal Verifier	Verify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a minimum of 10% of all assessments a selection of learners work per component and level all Internal Verifiers all Assessors all sites a sample based on risk

Internal assessment and verification

Controlled assessment

For each programme, your centre should have a schedule, which includes:

- internal standardisation
- internal monitoring
- internal verification.

Internal standardisation

Standardisation must be carried out when there is more than one Assessor delivering and marking the same programme. This should happen before any marking or internal verification takes place.

The standardisation process is designed to make sure that all Assessors mark learner work consistently and accurately. It establishes a common standard of marking, which should ensure the quality of marking across the assessment team. Assessors should reach a consensus after marking and discussing a sample of assessments. Once agreement has been reached, Assessors can individually mark learner work.

The simplest means of completing a standardisation review is to collate copies of completed assessments and ask each Assessor to make a judgement on them. Internal verification exercises should be repeated at regular intervals to ensure that messages are reinforced. If action to adjust marks is found necessary, a plan should be in place to ensure that this is completed before standards verification takes place. Procedures should be put in place to provide ongoing feedback to Assessors.

Internal monitoring

Monitoring is necessary to:

- ensure that marking meets the national standards and that these are adhered to by all Assessors
- identify problems or areas where Assessors require advice/development
- ensure that learners are aware of, and satisfied with, the marking process.

Monitoring marking includes the Internal Verifiers sampling Assessors. It also includes reviewing the internal verification records completed for each Assessor and evaluating all aspects of their performance when conducting marking.

The Internal Verifiers should record their judgements and give feedback, rather than just tick boxes. Internal Verifiers should give actions on improvements that can be made to the marking process.

Monitoring the administration includes the correct storage, transit and invigilation of assessments. Please refer to the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document for guidance on transporting live assessment materials between sites.

Internal verification

Internal verification is based on sampling of completed controlled assessments. It should cover a wide range of achievement.

It is recommended that the Internal Verifier verifies a minimum of 25% of the total number of completed controlled assessments per component and per level. You are required to put in place an internal verification plan to ensure all Assessors are sampled appropriately.

Internal Verifiers should consider:

- the experience of each Assessor with the qualification
- the size of the cohort
- issues identified in previous samples, if applicable
- various centre sub-sites, if applicable.

Internal verification should take place soon after the assessment is completed and before the results are handed back to the learners, so that any remedial action can be implemented. Please note, learners should not receive results before the Standards Verifier has completed their sample.

We recommend that the Lead Internal Verifier verifies a minimum of 10% of the total number of completed controlled assessments per component and per level. If your centre schedules assessments throughout the academic year, the Lead Internal Verifier should sample a minimum of 10% of the assessments taken in each session.

Good practice

Internal verification can be undertaken in a number of ways, but the following are examples of good practice:

- across the centre, there is a recognised team which meets regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures
- standardisation meetings are seen as pivotal to staff development
- internal verification processes are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all members of the assessment teams
- all Assessors are involved in and understand the internal verification process
- the time required to carry out internal verification is recognised
- The Internal Verifier must have a good understanding and experience of the assessment but does not have to be an assessor.

Standards Verification

Standards verification is the quality assurance method that we use to ensure that our centres are assessing to the national standards. Standards verification is carried out during a remote centre virtual visit. In certain cases, a follow-up postal sample may be required.

Standards Verifiers are allocated to those centres that have approval for ELFS and have registered learners on this programme.

You need to liaise with your allocated Standards Verifier to discuss the planned standards verification needed for the year and agree suitable dates for the samples to be sent and for the centre virtual visit. Where possible, you should make available a wide range of components and levels to send to the Standards Verifier.

The primary focus and role of the Standards Verifier is to ensure that centre staff involved in the planning, delivery, assessment and internal verification of qualifications:

- maintain the national standards of qualifications awarded by us
- assess learner performance in accordance with national standards
- maintain a robust process for internal verification
- have a clear understanding of the verification procedures.

The key tasks of the Standards Verifier are to:

- verify marking practice and procedures, including assessment delivery, to ensure that national standards are applied consistently
- provide information, advice and support to centres
- maintain accurate records and provide feedback to us and centres
- promote and improve the quality of qualification assessment
- take action to deal with identified problems.

If you have a query regarding the allocation of a Standards Verifier or enquiring who your Standards Verifier is, please contact the Deployment team via the following link [Contact us | Pearson qualifications](#)

Standards Verifier

The Standards Verifier is our representative who:

- approves contextualised assessments before these are used to assess candidates
- agrees a schedule for the standards verification which includes an initial centre visit and a follow-up postal sample if needed
- validates assessment judgements through sampling completed controlled assessments, reviewing assessment records and internal verification reports and records
- provides positive feedback and encouragement when good practice is identified
- informs the Lead Internal Verifier of any areas of weakness and agrees an action plan for improvement
- checks that your internal quality assurance systems are sufficiently robust to ensure that future claims for certificates are valid and that problems are identified and resolved quickly
- reviews your processes for meeting the conditions in the Instructions for the Conduct of Controlled Assessment document
- recommends release or blocks to certification

Standards Verification Process

Sampling Report Form

The Sampling Report Form contains information necessary for your allocated Standards Verifier to conduct the whole standards verification process. This will be provided by your Standards Verifier.

At the beginning of the academic year, you and your Standards Verifier must mutually agree the frequency at which the Sampling Report Form is sent to the Standards Verifier, although this varies from centre to centre and is largely dependent on cohort size. You should update the Sampling Report Form on a regular basis in order for the Standards Verifier to select the necessary samples per component and level.

Please ensure you password protect this spreadsheet when sending it to your Standards Verifier to ensure your learner details remain confidential.

Learners need to have a registration number at this stage, or your Standards Verifier will request for registrations to be made before sampling can take place.

Please note: only one Sampling Report Form spreadsheet per qualification should be used for the academic year. You should update it regularly and send to your Standards Verifier as described above. You must ensure that this Sampling Report Form always contains the latest information. You and your Standards Verifier should liaise with each other to ensure version control of this document.

Centre virtual visit

There are two key purposes to the centre virtual visit:

- to check that national standards are being correctly applied in the marking and internal verification of assessments
- to check that the administration of tests and associated record-keeping demonstrate that there are effective security and test procedures in place.

The Standards Verifier agrees a schedule for the virtual visit with the Lead Internal Verifier, including:

- a date for samples to be sent to the Standards Verifier
- components and levels to be sampled and the evidence of learner work expected (please refer to the Sampling Report Form section above for further information)
- assessment records to be sent with the samples, including evidence of internal verification
- quality assurance policies to be reviewed
- information on learner recruitment, induction and tracking
- review of testing facilities and test delivery
- date and time to feedback to the Lead Internal Verifier via phone call or video call
- discussions with key team members
- review of facilities.

Please note: all assessments that have passed internal verification before the centre virtual visit should be kept in case the Standards Verifier needs more samples to make a decision on whether to release or block certification for the centre.

The purpose of the centre virtual visit is for the Standards Verifier to make a decision on whether or not to allow certification. A sample of **five** scripts per component and level make up the annual sample for each centre. These scripts should be sampled during the centre virtual visit. Within the centre, it is the Lead Internal Verifier's responsibility to provide evidence to demonstrate that all criteria are being met.

Your Standards Verifier reserves the right to request additional samples or increase the sample size at any time.

Monitoring Speaking, Listening and Communicating

As part of the annual virtual visit, the Standards Verifier will carry out a full review of your centre's approach to assessment, monitoring and standardisation of Speaking, Listening and Communicating (SLC). Your centre will be required to ensure that two E1, one E2 and one E3 video recordings of live assessments can be viewed by the Standards Verifier during sampling. If the Speaking, Listening & Communicating assessment is taking place remotely the Standards Verifier may request to attend the call and view the live assessment.

We appreciate that for Entry Level learners this process may be intrusive so have designed this process to be as flexible as possible to meet learner needs.

The Standards Verifier will sample one of the following options **per level**:

Entry Level 1:

- 1 live assessment including the accompanying Assessment Record Sheet, plus an extra 4 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

OR

- 2 video recordings including the accompanying Assessment Records Sheets, plus an extra 3 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

Entry level 2:

- 1 live assessment including the accompanying Assessment Record Sheet, plus an extra 4 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

OR

- 1 video recordings including the accompanying Assessment Records Sheets, plus an extra 4 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

Entry level 3:

- 1 live assessment including the accompanying Assessment Record Sheet, plus an extra 4 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

OR

- 1 video recordings including the accompanying Assessment Records Sheets, plus an extra 4 Assessment Record Sheets from different candidates

Centres are required to make two E1, one E2 and one E3 video recordings of live assessments prior to the virtual visit taking place. This is to ensure that the centre can provide sample assessments to the Standards Verifier during a virtual visit. More recordings may be requested so you may wish to video more than the requirement.

If there are specific reasons why a learner should not be identified within a video recording, please contact FS Assessment via the contact us page - [Contact us | Pearson qualifications](#)

For further information, please refer to the Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessment document.

During the virtual visit, the Standards Verifier might also request to see further internal documents, including:

- controlled assessment reports (please see explanation below)
- internal verification plans
- internal verification records, including feedback to Assessors and/or Internal Verifiers
- records of monitoring assessment practice, including feedback to Assessors and Internal Verifiers.

A controlled assessment report is a log of anything to do with the controlled assessment taking place. For example:

- date and time of assessment
- if the assessment was split between different sessions and details of the start and the finish time of each session
- log of which learner took which controlled assessment test from which set
- name of the person who printed the controlled assessment tests from the secure website
- name of person who was responsible for contextualising Entry Level Functional Skills controlled assessment tests
- name of person that removed the controlled assessment tests from the secure storage
- name of Invigilator
- number of learners that took the controlled assessment test
- anything that took place during the assessment that does not have to be reported as per JCQ guidelines, for example supervised toilet breaks
- other relevant information.

During the virtual visit, the Standards Verifier needs to verify that your centre:

- has a Lead Internal Verifier in post
- has a process to profile individual learners to ensure that the levels are correctly identified at the start of the programme
- has a programme with a structure and content appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes
- understands and is prepared to conform with the assessment requirements

- has the resources needed to deliver an Entry Level Functional Skills programme
- reviews the procedures necessary to ensure that the programme takes account of learners' changing needs
- has identified progression routes most appropriate to individual learners.

Where possible, the Standards Verifier should also meet with the assessment and verification team to discuss and advise on assessment issues and practices, and to check the learner suitability criteria. A crucial part of the Standards Verifiers' role is to advise and support you in relation to assessment and quality assurance issues.

The findings of the virtual visit are discussed with the Lead Internal Verifier at the end of the virtual visit. Both the Lead Internal Verifier and the Standards Verifier should allow enough time for this as actions for improvement are identified during the discussion. It is important that any actions and target dates agreed are clear and realistic. Lead Internal Verifiers should ensure that they understand any required action(s) so they can follow up with the assessment team in the centre.

The main action points are agreed during the virtual visit. If the Standards Verifier has any concerns about standards or the validity of the administration in your centre, the Standards Verifier may consult the Senior Standards Verifier and our FS Assessment team to confirm the virtual visit outcome.

The Standards Verifier completes the Standards Verifier Report Form. This will be forwarded to Pearson and to the centre within 10 working days of the centre virtual visit.

Please note: The Standards Verification virtual visit must take place before 31 July 2022. Requests for visits after this date will not be granted and the centre will not be able to claim certification for learners in this academic year.

All standards verification visits are remote. If a face-to-face visit is required, further information will be provided.

Postal sampling

The components and levels available during the centre virtual visit will be sampled and released for certification if appropriate. All remaining components and levels are sampled through postal sampling at a later stage during the year.

The date for submitting the postal sample is agreed between you and the Standards Verifier during the centre virtual visit. You should post original assessments to the Standards Verifier. You must keep copies of the original assessments. These copies must be stored securely.

It is the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier to ensure that the sample they internally verify is representative of all Assessors, Internal Verifiers and all centre sub-sites.

The Standards Verifier uses the Sampling Report Form provided to ensure that at least 25% of the sample has been through the internal verification process and at least 10% has been sampled by the Lead Internal Verifier.

The postal sampling process with the Standards Verifier normally includes:

- confirming when the Sampling Report Form is completed by the centre and sent to the Standards Verifier
- confirming when the Standards Verifier selects the sample and receives the selected completed controlled assessments
- which components and levels are to be verified
- annual number of learners for each component and level.

All parcels containing a sample of completed controlled assessments should be sent using a secure postal service which allows tracking parcels. The tracking number should be retained until the Standards Verifier confirms the receipt of the parcel. The Standards Verifier completes the postal sample verification within 10 days of receiving the parcel and completes the Standards Verification Postal Report. You are advised to wait 5 days after receiving confirmation of the programme approval on the Standards Verification Report before making any claims on Edexcel Online.

Following standards verification

After standards verification, if your centre is given a release to certificate by the Standards Verifier, you can continue to assess and verify the controlled assessments for your learners for the remainder of the academic year. However, we reserve the right to re-sample assessments after the Standards Verifier has allowed access to certification.

A certification release lasts for the academic year in which the Standards Verifier visit takes place. The deadline to claim certification for candidates completing the 2021-2022 assessments is 31 August 2022.

If there are serious issues identified by the Standards Verifier, these must be addressed by your centre. You will have a block put on certification while these action points are being addressed. Further sampling of completed controlled assessments will need to take place to show that any action points relating to assessment or internal verification have been addressed. It is therefore important to schedule standards verification with enough time between receiving the results of the standards verification and claiming certificates.

Retaining assessments

For you to monitor assessment decisions over time, you should retain all completed and marked controlled assessments until certificates are received, checked and issued to learners.

The following documents need to be retained for a **minimum of three years**, for all learners whose assessments have been verified by your Standards Verifier:

- any internal verification feedback to Assessor documents related to the sample
- records of internal verification meetings
- internal verification feedback forms
- standards verification feedback reports
- controlled assessments submitted to the Standards Verifier.

Support

Documentation

We communicate with the Examinations Officer for administration and certification information. We do not issue any information directly to Programme Managers or Lead Internal Verifiers. However, we produce a variety of qualification specifications, policy documents and information guides to assist teaching teams.

Websites

qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html

Our website pages are regularly updated with all the most current information and documents. The homepage for Entry Level Functional Skills is:
qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-functional-skills.html

www.edexcelonline.com

This web-based system allows centre administrators to register, manage and certificate learners.

Pearson teams

Customer Services

We pledge to provide excellent service in all your dealings with us. We have a dedicated Customer Services team and are able to answer your query or direct it to the appropriate team: <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html>

Please note: Controlled assessment queries must not be emailed. The content is **secure** and emailing any part of it is considered a **breach of security** – if you have a query about the content of a controlled assessment test, please contact us stating your name and contact details, and request for a member of the team to contact you directly via phone.

Approvals team

ukapproval@pearson.com - for gaining approval and approval queries

Business Improvement and Regulation team

pqsmalpractice@pearson.com - for reporting cases of suspected malpractice or a breach of test paper security.

Exams Officer Support team

examsofficers@pearson.com - for registrations and certifications issues, reporting of grades, amendments to names, grades entered incorrectly and reprinting of certificates.

Deployment team

To find out your Standards Verifier details, to have a Standards Verifier allocated to your centre, to report difficulty contacting Standards Verifiers and report form queries including the logging of reports and release/block of qualifications.

Vocational Quality Standards team

vocationalqualitystandards@pearson.com - for special requirements, quality issues and appeals against qualification and certification blocks.

