

Administration Guidelines

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I Administration Guidelines

Apprenticeships, BTEC, NVQ & SVQ

I.1 Responsibility for registration

Responsibility for the registration of learners and for the payment of fees lies with the approved centre.

Pearson Work Based Learning reserves the right to:

- refuse to accept new registrations from a centre if that centre has a debt outstanding to Pearson Work Based Learning at the due date of submission of new registrations
- withhold certificates if that centre has a debt outstanding to Pearson Work Based Learning at the due date of issue of certificates.

I.2 Deletion of registrations

For Work Based Learning provision, learner registrations will not normally be deleted or fees refunded once registrations have been submitted and accepted by Pearson Work Based Learning. A new learner cannot replace an individual who has been registered and subsequently left the programme. Any requests to delete learners must be approved by your Regional Account Manager and further agreed by the Director of Pearson WBL.

I.3 Reporting success to UCAS

In March/April each year, we undertake a matching exercise with UCAS to identify those BTEC Level 3-5 learners who have applied to UCAS for entry to higher education courses. During July/August, we will provide UCAS with confirmation of these matched learners' achievements so that HEIs have the latest information on each applicant.

Where a match cannot be found, because of incorrect spellings or incorrect centre details, UCAS will write to the learners to ask them to send evidence directly to HEIs. We will still be able to inform UCAS of these learners' achievements if you notify Pearson Work Based Learning of the learner's UCAS applicant number by email to wblcustomerservices@pearson.com. This number must be in the following format: 10-123-345-6.

Red UCAS SRFs will be issued in May for matched learners following BTEC Nationals, Higher Nationals and Foundations Studies Art and Design and who are applying for higher education places.

It is important that results are reported for these learners to Pearson Work Based Learning by 5 July. Where we receive results after 5 July and before 31 July, we make every effort to confirm the results to UCAS.

If you are reporting results to Pearson Work Based Learning by EDIFACT EDI, we would ask that you send a file earlier in July for your UCAS learners only, rather than include these learners in a larger file later in July.

I.4 Recognition of prior learning and/or experience (RPL)

Centres may make claims for some units or a whole qualification based on recognition of prior learning and/or experience. Please refer to the Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning, which is on our website, <http://pearsonwbl.edexcel.com/policies/Pages/home.aspx>

I.5 Accreditation of prior learning and/or experience

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) and Accreditation of Prior Achievement (APA) are assessment processes which allow achievement from a range of activities, using any valid assessment method, to be recognised. Provided that the assessment requirements of a given unit or qualification have been met, the use of these processes is acceptable for accrediting part of a unit, unit(s) or a qualification.

Evidence submitted under these systems must be:

- valid
- authentic
- current
- relevant
- sufficient.

Your centre assessor has the responsibility for ensuring that all the requirements of a unit have been met and also for keeping appropriate records. It is also important that the internal quality assurance process has taken into account the needs of the assessment strategies for the qualifications for which these are being accredited.

Further information on assessment requirements/strategies, where applicable, can be found in the Centre Guidance document for the qualification or from the relevant standard-setting body. Where a Sector Skills Council (SSC) has an operation licence, the information can be found on the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) website.

Centres are expected to establish their own policy with regard to APL, in line with Pearson Work Based Learning policy. Centres should refer to the policy on APL and the guidance on establishing and implementing an APL process, which can be found on the Edexcel website.

1.6 Claiming a qualification by RPL

After accepting a learner for assessment of prior learning, registration should be made in the usual way and RPL achievement may then be reported and graded where appropriate, using methods of reporting success.

1.7 QCF Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT)

Learners may transfer credit achieved with other awarding bodies to Edexcel QCF programmes provided the credits fall within the rules of combination for the qualification.

CAT should be claimed in writing following registration and before claiming final certification by submitting a copy of the relevant certificate and advising which units are to be credited.

It is hoped that in future an online service will be available that can interface with MIAP's Personal Learner Record system and check CAT claims automatically.

1.8 Language of Assessment

The language of assessment is English unless agreed with Pearson Work Based Learning. Centres are required to notify BTEC Assessment by the end of September 2012 where a programme is delivered solely in the medium of Welsh. Pearson Work Based Learning will endeavour to provide standard verification in Welsh for programmes notified by this date.

1.9 BTEC Completion of Quality Assurance Processes

BTEC programmes are operated on the basis that appropriate quality checks are completed prior to certification. Certification claims should only be made when centres have authority to do so. Claims made without authority may be blocked from processing or may lead to subsequent action by Pearson Work Based Learning.

Pearson Work Based Learning reserves the right to suspend certification by a centre on a programme/unit if there are any concerns over standards, quality assurance or centre management.

This includes qualifications approved prior to 2003 and those on the customised qualification framework (CQF). Programmes are subject to external verification. Full details are given in the customised handbook on the Pearson Work Based Learning website, <http://pearsonwbl.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/qa-cust.aspx>. The outcome of standards verification is a report and if this indicates a 'Yes', then certification may be claimed.

NVQ/ SVQ Completion of Quality Assurance Processes

Regulations

QCA NVQ Code of Practice (2006), The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications (2004) and The Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (2008)

The above regulations specify the quality assurance and control requirements which apply to and reflect the distinctive character of NQF NVQs, QCF NVQs, SVQs and competence-based qualifications. All staff involved with the delivery of NVQs should be familiar with their contents. Copies of the documents can be found on the Ofqual website.

The NVQ Code of Practice will continue to apply to all NVQs in the NQF until their last certification end date. These NVQs will continue to be part of the NQF and therefore must meet the requirements that applied when they were accredited – **The Statutory Regulation of External Qualifications 2004** and the **NVQ code of practice**. This means that there will be a transition period during which awarding organisations and their centres, operating in both the QCF and the NQF, are required to work with two sets of regulatory requirements – one for QCF NVQs and competence-based qualifications and one for NVQs in the NQF.

It is highly recommended that centre coordinators and NVQ administrators are briefed on any issues which are affected by the above regulations. These could include (among others) the ten week rule, direct claims status and record-keeping.

Also, all staff involved must be aware that centres need to have approval with Pearson Work Based Learning before they can register Learners and deliver NQF NVQ awards (see part 3 of this section of the manual). Similarly, centres must have gained centre recognition before they can register Learners and deliver QCF NVQ awards. It is essential that the deadlines given in part 2 are strictly adhered to.

The NVQ Code of Practice and Edexcel Assessment Requirements, as specified in the NVQ Handbook, stipulate that centre records, including all recording information, internal verification and assessment records, are retained for auditing purposes for a period of three years.

There is no penalty for withdrawing Learners, if they are no longer on a programme or have transferred to another programme or centre.

Having accurate data enables us to provide appropriate solutions to centres' needs to meet their quality assurance obligations. We can also provide better responses to any queries they may have about administration.

1.10 Equality of Opportunity

Equality of opportunity is a tenet of our provision and is embedded in Pearson Work Based Learning's policies. There should be no artificial barriers to Pearson Work Based Learning programmes and awards, which must be:

- available to everyone who can achieve the required standard and be free from barriers which restrict access to progression
- free from overt or covert discriminatory practices with regard to age, colour, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, marital status, race or sexual orientation, and pay due regard to the particular requirements of individuals, including those who may require support to undertake learning and assessment
- free from any restrictions that are not legally required.

Every approved centre must have an equal opportunities policy and a strategy for monitoring and reviewing:

- access to assessment and learning
- prevention of discrimination
- provision for Learners with particular requirements

and a mechanism for dealing with Learner appeals.

It is essential that centres recruit with integrity and fully explore with applicants any issues which may prevent them from achieving in any areas of their proposed qualification.

Centres should assess each applicant's potential and make a judgement about his/her ability to successfully achieve the programme of study. This should include access to specialist resources and/or essential skills such as basic and key skills. Initial assessment is highly recommended, with particular regard to the Disability Discrimination Act as applicable.

Centres should refer to the appropriate Occupational Standards, the Evidence Requirements and, where available, the Assessment Requirements/Strategy, for the particular NVQ title when giving advice to prospective Learners. As part of this process, centres should advise Learners if there is a more appropriate qualification, or if they would only be able to achieve unit certification, rather than the full qualification.

1.11 Access Arrangements Policies

Specific assessment policy is detailed in the guidelines for each NVQ/SVQ qualification. Centres should refer to the reasonable adjustment arrangements for Edexcel vocational qualifications, which can be found on the Pearson Work Based Learning website.

Pearson Work Based Learning's policy on access arrangements and special considerations for BTEC and Edexcel NVQ/SVQ qualifications aims to enhance access to the qualifications for learners with disabilities and other difficulties (as defined by the Disability and Discrimination Act 1995 and the Amendments to the Act), without compromising the assessment of skills, knowledge, understanding or competence being measured.

Note: For full information on equal opportunities, visit the Disability Rights Commission website: www.equalityhumanrights.com and refer to the latest Draft Code of Practice: The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

1.12 Assessment and reasonable adjustments

Centres can put in place reasonable adjustment arrangements for Learners with particular requirements if they have, for example:

- a permanent or long-term disability or learning difficulty
- a temporary disability, illness or indisposition.

These arrangements are intended to allow Learners to demonstrate their achievement. However, any reasonable adjustment arrangements must not:

- advantage or disadvantage the Learner
- alter the assessment demands of the qualification.

Centres should notify Pearson Work Based Learning in writing to the Quality Operations Manager of any reasonable adjustment arrangements they are putting in place to support Learners.

Pearson Work Based Learning reserves the right to request further clarification or information in relation to any proposed arrangements.

1.13 Centre recruitment

While access to our awards should be as open as possible, it is not in the interests of the individual if centres encourage unrealistic Learner expectations or set unattainable goals.

Centres must ensure that their recruitment process is conducted with integrity. Counselling on the appropriateness and feasibility of a particular course or qualification is very important to ensure the best match with individuals' needs.

1.14 Appeals by a Learners

As part of the approvals/centre recognition process, centres are required to provide evidence that they have a published internal appeals procedure which can be accessed by Learners.

From time to time, learners do contact Pearson Work Based Learning directly about issues relating to the delivery and assessment of the programme they are following. On receipt of any such communication we would, in the first instance, refer the learners back to their centre's own internal appeals procedure. Learners are advised that they must fully exhaust this system before Pearson Work Based Learning can become involved.

If a learner does access a centre's internal system and does not feel that the outcome is satisfactory, he/she can contact Pearson Work Based Learning again.

Lshould provide the following information when making an appeal to Pearson Work Based Learning:

- an outline of the nature of the issue and details of communication with their centre
- evidence that they have fully completed their centre's internal appeals process
- clear details of why they feel the outcome to be unsatisfactory.

At this stage, we would take the appropriate steps to investigate the complaint. The outcomes of any such reviews are confidential between Pearson Work Based Learning and the centre. Pearson Work Based Learning may charge for carrying out these reviews.

The External Verifier's role is to monitor the conduct of the appeal in line with the centre's published appeals procedure. External Verifiers are not permitted to arbitrate in appeals.

1.15 Centre assessment records

Centres are expected to make every effort to ensure the safety and security of Learner work which they are holding for assessment purposes. Centres must ensure that they have detailed and up-to-date assessment records for all Learners, which are kept separately from actual Learner work. Assessment and verification records left in Learner portfolios are likely to be unavailable when Learners leave programmes or complete certification. Centres need to retain assessment and internal verification records for three years, according to the **NVQ Code of Practice and Edexcel Assessment Requirements**.

1.16 Lost or destroyed learner work

If Learner work is lost or destroyed, centres will need to provide those assessment records that will verify what has been achieved in order to ensure that certification can proceed.

Centres must notify BTEC Quality Standards immediately when Learner work is lost or destroyed, ensuring they provide the following information:

- circumstances in which the work was lost or destroyed
- programme title and number
- details of the Learner(s) affected
- details of which unit(s) are affected
- centre, programme and assessment records
- any evidence of internal verification
- any supplementary information, such as witness testimonies.

Each case will be considered individually and certificates may be granted if:

- sufficient centre records and supplementary evidence are available
- all other assessment on the programme has been subject to ongoing external quality assurance which identifies that national standards have been met.

1.17 Certification

Certificates are issued weekly. Pearson Work Based Learning reserves the right to withhold certificates if fees are outstanding at the time of despatch.

Results should only be reported if your centre has clearance to certificate through reports from standards verifiers or examiners. Subject to this results must be reported immediately following programme completion so that certificates can be issued as soon as possible.

1.20 Certificate block or deferral

Centres offering Edexcel NVQs/SVQs will receive an annual visit for 'Quality Review and Development' by an Edexcel 'Centre Quality Reviewer'. The annual visit by a single Centre Quality Reviewer will address the management of all the NVQs approved at the centre. In addition, centres will also receive a separate annual visit by sector-specific and occupationally competent 'Standards Verifiers' for each QCF NVQ sector who will sample Learners' work in the usual way. The Standards Verifier will review evidence to ensure that the National Occupational Standards for assessment, internal verification and for the occupational sector are met.

In order for certification to be released, confirmation is required that the following are met:

1. the Quality Objectives for the effective management of the delivery of all Edexcel QCF qualifications,
in particular the Quality Objective for internal verification
and
2. the National Occupational Standards for assessment, verification and for the specific occupational sector.

Where problems have been encountered with the assessment of the programme or with the assessment of individual Learners, the Standards Verifier (SV) will have reported this to Pearson Work Based Learning and certificates for Learners on these programmes may be withheld or blocked.

A block on certification may be the result of information received by Pearson Work Based Learning which raises doubt as to the validity of certificates issued. Alternatively a potential risk may have been indicated to, or identified by, Pearson Work Based Learning.

The decision to block certification may have been made by the regulator or by the funding providers. Centres are reminded of the **NVQ Code of Practice** and the **Edexcel Assessment Requirements** and of the role of the awarding organisation in ensuring the validity of certificates. There is an overriding implication that the regulator and/or funding providers may influence this decision.

Following a visit by a Standards Verifier, he/she will complete a Qualification Report Form (QRF). The QRF authorises claims for certification by allowing Direct Claim Status or allows limited certification to be claimed by using a Limited Certification form. Where a certification box is checked as 'No', a further External Verifier (EV) visit will be required before certification can be released and centres may be required to pay for this. Centres can keep track of the information on registrations and their associated certification through Edexcel Online.

Pearson Work Based Learning Standards Verifiers will provide support, advice and guidance to centres to achieve Direct Claims Status (DCS). Pearson Work Based Learning will maintain the integrity of NVQs through ensuring that the awarding of these qualifications is secure. Where there are quality issues identified in the delivery of programmes, Pearson Work Based Learning will exercise the right to:

- direct centres to take actions
- limit or suspend certification
- suspend registration.

The approach of Pearson Work Based Learning in such circumstances is to work with the centre to overcome the problems identified. If additional training is required, Pearson Work Based Learning will aim to secure the appropriate expertise to provide this.

When programme teams are contacted by their allocated EV, they need to liaise with the EV to make the best use of EV time during visits, so as to ensure that the certification status of their programmes is upheld. Programme teams may use Edexcel Online to check their EV allocation.

2 Invoices

We will issue invoices and credit notes once entries have been processed. Both paper copy and online invoices are available. To access invoice details online please follow these instructions:

- Log into Edexcel Online – www.edexcelonline.com
- Click 'Home' link at the top of the page
- From the menu section (at the left hand side of the page) click 'View Invoices'
- Click 'View Summary Invoices'
- You are then presented with two ways to search for invoices. The first (default) option allows a search by invoice number. Alternatively, enter two dates to see all invoices produced during the specified period.

You will be provided with a summary, including the following information:

- Invoice number
- Invoice description
- Date issued
- Date due
- Amount.

You can also see the contents of the invoice by clicking on the 'View' button on the relevant statement. By using this function you can view the subject or programme and any learners to which the invoice applies. Any invoices showing a minus figure are credit notes.

Please note that this information is only available to users with the 'Invoice Enquiries' profile activated. Your Edexcel Online Administrator can change user profiles if required.