

BTEC International

# Quality Assurance Handbook

2018-2019

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# Introduction

## How to use this handbook

The handbook is divided into individual chapters to make it easier to navigate and use. Please make sure you read this introduction thoroughly. It provides the following important information to help you manage your BTECs:

- key dates
- roles & responsibilities
- support
- a brief explanation of each chapter and the qualification types covered

## What is quality assurance?

BTEC quality assurance is:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• at the heart of BTEC qualifications</li><li>• how we ensure the quality and standard of internal assessment in all BTEC centres</li></ul>	
<b>You use quality assurance to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ensure that your managers, Internal Verifiers and Assessors are standardised and supported</li></ul>
<b>We use quality assurance to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• check that all centres are working to the required standards</li><li>• identify and provide support where it is needed in order to safeguard certification</li><li>• recognise and support good practice</li></ul>

Every year we publish an updated **BTEC International Quality Assurance Handbook** to explain our quality assurance processes for the coming academic year.

Along with your qualification specification, this handbook should provide your Assessors and Internal Verifiers with the information they need to ensure quality assurance is undertaken successfully.

## Which qualifications does this handbook cover?

This handbook covers the following qualifications:

**BTEC  
qualifications  
accredited on:**

- Qualification Credit Framework (QCF)
- BTEC (QCF) Entry to Level 3
- BTEC (QCF) Level 4 to 7

The guidance in this handbook relates to the quality assurance of internally assessed qualifications and units.

This handbook does not cover the following qualifications. We have separate quality handbooks with specific details for:

- Higher National programmes approved after 1 September 2016 on the Regulated Qualification Framework (Please refer to the Higher National International Guide to Quality and Assessment document on our website)
- NVQ programmes accredited on the NQF and QCF

## Who is this handbook for?

This handbook is for **International centres only**. UK centres should refer to the relevant UK guidance documents on our website.

The handbook contains important information for anyone managing, delivering or assessing BTEC QCF qualifications. Please make sure that all the relevant staff in your centre read and understand this document.

## What other quality assurance guidance is available?

For extra support, we also provide guides and template forms that you may find useful. These guides provide essential information for anyone involved in delivery and assessment of BTEC qualifications. Please make sure that all the relevant staff in your centre read and understand them.

## BTEC Centre Guides

<b>Internal Assessment for BTEC Firsts and Nationals</b>	Provides important information and guidance for the assessment requirements for all BTEC Firsts and Nationals.
<b>Subject Guides to Internal Assessment</b>	We have provided subject-specific guides to implement the assessment requirements introduced in 2014 for BTEC Firsts and Nationals. These contain useful advice and guidance, examples of forms and where to get further support. These are published on each qualification specification page on our website.
<b>Assessment (Entry Level to Level 3)</b>	Overarching guide to the principles of assessment design and delivery for Entry Level to Level 3 BTEC qualifications.
<b>Assessment (Level 4 to 7)</b>	Overarching guide to the principles of assessment design and delivery for Level 4 to 7 BTEC qualifications.
<b>RQF/SRF Higher Nationals International Guide to Quality and Assessment (Approved from 1st September 2016)</b>	Provides important information about quality assurance and assessment requirements for Higher National programmes approved on the RQF/SRF from 1st September 2016.
<b>Internal Verification</b>	Advice and guidance on the management and implementation of internal verification and standardisation in your centre.
<b>Managing Quality</b>	An overview of the management of internal quality assurance of BTEC programmes across your centre, with advice and guidance on best practice.

# Key dates

It is important to register your learners as soon as they start their programme of learning and no later than 60 days after enrolment. The registration on Edexcel Online alerts us that you have started teaching. We then allocate a Standards Verifier who will be able to give you valuable support and advice to ensure that your delivery and assessment are to the required standard.

Please refer to the relevant chapters of this handbook for full details of the quality assurance process.

For dates and deadlines relating to learner registration and certification, please refer to the International Information Manual.

# Roles and responsibilities

This section gives you an outline of the key roles undertaken at your centre. The responsibilities for each role are described briefly. Where a role has specific responsibility in relation to a quality assurance process, this is also explained in the relevant chapter.

## Roles at cross-centre level

### *Senior Managers*

#### Senior Manager responsibilities

The Head of Centre is formally responsible for management and delivery of BTECs in your centre.

**The Head of Centre must ensure that your centre acts in accordance with our terms and conditions of approval, by:**

- ensuring the provision of appropriate resources
- recruiting learners with integrity
- providing full and fair access to assessment
- maintaining full and accurate records of assessment
- complying with all our quality assurance processes
- ensuring that all certificate claims are secure and accurate

Day-to-day responsibility is normally delegated to the centre's Quality Nominee.

**Senior managers must:**

- identify a Quality Nominee to act as a key point of contact with us
- liaise with the Quality Nominee to ensure that all processes are being conducted effectively
- support the Quality Nominee to take action to respond to reports on quality assurance

Other responsibilities:

**The Head of Centre or other senior managers may need to be directly involved in:**

- dealing with appeals from learners that have not been resolved by the programme team
- investigating malpractice allegations related to learners or members of staff
- liaising with us where any serious breach of approval conditions has occurred
- any aspect of quality assurance which relates to the overall integrity and security of BTEC qualifications

### ***Quality Nominee***

We ask every BTEC centre to identify a member of staff as the Quality Nominee for BTEC provision. This person is the main point of contact for information related to quality assurance. The Quality Nominee will receive regular information from us about all aspects of BTECs, which they must share with the relevant staff in your centre. Therefore, it is very important that Quality Nominee details are kept up-to-date on Edexcel Online.

#### **Updating Quality Nominee details on Edexcel Online**

- Log into your Edexcel Online account at: [edexcelonline.com](http://edexcelonline.com)
- Click on My Account
- Put a cross in the box marked, 'Please check this box if you are the Quality Nominee for your centre'
- Click **Submit**

We recommend that your Quality Nominee is someone with responsibility for your BTEC curriculum, as they will be involved in monitoring and supporting staff in your centre. This is a curriculum role, so in most cases it is not appropriate for the Examinations Officer to be the Quality Nominee.

Our systems will only allow one person to be identified as the Quality Nominee for your centre. In larger centres, we appreciate that certain responsibilities may be delegated to a team. In this case, the Quality Nominee remains the main point of contact for us and must coordinate quality assurance activity undertaken by their team.

### Quality Nominee responsibilities

Ensure the effective management of your BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice your centre.

#### **The Quality Nominee is:**

- a key point of contact with us
- the person who liaises with senior management to ensure that all processes are being conducted effectively
- the initial point of contact for our Standards Verifiers, who makes sure that they are put in touch with the relevant Lead Internal Verifier to conduct sampling
- the person who puts actions in place to respond to the Standards Verifiers' reports

#### **Liaise with the appropriate centre and Pearson staff to ensure that:**

- all programmes are approved and registrations are accurate and up-to-date
- our approval conditions and policy requirements are being implemented consistently and effectively
- all staff are aware of all support and guidance available and understand requirements
- assessment and internal verification is effective on all BTEC programmes
- there is a registered Lead Internal Verifier in place for each Principal Subject Area, where required
- standards verification is completed successfully

Further guidance can be found in the BTEC International Centre Guide to Managing Quality on our website.

## **Examinations Officer**

This is the person in your centre who takes responsibility for the correct administration of learners with us. This may be a defined role or, in a smaller centre, an additional duty undertaken by a Programme Leader or teacher. The Examinations Officer normally acts as the administrator for Edexcel Online, which provides direct access for learner administration.

### **Examinations Officer responsibilities**

- Liaise with programme leaders to maintain information on which programmes are running and when they start and finish
- Register learners within 60 days of enrolment at your centre
- Higher fees are payable for late registrations (61-90 days after enrolment the original fee x 1.25; 91 – 120 days x 1.5; 121 days+ x 2)
- The name given at registration will be printed on the certificate
- Register learners onto the correct programmes checking that these are the specific titles and versions that learners are following
- Check registrations carefully to ensure that all data is correct and follow correct procedures if amendments are required
- Give Edexcel Online access to the Quality Nominee
- Give Edexcel Online basic access to all other BTEC staff as necessary

You can find full details on BTEC registration procedures, including deadlines and instructions for registering via EDI and Edexcel Online from the Information Manual on our website.

To use Edexcel Online, you will need to be set up with an account in order to obtain a username and password.

If your centre is not registered, or you are unsure who your Edexcel Online administrator is, contact our Edexcel Online Customer Services team on **+44 (0) 844 576 0024**. For additional Examinations Officer support, contact: **[examsofficers@pearson.com](mailto:examsofficers@pearson.com)**.

## Roles at programme level

The programme team consists of the teachers or tutors who are responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of BTEC programmes.

### BTEC programme team responsibilities

- Read and understand the programme specification and assessment guidance
- Understand the construction of the units
- Identify opportunities to generate evidence
- Create and agree a plan of assessment activities, with timescales
- Ensure the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team
- Read and understand the relevant chapters of this Quality Assurance Handbook.

The appropriate minimum size of the programme team will depend on the number of units and the number of learners. An Assessor cannot internally verify their assessment decisions. Where there is a single specialist practitioner delivering the programme, arrangements must be made for their assignments and assessment decisions to be internally verified by someone appropriately experienced.

### **Programme Leader**

A Programme Leader or Programme Manager is a person appointed by your centre to take overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of BTEC qualifications. The Programme Leader may also act as the Lead Internal Verifier, if appropriate.

### Programme Leader responsibilities

- Liaise with the Quality Nominee to be aware of information updates and quality assurance requirements
- Liaise effectively with the Examinations Officer to ensure accuracy of registration and certification of learners
- Liaise with programme team to confirm assessment and internal verification schedules
- Liaise with relevant Pearson appointed staff undertaking quality

assurance

- Ensure that there are sufficient resources to deliver the programmes and units
- Ensure that programme staff have the necessary expertise and, where relevant, qualifications
- Review reports arising from quality assurance and ensure that appropriate actions are taken

### ***Lead Internal Verifier***

The Regulatory arrangements for the Qualifications and Credit Framework 2008 require us to “put in place procedures that must ensure each centre has arrangements to identify a single named point of accountability for the quality assurance and management for the assessment of units and qualifications”. We also require this for all BTEC qualifications.

A Lead Internal Verifier is a person designated by you to act as a point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area (e.g. BTEC (QCF) Firsts and Nationals in Business).

We use the term Lead Internal Verifier to emphasise the importance of proper co-ordination of internal verification through a single point of contact. This is a role that senior staff members within programme teams have always undertaken.

We appreciate that centres deliver BTEC programmes in different ways and have a variety of programme team and management structures. However, the Lead Internal Verifier should be:

- the person within the centre who has responsibility for verifying and signing off the assessment outcomes for a subject area
- a subject specialist - it is important that the Lead Internal Verifier has an understanding of the subject that they are responsible for
- directly involved in the assessment and delivery of a programme, with a good understanding of the units being assessed
- the person who usually coordinates internal verification across assessors and other internal verifiers for a subject area

## Lead Internal Verifier responsibilities

- Oversee the internal verification activity in their subject and ensure that it is consistently applied  
Please note: the Lead Internal Verifier is not expected to undertake all the internal verification themselves
- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for your programmes which is fit for purpose and meets requirements
- Sign off the plan and check that it is being followed at suitable points
- Where possible, undertake some internal verification and/or assessment for individual units within at least one of the programmes
- Ensure that assessment plans, records of assessment and samples of learner work are retained for standards verification if necessary. Plan to set aside examples of work verified to different levels and grades
- Support the development of Assessors and Internal Verifiers
- Liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place

## Levels 2 and 3 Lead Internal Verifier responsibilities from 1 September 2014

New assessment rules have been brought in for new Level 2 and 3 learners registered after 1st September 2014. Further information can be found on our website.

In addition to the duties above the Lead Internal Verifier will be responsible for:

- authorising resubmission of assignments for learners who are thought to be able to achieve more without any additional guidance
- authorising re-takes for those learners who, after a re-submission have not yet achieved the Pass criteria on a QCF Level 2 or 3 qualification

## *Internal Verifiers*

Internal verification is the quality assurance system you use to monitor assessment practice and decisions, ensuring that:

- assessment is consistent across the programme

- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions accurately match learner work to assessment and grading criteria
- standardisation of Assessors takes place

Internal Verifiers can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the programme. You cannot internally verify your own assessment.

Where there is a team of Assessors, it is good practice for all Assessors to be involved in internally verifying each other. If there is only one main person responsible for delivery and assessment, then another person will need to be identified to undertake internal verification.

### Internal Verifier responsibilities

- Agree an assessment and verification plan for each programme
- Check the quality of assessment instruments to ensure they are fit for purpose
- Ensure an effective system of recording learner achievement is in place
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of the internal verification process
- Advise on the appropriateness of assessment evidence with regard to level, sufficiency, authenticity, validity and consistency
- Use subject specialism to sample assessments to verify Assessors' judgements, ensuring that they are consistent, fair and reliable
- Ensure your own assessment decisions are sampled when teaching on the programme
- Ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken where necessary
- Take part in the formal stages of any appeal

Further guidance can be found in the BTEC Centre Guide to Internal verification on our website.

### Assessors

An Assessor is anyone responsible for the assessment of learners.

## Assessor responsibilities

- Ensure that you have read and understood the programme specifications and the requirements of all units being assessed
- Agree an assessment and verification plan for each programme ensuring full coverage of the required units
- Teach learners the knowledge and skills required to achieve the qualification
- Design assessment activities which guide learners to produce evidence that meets the targeted learning aims and assessment criteria, using the associated assessment guidance to provide sufficient coverage of unit content
- For learners studying at Levels 4- 7, provide formative feedback on work in progress, identifying areas for improvement
- For learners studying at Levels 2 and 3, decide when they are ready to complete independently an assignment for formal assessment
- Ensure opportunities for plagiarism are minimised and that learners' work is authentic
- Provide summative assessment of the completed work submitted by learners, checking authenticity and sufficiency of evidence produced against the relevant learning aims, assessment criteria and unit content
- Accurately record all summative assessment decisions
- Follow up any advice from your Internal Verifier

Further guidance can be found in the **BTEC Centre Guides to Assessment** on our website.

# Support

There are many ways we can support you. We have dedicated teams available for specific advice and guidance who you can contact for help.

## Subject support

### Pearson Authorised Assignment Briefs

A bank of Pearson Authorised Assignment Briefs for our BTEC qualifications is available on myBTEC: [www.btec.co.uk/mybtec](http://www.btec.co.uk/mybtec). They are also available on the specification pages of our website.

These assignment briefs cover several units of BTEC Firsts and Nationals. Please take care to check the framework of the qualification matches the framework for your qualification.

It is not compulsory to use these assignments and we recommend you review them to ensure that your centre devised briefs are in line with national standards and best BTEC practice. You must apply internal verification to the Pearson Authorised Assignment Briefs as follows.

#### Programme Leader responsibilities

<b>Use a Pearson Authorised Assignment Brief as published</b>	An Internal Verifier must ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• it meets the specific needs of your learners</li><li>• it remains current and relevant for learners in your area</li><li>• the Assessor has added correct key information including hand out dates and submission deadlines</li></ul>
<b>Adapt a Pearson Authorised Assignment Brief to suit the needs of your learners</b>	The internal verification process must be detailed and rigorous in order to ensure the assignment brief is fully fit for purpose.
<b>Create your own assignment briefs</b>	The internal verification process must be detailed and rigorous in order to ensure the assignment brief is fully fit for purpose.

For more guidance on internal verification, please see our **BTEC Centre Guide to Internal verification** on our website.

## Our Assignment Checking Service

You can also submit assignments you have written to our Assignment Checking Service. Your assignments will be reviewed by an expert who will check that you have understood and applied the relevant assessment requirements and provide feedback. When using this service always be careful to select the correct BTEC qualification from the drop-down list.

Please note: This free service is advisory only. It is not a replacement for internal verification, nor does it remove the need for standards verification. You must always internally verify all assignment briefs you have written to ensure they are fit for purpose and meet the specific needs of your learners.

## Teachers and Heads of Department

To connect you directly with our subject experts, we have 35 subject lines just for teachers, each supported by a dedicated specialist. During busy periods, we may ask you to leave a message. If you do, we'll get back to you as soon as we can - usually within 24 hours.

You may prefer to use our subject-specific email addresses, so you can check for a response when it suits you. We aim to reply within two days at the most, but usually within a few hours.

## Exams Officers

We now have a single customer support number for exams officers. When you call this number, you'll be connected to your account specialist: **+44 (0) 844 463 2535**.

You can email us with queries concerning registrations and entries, certification, fees, invoice content or any general enquiry about administering a Pearson qualification: **examofficers@pearson.com**.

## Training from Pearson

Training from Pearson is our specialist training division. Training is designed to fit your requirements, with an option of face-to-face, online or customised training so you can choose where, when and how you want to be trained. Find out more on our website.

## Feedback on our Assessment Associates

Your feedback is important to us and is used to improve our services. We will be happy to receive feedback about our Assessment Associates (Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners) about their reporting, judgement, communication, responsiveness and professionalism. The feedback will be considered as part of our Assessment Associate monitoring process. If you would like to provide feedback please contact the International Quality Standards and Operations Manager - [letitia.rowan@pearson.com](mailto:letitia.rowan@pearson.com).

### Face-to-face support

#### International Quality Managers

International Quality Managers are an important part of our quality partnership and are full time managers within our BTEC Assessment team. We have three International Quality Managers working in:

- India – [saurabh.saxena@pearson.com](mailto:saurabh.saxena@pearson.com)
- Middle East – [mohamed.kamel@pearson.com](mailto:mohamed.kamel@pearson.com)
- Hong Kong and China – [florence.chan@pearson.com](mailto:florence.chan@pearson.com)

Their role is to:

- offer quality assurance advice and support for BTEC qualifications
- provide formal support and monitoring throughout our quality assurance process of standards verification

#### Regional Development Managers

Our Regional Development Managers are curriculum experts who provide information and guidance to Senior Management Teams. They'll support you in translating policy initiatives and curriculum developments into practical solutions for your centre.

If you would like your Regional Development Manager to get in touch their contact details can be found on the website. Alternatively, email [internationale@pearson.com](mailto:internationale@pearson.com) and the team will get in touch with you.

#### Pearson Think Tank

The Pearson Think Tank is an independent education think tank focussed on the provision of, and access to, high-quality education for all. This includes an ongoing programme of policy analysis;

practical research on best practice and education improvement, and on inequalities in educational access and outcomes; as well as consideration of philosophical questions around the nature of quality in education and the principles of social justice.

We draw on research and analysis to address pressing education policy issues and provide innovative, evidence-based advice to support policy-makers and practitioners: [thepearsonthinktank.com](http://thepearsonthinktank.com)

### Contact us by email

We have a number of dedicated email addresses which will get you through to the relevant team straight away:

Follow the quick links below for specific support:

<b>Contact our BTEC Business Managers for advice on the latest developments and planning</b>	<b>btec@pearson.com</b>
<b>Queries relating to the quality assurance of BTEC programmes</b>	<b>btecdelivery@pearson.com</b>
<b>Request email updates on the latest BTEC developments</b>	<b>btecmarketing@pearson.com</b>
<b>Queries relating to approval, registration and certification of BTEC qualifications</b>	<b>internationaleo@pearson.com</b>
<b>Contact our BTEC Quality Standards team for help with issues such as late registration, certification, special consideration and reasonable adjustment.</b>	<b>vocationalqualitystandards@pearson.com</b>

### Contact us by phone

Please visit our website for details of how to contact us by phone.

### Write to us

Pearson Customer Services  
190 High Holborn  
London WC1V 7BH  
UK

# Further BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook chapters

## **2. Standards verification for BTEC (QCF) Entry Level to Level 7**

This chapter gives you information on standards verification for BTEC (QCF). A subject specialist Standards Verifier/ External Examiner will be allocated to verify a sample of assessed BTEC learner work and support you in working to national standards.

## **3. Preparing for a Standards Verifier/ External Examiner visit**

This chapter will help you put everything in place for a successful visit from your Standards Verifier/External Examiner.

For information about Edexcel, BTEC or LCCI qualifications visit [qualifications.pearson.com](https://qualifications.pearson.com)

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