

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

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## Which qualifications does BTEC (QCF) standards verification cover?

This chapter covers the following qualifications:

<b>BTEC (QCF) Entry to Level 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BTEC (QCF/SRF) Level 2 Firsts</li><li>• BTEC (QCF) Level 3 Nationals</li><li>• BTEC (QCF) specialist qualifications at Entry Level to Level 3</li></ul>
<b>BTEC (QCF) Level 4 to 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BTEC Level 4 HNC and Level 5 HND</li><li>• BTEC Level 3 and 4 Foundation Diploma in Art &amp; Design</li><li>• BTEC Professional qualifications at levels 4 and above</li></ul>
<b>BTEC RQF Level 4 to 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please refer to the Higher National International Guide to Quality and Assessment on our website</li></ul>

# Standards verification

## Why we do it

Standards verification is how we check that you are operating appropriate quality assurance and assessing to national standards. We undertake standards verification to ensure reliability of assessment across all BTEC centres and to:

- provide a thorough review of assessment and verification
- ensure that correct processes and procedures are being applied, consistent with qualifications at all levels
- encourage you to continue to deliver best practice in vocational assessment
- provide a detailed report on verification and assessment practice for the relevant programme sector

Standards verification helps ensure you have accurate assessment and verification records and that you are assessing learners appropriately, consistently and fairly.

The outcome of standards verification informs us whether or not to print certificates for your learners. Learners must reach the required national standard before certificates can be released.

## How we do it

We allocate a Standards Verifier/ External Examiner who is a subject expert to conduct sampling of assessment instruments and assessed learner work in order to provide judgements and feedback.

Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners will visit you and work with you to support you to identify good practice and areas for further development. They will give you guidance on how you can improve the delivery of the programme.

## When is standards verification required?

We allocate a Standards Verifier/ External Examiner to visit you twice per year. There is a cost for the visit. Please ask your Regional

Development Manager for more information about the charges.

If you cancel visits this may incur extra costs and the certification of your learners could be delayed. We ask you therefore to liaise with your Standards Verifier/ External Examiner to arrange mutually convenient dates and times for the visits as soon as possible after registration of your learners.

If you are newly approved to deliver a BTEC qualification, the first few visits will be to provide you with support and guidance as well as to check that the assessment decisions that are being made are accurate and to the required standard.

The one day visits will be arranged at times agreed between your Quality Nominee and the Standards Verifier/External Examiner. They should take place between October and August of each year.

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will sample all of the units that make up your qualification and will need to report that the required standard is being achieved, before the certificates will be released.

If after running the programme for three years during which time you have received acceptable reports, the number of visits can be reduced to one per year. This is subject to approval by Centre Management in London. There must be no outstanding issues or required actions.

Please be aware that the frequency of visits applies to specific programmes and does not apply across your centre. You may receive one visit per year for one of your BTEC programmes but still have two visits for other programmes.

If quality issues should arise, the frequency of the visits will return to two per year until a satisfactory quality profile is re-established.

If you have achieved consistently good reports but would like further support or reassurance for your programme teams, then this can be arranged from Training from Pearson. There is further information available on our website.

# Standards verification: *Roles and responsibilities*

## Pearson

### ***Standards Verifier Level 1-3 / External Examiner Level 4-7***

We appoint a Standards Verifier/External Examiner to a Principal Subject Area. They will be a subject specialist and their primary focus is to ensure that you are assessing to national standards. We normally change the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner allocated to your centre, after they have visited you for four years.

#### Standards Verifier/External Examiner responsibilities

##### **Standards Verifier/ External Examiner**

Verifies that you are:

- assessing learners to national standards as set out within the BTEC qualification specifications
- maintaining effective mechanisms for the internal verification of BTEC programmes
- demonstrating effective recording of assessment and internal verification
- applying centre-wide processes and procedures effectively and consistently in your programme area

Please note that the Standards Verifier/External Examiner is not allowed to deliver training to your centre. Training sessions can be arranged through 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.

### ***Senior Standards Verifier***

The Senior Standards Verifier for each Principal Subject Area has an overview of standards and ensures that all Standards Verifiers/ External Examiner have appropriate standardisation and training. The Senior Standards Verifier may be become directly involved with a centre at our request.



## Standards verification responsibilities

### Senior Standards Verifier

- Upholds the national standard for their sector
- Trains and standardises Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners
- Provides ongoing advice and guidance for Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners
- Provides support for queries and appeals

## *International Quality Manager (IQM)*

Pearson has three International Quality Managers, located in;

- **Middle East** – [mohamed.kamel@pearson.com](mailto:mohamed.kamel@pearson.com)
- **India** – [saurabh.saxena@pearson.com](mailto:saurabh.saxena@pearson.com)
- **North Asia** – [florence.chan@pearson.com](mailto:florence.chan@pearson.com)

They have a responsibility for centres within a geographical area and provide quality assurance support and guidance for anyone managing or delivering vocational qualifications.

## Standards verification responsibilities

### International Quality Manager

- Works with a centre to agree a remedial action plan, where sampling has been undertaken and national standards have still not been met
- Provides support if major concerns are raised by a Standards Verifier/ External Examiner at any point in the process
- Reviews all SV/EE reports written for centres in their region

## **Centres (Levels 4 – 7)**

We make every effort to ensure that international centres delivering Level 4 – 7 qualifications operate to the standards outlined in the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

You must ensure that your Standards Verifier/External Examiner is informed about your organisational procedures, practices, and

academic regulations. It is good practice for all centres but essential for centres delivering higher level qualifications that the Standards Verifier/External Examiner feedback to Assessors and students is part of your broader system of quality assurance and enhancement.

## All Centres

### *Quality Nominee*

You will appoint a member of staff to act as the main point of contact between Pearson and your centre. Your Quality Nominee should ensure the effective management of BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice.

You must keep the Quality Nominee details up-to-date on Edexcel Online. Please see page 6 of Chapter 1 for information on how to register as a Quality Nominee on Edexcel Online.

#### Standards verification responsibilities

##### **International Quality Manager**

- The initial point of contact for all Standards Verifiers/External Examiners
- Liaises with appropriate practitioners and Internal Verifiers to ensure that Standards Verifiers/External Examiners are able to carry out their role

### *Programme Leader*

The Programme Leader is the person responsible for day-to-day management and delivery of the programme.

#### Standards verification responsibilities

##### **Programme Leader**

- Ensures that records of assessment and samples of student work are being retained for sampling by the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner
- Plans to set aside examples of work that has been verified to different levels and



**Programme Leader**

- grades, where applicable
- Liaises with the Standards Verifier/External Examiner to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place

**Lead Internal Verifier**

QCF regulation requires that centres identify a designated person to have overall responsibility for the assessment of a group of programmes. The Lead Internal Verifier is the person designated by you to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of programmes in a Principal Subject Area.

**Standards verification responsibilities****Lead Internal Verifier**

- Ensures that records of assessment and verification are available for scrutiny by us
- Ensures that current learner work is available for scrutiny by us
- Liaises with the Standards Verifier/External Examiner to ensure that an appropriate level of sampling takes place
- Signs a declaration to confirm that each learner has declared the sampled work is authentic and valid
- From 1 September 2014, Lead Internal Verifiers for Level 2 and 3 qualifications, will be responsible for authorising resubmissions and retakes
- Must ensure any resubmissions and retakes are administered fairly and consistently

**Assessors and Internal Verifiers**

Your programme team consists of the teachers or tutors who are responsible for the delivery, assessment and internal verification of BTEC programmes. The appropriate minimum size of the programme team will depend on the number of units and the number of learners. For most programmes at Level 4 and above, we would expect that programme teams will include appropriately qualified staff for

specialist units.

No person can internally verify their assessment decisions. Therefore, where there is a single specialist practitioner delivering a programme, arrangements must be made for their assignments and assessment decisions to be internally verified by someone with appropriate experience.

#### Standards verification responsibilities

##### **Assessors and Internal Verifiers**

- Ensure that the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team. This is co-ordinated and monitored by the Lead Internal Verifier
- Provide records of assessment and samples of learner work
- Undertake any actions required as a result of standards verification

*Please see the Roles & Responsibilities section in Chapter 1: Introduction for further details.*

# The Standards Verification process

Stage	Activity
<b>Standards Verifier/ External Examiner allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● From October onwards, we will identify Standards Verifiers/ External Verifiers with appropriate subject expertise and allocate them to the programmes that have active registrations at your centre.</li> <li>● If a programme is no longer running at your centre but still has active registrations, you must either claim certificates or withdraw the learners.</li> <li>● The SV/EE will contact your Quality Nominee to inform him/her of the allocation.</li> </ul>
<b>Arranging the sample</b>	<p>Your Quality Nominee should put the Standards Verifier/External Examiner in touch with the relevant Lead Internal Verifier to agree the sample.</p> <p>You should confirm with the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner your assessment plan for all registered learners, identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● which Assessors are assessing which units and learners</li> <li>● when assessment is planned to take place</li> <li>● who are the Internal Verifiers and when internal verification is planned to take place</li> </ul> <p>After consultation with the Lead Internal Verifier, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will confirm by email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the date of the visit</li> <li>● the sample size</li> <li>● which learners' portfolios will be sampled</li> <li>● a visit plan will be attached to the email</li> </ul>
<b>Arranging the sample</b>	<p>The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will review;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the operation of the internal verification</li> </ul>

- process
- assignment briefs; learner work; assessment and internal verification records
- programme documentation; policies; programme review documentation
- physical resources e.g. library; computer facilities; laboratories

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will meet;

- Learners
- Teaching staff
- Key personnel in your centre

At the end of the visit the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner will provide verbal feedback on the findings.

A report will be sent to your centre within 10 working days of the visit. If there is any reason why this Service Level Agreement cannot be met, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will let you know.

## Large cohorts and multi-site centres

If you deliver programmes across different sites, the Standards Verifier/External Verifier will communicate directly with the Quality Nominee at the main site.

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will select the sample from learners across the sites.

The Lead Internal Verifier will collate and check the sample to ensure that there is an appropriate sized sample from all of the sites. Before certificates can be released, the assessment decisions of all Assessors at all sites will need to be sampled. This will confirm that all staff are making accurate assessment decisions.

Outcomes of standards verification/External Examiner will apply to all of the sites running the programme. Over a period of time, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner may request to visit other sites, rather than making the visit to the main site.

Where programmes have particularly large cohorts or operate across a large number of multiple sites, we may operate a 'team approach' to standards verification.

In such cases, a Standards Verifier/External Verifier will be allocated, but they will coordinate a team of Standards Verifiers/External Examiners who will support them in conducting sampling. The allocated Standards Verifier/ External Examiner will look at programme management and complete the appropriate part of the report. The supporting Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners will make visit(s), conduct sampling of one or more units and provide judgements and commentary. The allocated Standards Verifier/ External Examiner will collate the sampling evidence for the assessment decisions part of the report and then complete the final report.

There will be an increased cost for visits that require a team of Standards verifiers/External Examiners or for visits that will take more than one day to complete the required amount of sampling e.g. when there are a high number of registrations or certificates are needed urgently when the programme has not yet been fully sampled.

## Sampling

As part of our overarching quality assurance process, we scrutinise each centre's 'quality profile', taking into account factors such as:

- registration patterns
- grades claimed by programmes over time
- the results of other processes, such as the approval of other qualifications
- general issues highlighted in a particular sector

We may ask you to facilitate extra Standards Verifier/External Examiner visits if this is required.



# Time frames for standards verification

Standards verification will ordinarily be conducted between **November** and **August**:

## **Allocation of Standards Verifiers/ External Examiners for BTEC (QCF)**

- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will discuss your assessment plan at the start of the process and use this to select the learners to be sampled
- We allocate Standards Verifiers/External Examiners in October though allocations may take place at other points in the year
- The learners to be sampled will be agreed with the Standards Verifier/External Examiner
- The date for sampling will be agreed with the Standards Verifier/External Examiner

## **The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will contact you to request a list of learners**

- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will check the list of names you provide with the learners who are registered on Edexcel Online
- Only those learners registered on Edexcel Online will be sampled
- You should already track and record learners' achievement as they progress on the programme. This can be used to provide information when the sample is being selected
- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will confirm which learners will be sampled
- The sample must include the full range of grades that you have awarded
- If a range of grades is not available because of the achievement of the learners in the cohort, discuss this with your Standards Verifier/External Examiner
- We may scrutinise subsequent certificate claims to identify any discrepancies

## **The Standards Verifier/**

- You will not be able to claim certificates until sampling has been successfully



**External Examiner will complete their report within 10 working days of conducting the sample**

- completed  
It is particularly important for Level 3 programmes where learners are applying for college/university that sampling is undertaken at an appropriate time

Over the period of time that the qualification is delivered, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will sample all of the units and all of the Assessors. For example a 12 unit qualification being delivered over 2 years, 4 visits will be required before certificates can be released.

For short courses it may be appropriate that the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner will be able to see all units and sample all Assessors at the first visit. In this case certificates would be released after the first visit.

The rule is that certificates cannot be released until all units have been sampled and assessment decisions have been found to be accurate.

# Samples for Level 2 and Level 3

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner selects the learners to be sampled. For each learner sampled, you must provide the Standards Verifier/External Examiner with full assessment records.

Stage	Evidence
<b>Assignment briefs</b>	All assignment briefs used to generate learner evidence for the unit
<b>Sample size for Levels 2 and 3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1-3 learners - all learners' work will be sampled</li> <li>● 4-100 learners - 4 learners' work will be sampled</li> <li>● 101-250 learners - 8 learners will be sampled</li> <li>● 251+learners -12 learners will be sampled</li> <li>● The sample must contain examples of the range of grades awarded (Pass, Merit, Distinction and Not achieved)</li> <li>● The sample will also need to encompass (over a period of time) all Assessors</li> <li>● Please note: There is no maximum size of the sample. The Standards Verifier/External Examiner may ask for more samples if initial sampling suggests that further investigation is required</li> <li>● Additional visits to increase the sample size are not permitted without consent from Pearson</li> </ul>
<b>Learner evidence and assessment records</b>	<p>The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will need to see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● a list of learners' names which will be compared to the names registered on Edexcel Online</li> <li>● assessment decisions for the learner work and related feedback</li> <li>● signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner</li> <li>● confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work*</li> </ul>

<p><b>Internal verification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal verification documents for the assignment briefs</li> <li>• Any internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions for learners sampled</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resubmissions</b></p>	<p>Where applicable, evidence of any resubmissions, including a full audit trail of the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of Lead Internal Verifier authorisation, signed and dated, with the resubmission deadline clearly stated*</li> <li>• the initial assessment record</li> <li>• the resubmitted learner evidence, accompanied by a signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner</li> <li>• the resubmission assessment record, detailing the additional learner evidence submitted and showing any related changes to the assessment decisions</li> <li>• confirmation from the Assessor that the resubmitted evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work*</li> </ul>
<p><b>Re-takes</b></p>	<p>Where applicable, evidence of any retakes, including a full audit trail of the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evidence of Lead Internal Verifier authorisation, signed and dated</li> <li>• the initial assessment record</li> <li>• the learner evidence, targeted to the Pass criteria only and accompanied by a signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner</li> <li>• the assessment record, detailing the learner evidence submitted and showing any related changes to the assessment decisions</li> <li>• confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work*</li> </ul>

\* These are mandatory requirements for new learners from 1 September 2014. For full guidance, please see the **Guide to Internal Assessment for BTEC Firsts and Nationals**: [www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments](http://www.btec.co.uk/keydocuments), and Subject Guides, available on each qualification specification page: [www.btec.co.uk](http://www.btec.co.uk)

For each sample there must be definitive evidence of assessed work covering targeted criteria. You must provide a complete sample which can be used to accurately judge your approach to assessment. If the materials are incomplete, inappropriate or appear not to be authentic, the Standards Verifier /External Examiner will not be able to complete sampling.

## Samples for Levels 4 and 5

Stage	Evidence
<b>Assignment briefs</b>	All assignment briefs used to generate learner evidence for the unit
<b>Sample size for Levels 4 and 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 9 learners – All students will be sampled</li> <li>• Up to 100 learners – At least 9 learners</li> <li>• More than 100 learners – At least 18 learners</li> <li>• The sample must contain examples of the range of grades awarded (Pass, Merit, Distinction and Not achieved)</li> <li>• The sample will also need to encompass (over a period of time) all Assessors</li> <li>• Please note: There is no maximum size of the sample. The External Examiner may ask for more samples if initial sampling suggests that further investigation is required</li> <li>• Additional visits to increase the sample size are not permitted without consent from Pearson</li> </ul>
<b>Foundation in Art &amp; Design</b>	The sample must include work from the Final Major Project Confirmatory Unit 10 plus learner work from at least 2 other units.
<b>Learner evidence and assessment records</b>	<p>The External Examiner will need to see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a list of learners' names which will be compared to the names registered on Edexcel Online</li> <li>• assessment decisions for the learner work and related feedback</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner</li> <li>confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work</li> <li>staff CVs and the list of units they delivered and assessed</li> </ul>
<b>Internal verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal verification documents for the assignment briefs</li> <li>Any internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions for learners sampled</li> </ul>

## Samples for Level 7

Stage	Evidence
<b>Assignment briefs</b>	All assignment briefs used to generate learner evidence for the unit
<b>Sample size for Level 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there are more than 100 learners, the visit will take 2 days. There will be an extra cost applied</li> <li>Please note: There is no maximum size of the sample. The External Examiner may ask for more samples if initial sampling suggests that further investigation is required</li> <li>Additional visits to increase the sample size are not permitted without consent from Pearson</li> </ul>
<b>Learner evidence and assessment records</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A list of learners' names which will be compared to the names registered on Edexcel Online</li> <li>You will be asked to make available all evidence for all students since the last visit</li> <li>The External Examiner will check staff CVs at each visit</li> <li>The External Examiner will look at the gap between student registrations and certifications</li> <li>The External Examiner will need to see:</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o assessment decisions for the learner work and related feedback</li> <li>o signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner</li> <li>o confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work</li> </ul>
<b>Internal verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal verification documents for the assignment briefs</li> <li>• Any internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions for learners sampled</li> </ul>

## Postal (electronic) samples

In unusual circumstances we can arrange for the sample to be sent to a Standards Verifier /External Examiner. This will only normally occur when:

- there is political turmoil making travel to a region unsafe
- there is UK foreign office advice against travel to a region
- if a small number of certificates is required urgently to facilitate progression of the learner to another education establishment

Any postal (electronic) sample must be authorised by International Quality Standards and Operations Manager:

[letitia.rowan@pearson.com](mailto:letitia.rowan@pearson.com).

You must ensure that:

- you can assure the validity of the evidence
- the evidence covers the assessment and grading criteria fully
- it includes full assessment and internal verification records
- your Standards Verifier /External Examiner is able to access the materials

### Assessment of practical activities

Many units include practical activities where assessment is recorded through observation records. We advise you to use a form that



clearly details the assessment and identifies the assessment and grading criteria achieved. We provide template forms on our website.

These templates are not mandatory and you are free to design your own, but using them will help to ensure that you are meeting requirements.

Standards Verifiers /External Examiner need to be able to judge the validity of the assessment decisions and so they need evidence in addition to observation records. This evidence may take a variety of forms such as photographs, video, and audio.

When submitting copies of DVDs, CDs and other recording materials please ensure such materials identify the following as part of the evidence:

- centre name and number, Assessor name
- learner name and Pearson registration number
- unit title and number, assessment and grading criteria attempted

You must also provide information on assessment decisions and Assessor feedback. These are likely to be provided as paper or electronic documents to support DVD/CD materials.

### **Postal sampling of practical units**

It is important that sampling evidence is sufficient to justify the assessment and grading criteria awarded. Please ensure that the Standards Verifier /External Examiner has all the information needed to verify grades, to prevent misunderstandings.

You should send copies, not original evidence, to reduce the risk of damage to the learners' work. Also, original work may be too bulky and expensive to deliver. For some units, this may present logistical issues.

The following guidance gives advice on how best to prepare for sampling of the various types of evidence. If in doubt, discuss the sample with your Standards Verifier/External Examiner.

#### **Evidence**

- Encourage the recording of work as it is being done. Records of work in progress can provide good evidence. Also, collating a

sample is easier if records have been kept throughout

- Portfolios should be indexed allowing the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner to find work quickly and easily
- Witness statements and observation records should be included where relevant
- A front sheet should be included for every assignment, showing the learner's name, Pearson registration number, centre name and number, unit and criteria awarded. The work of each learner must be clearly identifiable and it should be clear which assignment each piece of work applies to
- All work, including electronic files, should be clearly labelled with the learner name and unit title
- Electronic evidence should be on a CD or DVD
- The quality and resolution of any photographs or digital evidence must be high enough for the Standards Verifier/External Examiner to be able to make judgments on the quality of the original work. This includes video or audio files
- To make sure that the Standards Verifier/External Examiner can open electronic files, please discuss this with them before you prepare a postal (electronic) sample. You should use the standard file formats: PowerPoint; Word Document (in Rich Text Format, to ensure compatibility); PDF; for video & audio files: WMV (Windows), MPEG (Mac), high quality MP3
- Please do not use software that is not commonly available on home systems unless you have agreed this with the Standards Verifier /External Examiner beforehand
- When photographing work, please ensure:
  - adequate lighting, using natural daylight where possible
  - proper framing and the subject is in focus
  - white balance is corrected
  - any text is easily readable
  - a high resolution (for digital)

### Performance-based units

- Some units require working log books (actor logs, dance diaries, training diaries, production files, etc.) which can be bulky, contain annotated scripts, studio diagrams, etc
- Completed units may relate to more than one performance. At the Standards Verifier's /External Examiners discretion, samples of completed units may comprise one of the performance projects, as long as all the assessment and grading criteria have been assessed at least once in the sample. This should include final assessment decisions
- Learners must be clearly identified, particularly in a group performance or team activity. Learners can verbally identify

themselves on video and/or you can provide a written commentary with a written description, timings and positions

- For musical performances, all performers should be identified. If this is an audio only recording, a written note would cover this. Ensure that the playback medium is agreed beforehand with the Standards Verifier /External Examiner. In most cases, a DVD which is playable in a domestic DVD player will be appropriate. If a DVD-Rom is provided, you must check that it can be played on a standard PC or Mac without the need for specialist software

### Production-based units

- As with performance based units, some productions often require working log books (actor logs, dance diaries, production files, meeting minutes, etc.) which can be bulky, contain annotated scripts, studio diagrams, etc
- CAD evidence of stage plans, studio layouts, shot blocking, etc. will need to be printed or made available in a format accessible to the Standards Verifier/External Examiner
- Evidence may include design portfolios containing sketches, swatches, textured elements, etc.; 3D sets and models; large ground plans and scale diagrams; costumes, etc. These will need to be recorded in photos or videos
- Video and photo records of puppets and masks will be needed to show quality of workmanship as well as fitness for purpose and fitting (masks) and ease of use (puppets)
- For audio and video group productions, it should be made clear what role the learners undertook, so that the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner can assess the contribution from the learner in the sample. Individual production logs are a good way for learners to identify what they did and allows for self evaluation of their processes and finished production
- Some production evidence may come from project files using specific sequencing or editing software. You should discuss this with the Standards Verifier/External Verifier beforehand. If they do not have access to the relevant software, you may wish to include screenshots of the project environment and include versions of the finished piece to show progression. These will need to be clearly labelled

### Visual arts units

- Completed units in Art & Design may include a significant amount of visual evidence. Think about which of the units are most appropriate to send evidence by post. Some units may have evidence which is easier to copy, or may have more evidence in electronic or written formats

- 3D work or large scale 2D pieces should be photographed. It is useful to identify the dimensions of the work by showing a coin or a ruler alongside the piece. It is also useful to photograph ceramic or 3D work from all sides. With hollow vessels, an overhead view would reveal the quality of the interior
- Visual evidence should be supplemented by the learner's research and analysis of the brief, sketchbook work and design development, presentation sheets and the final outcome
- Where a learner has produced several versions of a piece, but do not materially add to the evidence, you may select the appropriate evidence. However, the evidence selected should still show cover age of the assessment and grading criteria awarded
- Any annotations on work should be legible. If this is difficult, then provide close ups of the annotation or a supplementary sheet showing what was said will help
- The images should be presented in the correct sequence so that the Standards Verifier / External Examiner can see the learner's journey. PowerPoint is one way of ensuring that the images stay in order. Each individual JPEG image or word file should be numbered and the sequence should be absolutely clear. Numbering files is another simple way of doing this

## Internal verification

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

- assessment is consistent across Assessors
- assessment instruments are fit for purpose
- assessment decisions match learner work accurately and fully to the learning aim
- standardisation of Assessors takes place

Learners included within the sample will usually have been subject to internal verification. By this, we mean that for each learner, the assessment decisions for at least one assignment towards the unit have been internally verified. Full evidence of internal verification must be provided in the standards verification sample.

Before the sample is looked at by the Standards Verifier/External Examiner, your Lead Internal Verifier should check the sample and confirm that the standards are met by signing the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration. This is available on our website.



Internal verification templates can be found on our website. The templates are strongly recommended, but their use is not mandatory. You are free to design your own, but using them will help to ensure that you are meeting requirements.

Full guidance on internal verification can be found in the **BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification**, available on our website.

## The Standards Verification report

On the day of the visit, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will make arrangements to meet the relevant people in your centre to discuss the management and delivery of the programmes. You should provide the previous Standards Verifier/External Examiner report and any other minutes from appropriate meetings that have been held since the last visit.

All of the following topics will be included in the report and, if required, Essential Actions and/or Recommendations may be identified. Essential Actions identified are mandatory, but do not result in a certification block for programmes.

Flawed assessment reported on in the last part of the report will result in a block on certification.

### Page 1 Centre Information

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will confirm with you;

- the language of delivery and assessment (if the learners are assessed in a language other than English, the certificate needs to contain a statement to this effect. Please contact your Regional Development Manager if you are assessing in a language other than English but your certificates do not contain this sentence)
- the number of registrations made on Edexcel Online and the number of active learners at your centre
- the mode of delivery (face to face, blended or distance learning)
- whether any programmes are being run on a collaborative basis with other institutions
- Page 1 will also indicate a provisional date for the next visit

## Summary of Essential Actions

This is a summary of action points reported on elsewhere in the form. It provides an action plan for you to work to before the next visit.

## Summary of Actions from the Last Visit

The report will include any Essential Actions or Recommendations from the previous report. The Standards Verifier//External Examiner will look at progress made in relation to action points given in previous reports, indicating any that remain to be addressed.

## Areas of Good Practice

This will report any truly exceptional areas of good practice. You should not expect to see an entry here in every report.

## General Comments

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will report here any general points that have not been made elsewhere in the report. These may relate to administration, communication, access to resources or issues arising that may have affected the report e.g. bad weather or transport problems.

## Detailed Comments

Heading	Evidence required
<b>1. Centre Management Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective management procedures that are supported by appropriate systems policies and resources</li><li>• How you review the programmes that you are delivering</li><li>• How you monitor the effectiveness of the delivery of the programmes. This may include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o minutes of meetings of Assessment Boards</li><li>o monitoring of late submission of student work</li><li>o tracking the number of referrals and resubmissions</li><li>o decisions made on extenuating circumstances</li></ul></li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o appeals</li> <li>• How changes are made as a result of review</li> <li>• Existence of a programme handbook owned by the programme manager.</li> <li>• The operation of on-going assessment meetings, reviewing the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o fairness and consistency of decisions</li> <li>o decision making process</li> <li>o administrative support for the meetings</li> <li>o scope of the minutes of previous meetings</li> <li>o organisation and conduct of the meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Policies and Procedures</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The following policies and associated procedures are in place, published, communicated and embedded in centre practice.</li> <li>• Internal verification - to include specific information about the role of the Lead IV for Level 2 and 3 programmes</li> <li>• Assessment - to include the new assessment rules at Levels 2 and 3 for centres delivering at this level</li> <li>• Learner recruitment, registration and certification - to ensure that all learners are accurately registered on correct programmes on Edexcel Online at the beginning of their programme of learning</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) - to ensure that learners who join your centre with qualifications already achieved are granted recognition for prior learning that maps to the BTEC qualification</li> <li>• Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments – a policy to show that Reasonable Adjustment is identified by the centre at the pre-assessment planning stage and results in actions that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. The policy should also include Special Consideration to cover situations where a post-assessment allowance is made to reflect temporary illness, injury or indisposition that occurred at the time of assessment. The policy should ensure that the</li> </ul>

	<p>integrity of the assessment is not compromised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equal Opportunities - a policy to ensure that all learners have equal opportunity to access delivery and assessments, and that assessment is fair to every learner</li> <li>• Learner plagiarism; staff malpractice and/or maladministration policies - to ensure that the meaning of plagiarism and maladministration are fully understood and the consequences of learners plagiarising work or staff committing malpractice are published and understood</li> <li>• Appeals - a policy internal to the centre that is accompanied by the processes for a learner to make a staged, time constrained appeal regarding assessment outcomes</li> <li>• Complaints - to indicate how all stakeholders are able to make a complaint about any issue other than an appeal against assessment</li> <li>• Risk Assessment and health and safety - a policy to ensure the safety of all BTEC learners on a programme of study with the centre</li> <li>• Conflict of Interest - a policy to ensure that the outcome of assessment cannot be influenced by people with a vested interest in the outcome</li> <li>• Learner Support - a policy to ensure that learners receive any support required to allow them to achieve to their full potential but which does not compromise the integrity of assessment</li> <li>• Centre Contingency and Adverse Effects – a policy that asks ‘what if’ questions about unusual events e.g. a fire that may destroy learner records; the breakdown of a relationship with a 3rd party provider; government legislation</li> </ul>
Heading	Evidence required
<p><b>3. Registration and student learner support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a process for ensuring that student registration and certification is accurate and monitored effectively</li> <li>• Students must be registered correctly on the programme and any amendments, transfers or</li> </ul>

	<p>withdrawals made in a timely manner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The programme team has a good working relationship with your exams office to ensure that our student registration details accurately reflect your own records</li> <li>● Your centre must have procedures in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ checking of the accuracy of student registrations</li> <li>○ ensuring that timely and accurate certification claims are checked and verified against assessment records</li> <li>○ checking a sample of certificates received against assessment records, prior to issue to students</li> <li>○ investigating and reporting all inaccurate, early/late and fraudulent registrations or certification claims, via your senior management, to us</li> <li>○ The centre only recruits those learners who show a potential to achieve the qualification (recruitment with integrity)</li> <li>○ RPL is applied according to policy where appropriate</li> <li>○ Specialist support is given to learners where appropriate</li> <li>○ There is an informative and accurate student handbook</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Levels 4 and 5 only</b> - your centre must produce a document that gives information about the units that make up the qualification that you are delivering. There is a huge range of units that you can select from and it is important the learners are aware of which units they will be studying and the assessment requirements</li> </ul>
Heading	Evidence required
<p><b>4. Programme delivery</b></p>	<p><b>Human resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Evidence that an appropriate number of centre staff are appropriately qualified, trained and supported. Records of training events held to update staff about developments in Pearson qualifications, including changes in assessment practices</li> <li>● Regularity of programme staff team meetings</li> </ul>

- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will meet with the staff and ask if there are any concerns relating to the current and future operation of the programmes

### **Physical resources**

- Is there an overall strategy for provision of learning resources consistent with learning strategies and the student profile?
- Is the Library/Learning resource stock adequate and up to date? Are opening hours appropriate to the student profile and the learning regime?
- Are computing facilities sufficient and is there adequate access? Is specialist software sufficient/readily accessible?
- Are there open access learning/IT facilities?
- The learners' environment is safe, healthy and monitored to reduce risk.

### **Delivery**

The delivery of the programme is appropriate for a vocational programme and includes a variety of delivery methods.

### **For Levels 4 and 5 programmes**

For Levels 4, 5 and 7 programmes, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will seek views from students about the assessment process and access to resources. This requires meeting some students every year. Therefore, visits should be arranged on a day when the cohort of students is on site.

- Points the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will discuss with students include:
  - o all areas relating to the assessment process including assessment quality, quantity, variety, outcome coverage, skills development, feedback quality and promptness, academic support and clarity of task descriptions and grading criteria
  - o the quality, variety and effectiveness of teaching methods
  - o whether physical resources are appropriate in terms of type, quantity and currency in relation to supporting



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o the teaching and learning</li> <li>o whether there is an effective tutorial system in operation covering both academic and pastoral care</li> <li>o whether there are effective methods for students to express their opinions regarding their learning experiences and are their concerns documented and acted upon</li> </ul>
Heading	Evidence required
<b>5. Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The design and nature of assessments permit the aims and learning objectives of each programme to be met and are of a standard appropriate to the qualification level</li> <li>• If more than one Assessor assesses a unit, that standardisation events have been held</li> <li>• The following points will be considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Are the assignment outcomes and related assessment criteria clearly stated?</li> <li>o Are the assessment tasks matched to the outcomes/assessment criteria and to the level?</li> <li>o Is there a variety of assessment tasks?</li> <li>o Do the tasks relate fully to the unit content?</li> <li>o Is there clear guidance to students on tasks, content/scope, and grading?</li> <li>o Are assessments appropriate to the student profile, level and mode of study?</li> <li>o Do assessments promote learning, allowing students to develop skills as opposed to rote learning/accumulation of facts?</li> <li>o At levels 4, 5 and 7 are there formative as well as summative assessments?</li> <li>o Are there opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning and have some freedom of choice for completion?</li> <li>o Is there a unit assessment plan detailing coverage of all assessment criteria and grading opportunities?</li> <li>o Are there sufficient assessments for</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>each unit?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Is the workload realistic?</li> <li>o Is there equality of opportunity for all students, including those with particular requirements, to achieve the stated outcomes and associated grading criteria?</li> </ul>
<b>6. Internal verification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records show that assessment tools are checked before they are given to learners</li> <li>• IV records show that appropriate samples of assessment decisions are checked to ensure that the standard is being achieved</li> <li>• Accurate and up to date assessment records are kept securely and made available for third party scrutiny on request</li> <li>• The procedure for maintaining and auditing assessment records is secure and effective</li> <li>• For Levels 2 and 3 resubmissions and retakes have the authorising of the Lead Internal Verifier</li> </ul>
<b>7. Higher National programmes only</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Assessment Board minutes and supporting documentation</li> <li>• Resubmission and re-take documentation which is signed and dated by a member of the Assessment Board</li> <li>• Confirmation that Pearson's Annual Programme Monitoring Report forms (online) have been completed</li> <li>• Confirmation that marketing materials use full and accurate titles of Higher National programmes being delivered</li> </ul>
<b>8. Assessment sampling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will verify a sample of assessed student work. If the assessment does not meet national standards for any of the students sampled, the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will identify an Essential Action. Existence of an Essential Action in this part of the report will block certification for the specific programme</li> <li>• The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will take an appropriate sized sample of learners' work and check the assessment decisions</li> </ul>



made

- Only learners registered on Edexcel Online will be sampled and the Pearson registration number will be entered on the report form
- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will decide 'Yes' or 'No' as to whether the standard has been achieved
- The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will give a written justification of the decision
- For Levels 4 and 5 only the External Examiner will check that contextualised grading criteria for each grade being applied correctly in assignments
- Please note: if the External Examiner finds evidence of plagiarism in the student evidence, this will result in an Essential Action and a block to certification

At the end of the visit the Standards Verifier/External Examiner will give verbal feedback to senior management and any other appropriate members of the programme team. The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will not normally provide a full report on the day, but will summarise his/her findings and any required actions. The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will tell you when the report will be sent and this is normally within 10 working days of the visit.

The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will send a copy of the report to:

- Head of Centre
- International Quality Manager
- Regional Office [internationaleo@pearson.com](mailto:internationaleo@pearson.com)
- International Quality Standards and Operations Manager  
[letitia.rowan@pearson.com](mailto:letitia.rowan@pearson.com)

The reports are read and reviewed. In very exceptional circumstances, the decision of the Standards Verifier//External Examiner might be challenged, investigated and the decision may be overturned.

The report will:

- show the status and quality of the programme
- evaluate the materials and processed reviewed during the visit
- guide you towards action required to improve the programme
- decide whether certificates can be released for printing

- you must give full and serious consideration to the comments and recommendations contained in the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner reports. The actions taken as a result of reports, or the reasons for not following recommendations, should be formally recorded and circulated to those concerned

You should ensure that student representatives are given the opportunity to be fully involved in this process, enabling them to understand all the issues raised and your response. At centre level the general issues and themes arising from the reports should be reviewed.

## Outcomes of the sample

First sample report status	Outcome
<b>Release</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sufficient sample has been provided and the Standards Verifier/External Examiner judges that you are assessing to national standards and documenting assessment correctly</li> <li>• The Standards Verifier/External Examiner confirms that all student evidence is valid, authentic and sufficient</li> <li>• The Standards Verifier/External Examiner report releases certification, programme by programme</li> <li>• You will receive separate reports for different levels of programmes with different assessment methodologies</li> <li>• The Standards Verifier/External Examiner may agree that assessment standards are being maintained but identify Essential Actions or Recommendations in sections 1 – 6 of the report. You should read the report carefully for Essential Actions or Recommendations.</li> <li>• Certificates can be claimed on Edexcel Online for the current year and certificates will be printed</li> </ul>
<b>Block for one or more</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The external examination report is able to release or block certification separately</li> </ul>

<p><b>programme</b></p>	<p>for each programme within a sector. Therefore, if one or more programmes are subject to a certification block, this does not automatically affect certification of the other programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A block means that the Standards Verifier/ External Examiner does not agree that you are assessing to national standards and/or not documenting assessment and internal verification correctly on one or more of the programmes in the sector</li> <li>● A block will also result from any evidence of student plagiarism found in the sample</li> <li>● The Standards Verifier/External Examiner judges that one or more assessment decisions are incorrect, or the approach to assessment and verification does not meet requirements</li> <li>● Essential actions will be identified in section 7 of the report</li> <li>● The Standards Verifier/External Examiner will give initial feedback on the day of the visit, so you should be prepared for the outcomes of the report</li> <li>● Certificates should not be claimed</li> <li>● Certificates will not be printed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Not yet Fully Sampled programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Standards Verifier/External Examiner has not yet sampled all of the units that make up the qualification</li> <li>● Your learners are in the first cohort and this first cohort will not yet have completed the course</li> <li>● Certificates are not yet required and will not be claimed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Limited certification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Standards Verifier//External Examiner is prepared to release the certificates for a small number of learners. The standard of these learners' work is judged as appropriate for certificates to be issued</li> <li>● The programme remains blocked for certification of other learners</li> </ul>



# Appeals

If you have concerns about the outcomes of standards verification, we have a formal enquiries and appeals process. Details can be found on the Policies section of our website: [www.edexcel.com/policies](http://www.edexcel.com/policies)

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

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