

BTEC Centre Guide to  
**Standards**  
**Verification**  
**2016-2017**

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# Introduction

Welcome to the guide to standards verification for all our Level 1 to Level 3 vocational qualifications. This guide provides you with the information you need to be prepared for this process in 2016-2017.

It takes you through:

- what you need to do
- who's responsible at each stage

and gives additional advice and guidance around best practice.

We hope you find this guide useful and we've aimed to cover all the relevant points to help you successfully deliver internal assessments for BTEC.

## We're here to help

If you need more information or support at any stage, please do contact the **Vocational Assessment** team at: [btecdelivery@pearson.com](mailto:btecdelivery@pearson.com) and the **Vocational Quality Advisors** at: [qualitynominees@pearson.com](mailto:qualitynominees@pearson.com)

We are here to help with all your assessment queries.

For other general queries, please visit the [contact us pages](#) of our website so your question can be answered as quickly as possible by our teams.



# How to use this guide

## 1. What you need to do

### Step 1: Read the current information regarding standards verification that is published on our website



If you are new to delivering BTEC qualifications then you need to start by familiarising yourself with the term 'standards verification', and how we quality assure the internal assessment that you undertake. Further guidance on the process can be found [here](#).

Standards verification is how we check that you are operating appropriate quality assurance and maintaining national standards.

This document provides more information on the process and offers support to help you prepare for the delivery of our new suites of qualifications as well as our legacy qualifications.

### Step 2: Read this guide



This guide provides you with the additional information you need to undertake internal assessments for:

- BTEC Level 1 Introductory Suite (from 2016)
- BTEC Level 3 Nationals (from 2016).
- 2010 QCF Nationals, Level 2 and Level 1
- 2012 BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts

There's detailed, step-by-step guidance for your Lead Internal Verifiers and Programme teams, and some handy checklists for each role so you can be confident that you have everything covered.

### Step 3: Read the internal assessment section in the relevant BTEC specification



You also need to read any specific instructions in the relevant qualification specification document which you can find on the Pearson Qualifications website [here](#).

Working from our guidance documents will ensure you have all the correct conditions and requirements in place for each stage of the standards verification process.

## 2. What you need to know

### How we verify standards

We allocate a Standards Verifier, who is a subject expert, to conduct sampling of Assignment Briefs and assessed learner work in order to provide judgments and feedback. Standards Verifiers support you in identifying good practice and areas for further development, giving you guidance on how you can improve your assessment. We will aim to allocate you the same Standards Verifier if you are running both an NQF and a QCF programme from the same sector.

If our Standards Verifier finds that learner work doesn't meet the national standard outlined in the specification, you'll agree actions that need to be completed before we'll be able to issue certificates to your learners. This will include providing a second sample to show that you've responded to the Standards Verifier's feedback.

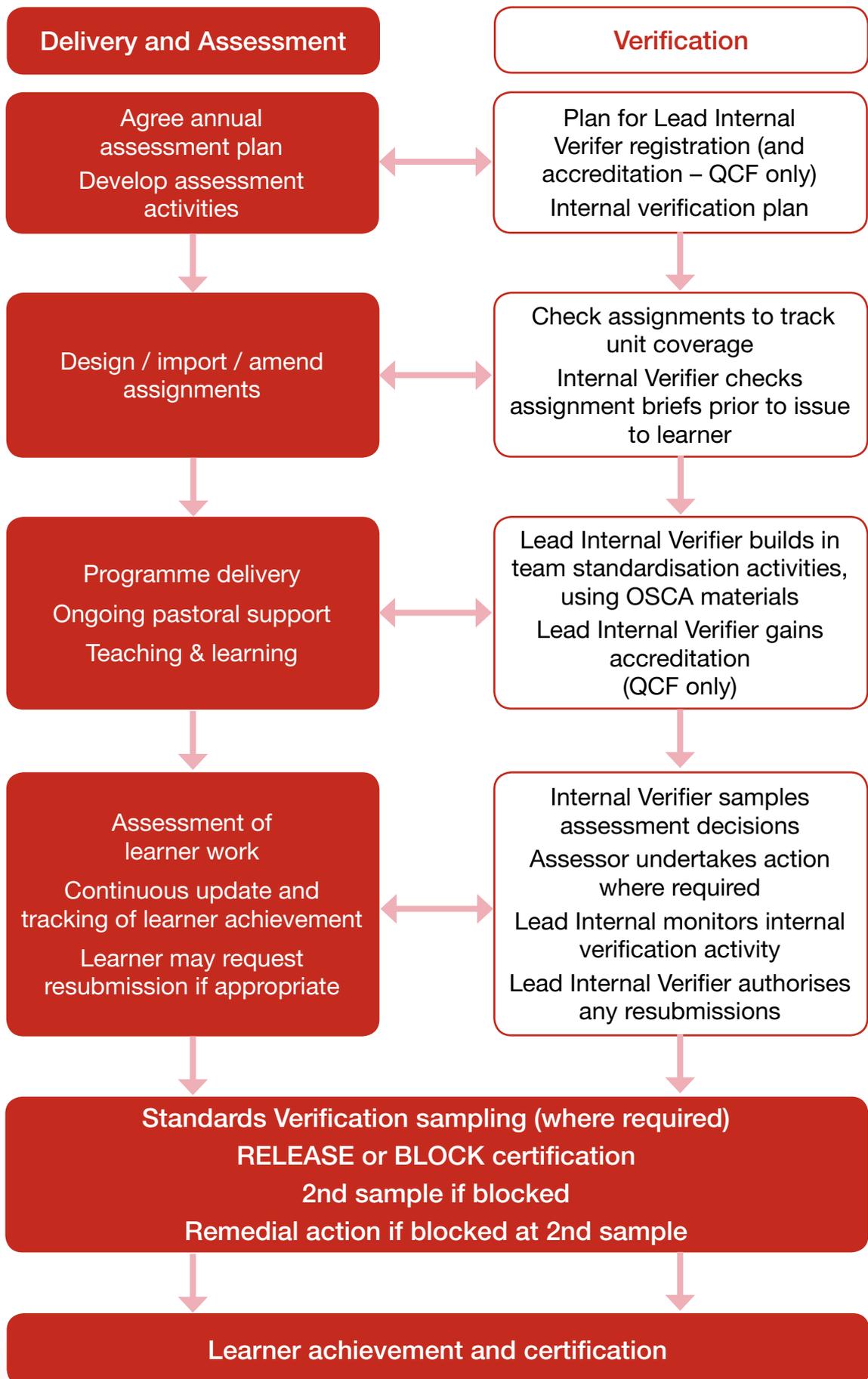
### Roles with responsibilities

It is important that you have a strong team in place at your centre in order to deliver and assess your BTEC programme effectively. Our website provides an overview of the main quality assurance responsibilities for each role [here](#).

### Planning

Good planning is the first step to your successful delivery of our vocational qualifications. It is the best way of making sure everything is in place to ensure unit coverage is robust and achievable.







# Standards verification

# 1. Allocation of your standards verifier

Our new suite of Level 1 and Level 3 qualifications and current 2012 NQF Firsts are sampled annually. It is important that your examinations officer registers any learners on your programmes before the end of October 2016. Lead Internal Verifiers need to log into OSCA to confirm they are responsible for a Principal Subject Area. Based on this information and your registrations, from November 2016 we will identify which centres require standards verification.

## What if I am running a QCF Entry Level to Level 3 programme?

There are four reasons for us to allocate you with a Standards Verifier for QCF:

### Confirmation sampling

Each year we'll select a proportion of Lead Internal Verifiers, who have received accreditation through OSCA, for confirmation sampling. If you're selected, you'll need to complete standards verification to confirm that the assessment practices within your Principal Subject Area still meet national standards.

You should expect to take part in confirmation sampling at least once during your accreditation period.

Find out more about [Lead Internal Verifier Accreditation](#)



### Accreditation sampling

If your performance in the standardisation exercise suggests that you would benefit from additional support, we'll allocate a Standards Verifier for accreditation sampling. You'll need to complete standards verification to confirm that the assessment practices within your principal subject area meet national standards. Should the Standards Verifier release certification following accreditation sampling, certification will be released and you'll gain accreditation for your Principal Subject Area for a further 3 academic years.

### Self-accreditation not attempted

Once the final standardisation window has closed, we'll allocate a Standards Verifier to all Lead Internal Verifiers who haven't attempted the exercise. You'll need to complete standards verification to confirm that the assessment practices within your Principal Subject Area meet national standards. Should the Standards Verifier release certification, you'll need to complete the standardisation exercise in the next available window in order to gain accreditation.

## Direct to Standards Verifier

The Principal Subject Areas listed below either aren't covered by Lead Internal Verifier accreditation or are no longer covered by Lead Internal Verification accreditation. We'll start allocating Standards Verifiers to all centres with registrations, who don't hold existing accreditation, from November.

- BTEC Aeronautical Engineering
- BTEC Agriculture
- BTEC Animal Care
- BTEC Aviation Operations
- BTEC Cleaning and Facilities Management
- BTEC Countryside
- BTEC Fire services
- BTEC Horticulture
- BTEC Land-based Studies
- BTEC Management
- BTEC Management (Law)
- BTEC Maths
- BTEC Security
- BTEC Supporting Teaching and Learning
- BTEC Sustainability
- BTEC Transport and Logistics

## What this means for me?

We will aim to allocate the same Standards Verifier if you are running an equivalent legacy qualification, such as a QCF Level 3 or NQF Level 2 alongside any 2016 National. **Please note that due to the nature of the qualification, you will be allocated a separate Standards Verifier for the Level 1 introductory suite.**

We begin to make these allocations in November with a view to completing the activity by February 2017. We do this by informing your Quality Nominee that a programme has been allocated a Standards Verifier via our Edexcel Online system.

This will mean that your allocated Standards Verifier(s) will make contact with you from late November 2016 through to early March 2017.

If you have programmes with no active learners but are allocated a Standards Verifier, then please notify us as soon as possible at:  
[vqdeployment@pearson.com](mailto:vqdeployment@pearson.com).



## I have questions about my allocation...

If you have any queries about the allocation of your standards verifier contact the Customer Services team on **0844 463 2535** or  
[examsofficers@pearson.com](mailto:examsofficers@pearson.com).



## 2. Arranging the sample

The Lead Internal Verifier should provide the assessment plan(s) for all registered programmes including:

- who is assessing each unit and learner and when assessment is expected to be completed
- who is internally verifying the assessment decisions and when internal verification is expected to be completed
- planned resubmission opportunities.

If the programme is administered using myBTEC, these are created automatically and will be able to be seen by the Standards Verifier through allowing access to myBTEC. If the programme uses paper based quality assurance, then a spreadsheet template is available, and this should be emailed to the Standards Verifier.

You can find out more about myBTEC [here](#).

**Q:**  
**What if I am delivering  
a new 2016 Technical Level  
Qualification?**

We verify employer involvement through existing quality and verification visits. You can use your own forms and documentation within these reviews or you can use our Employer involvement plan:

- An annual Quality Management Review programme will check that employer involvement plans exist at the organisation level
- Standards verifiers will look at your planned employer involvement when you submit your Assessment Plans.
- We don't require you to use our documentation for this part of these reviews; you can use your own documents, forms and systems.

The Standards Verifier will use your assessment plan to agree the:

- date(s) by which the Standards Verifier will receive the sample by post or visit your centre
- units to be sampled
- date when you will provide the learners' final grades to allow the sample to be selected.
- date(s) by which the Standards Verifier will receive the sample by post or visit your centre
- advise you on any potential for disadvantage to your learners.

In order for your assessment plan to be considered fit for purpose, it must allow for a timely sample to take place. You should arrange for your sample to be available as early as possible. **Only completed units with finalised grades (including any resubmissions) can be sampled.** If you are planning to complete the qualification within one year, you should ensure units are completed and available for sampling within the sampling window.

**All first samples must be completed by 30 May 2017.** Any further sampling must be completed by 30 June 2017. This is to ensure that learners completing in the current academic year have their results in time for college and university admissions results day.

It's important that you stick to these timescales as any late sampling can affect certification of learners.

### Top Tip from our Assessment team:

Your Standards Verifier is there to support you through the process. Talk to them if you have any concerns – they are there to help you!

# 3. Sampling explained

Sampling will include assessment decisions made by all Assessors of the programme during the registration period, and cover the full range of grades awarded.

In line with your internal verification schedule, selected as part of your sample may have had the assessment decisions for at least one of their assignments internally verified. Standards Verifiers will need to select internally verified learners as part of the sample so you should indicate which learners have been internally verified on the assessment tracking document. Your Standards Verifier may request to see additional units if it isn't possible to get a sample representing a range of grades, Assessors or types of evidence from these minimum requirements.

If essential actions are needed then second sampling is required, and the Standards Verifier will:

- review the re-assessed and finalised grades and select additional learner samples to ensure that feedback has been applied to the whole cohort, and
- sample a further unit(s) to ensure that any feedback has been applied to across the programme and by assessment team as a whole, so that there are no further issues for learners.

The aim of this sampling structure is to minimise the administration burden for centres who are assessing accurately, yet provide fuller support when need is identified.



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# 4. Preparing your sample

For each learner selected as part of the sample, you'll need to provide your Standards Verifier with definitive evidence of the assessment process for an entire unit, which they'll use to make a judgment on your approach to assessment. The materials you send to your Standards Verifier will include:

## Assignment briefs

- all assignment briefs used to generate learner evidence for the unit.

## Learner evidence and assessment records

- completed unit of learner work
- assessment decisions for the learner work and related feedback
- signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner
- confirmation from the Assessor that the evidence is authentic and is the learner's own work.

## Internal verification documentation

- internal verification documents for the assignment briefs
- internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions. For each learner, the assessment decisions for at least one Assignment towards the unit will have been internally verified.
- the Lead Internal Verifier declaration

## A full audit trail of any resubmissions

- signed and dated authorisation from the Lead Internal Verifier, showing the resubmission deadline and any conditions that were put in place e.g. to prevent collusion
- initial assessment record
- resubmitted learner evidence with a signed and dated declaration of authenticity from the learner
- assessment records for the re-submission detailing the additional evidence submitted and any changes to the assessment decisions
- confirmation from the assessor that the resubmitted evidence is authentic and the learner's own work

If materials are incomplete, inappropriate or don't appear to be authentic, your Standards Verifier won't be able to complete sampling and will contact you for clarification.

Assessment and internal verification records can be accessed by the Standards Verifier in myBTEC. If you do not use myBTEC then you can send all documents either electronically or by post.

## 5. Completing sampling

With the exception of Art and Design, some Childcare programmes and our license linked qualifications, you'll need to send the evidence for your sample to the Standards Verifier. You can do this electronically (using CDs or DVDs) or you can use our courier service to send copies of the evidence. Please do not send us the originals of the work.

### Top Tip from our Standards Verifier:

Also, it is good practice to have a second copy of the work in the unlikely event the work is lost in transit to your Standards Verifier.

### Instructions for sending BTEC samples via Parcelforce

We have an account with Parcelforce that you can use, free of charge, for sending standards verification samples.

## 6. Accessing your Standards Verifier's report

Your Standards Verifier will produce a report within 10 working days of reviewing your sample. Once the report has been completed, your Quality Nominee will receive an email to let them know the report is available to view at Edexcel Online.

# 7. Outcomes of your first sample

There are three possible outcomes of your first sample:

- Certification release
- Certification block
- Not yet fully sampled (NYFS (NQF First & 2016 Level 3 Nationals only))

Report status	Outcome
Certification release:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You've provided a full sample and your Standards Verifier has confirmed you have adequate quality assurance procedures in place. Your Standards Verifier has <b>agreed that you're assessing learners to the national standard</b> but may offer recommendations on how to improve on current practice.</li><li>• This means <b>certification is released for the academic year</b> and a second sample is not required.</li></ul>
Certification block:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You've provided a full sample but your Standards Verifier <b>does not agree that you're assessing learners to the national standard</b>. This is because one or more of your assessment decisions have been judged to be incorrect, or your approach to assessment and verification doesn't meet the requirements.</li><li>• This means that <b>certification is blocked and a second sample will be requested</b>. If the Standards Verifier judges that learners have been disadvantaged, they'll be able to authorise a further resubmission, on the basis that the original assessment decisions were invalid. This will be clearly stated on the standards verification report.</li></ul>

**Not yet Fully Sampled (NYFS):**

- If your Standards Verifier is not able to see the full sample and none of your learners are completing the qualification in the current academic year, they can begin the process by reviewing the bits of the sample that are ready. This could mean looking at fewer units of learners' work or just looking at the assignment briefs, depending on what is available. This allows your Standards Verifier to support you as early as possible in your delivery to reduce risks for your learners.
- **A Standards Verifier report based on an incomplete sample does not release certification** but will change the report status to NYFS meaning that the programme is not yet fully sampled. Once you've received a NYFS report, the standards verification process is complete for the year, but you should read the comments and complete any essential actions as soon as you can.
- **No second-sampling is possible** until first sampling is completed the following year. We'll try our best to allocate you the same Standards Verifier the following year, complete your first sample.

# 8. Submitting a second sample

You will need to submit a second sample if your first sample resulted in a certification block. Your Standards Verifier will get in touch to agree a timescale for you to submit the second sample once you've accessed the original report. A second sample will be conducted remotely, even if your first sample was conducted by a visit.

Your second sample will include:

- the elements of the first sample that caused the original block
- evidence that amendments have been made to address the issues highlighted in the Standards Verifier report. There are usually two ways to address this:
  - re-assess the learner work in line with the Standards Verifier's decision. This should be in respect of the whole cohort and not just the learners sampled
  - replace or improve the learner work
- evidence samples from additional learners so that your Standards Verifier can check that standards are being reapplied consistently across your learners
- samples from an additional unit to ensure that any feedback has been applied to across the programme and by the assessment team as a whole.

Once your second sample has been reviewed, your Standards Verifier will submit a second report within 10 working days. Your Quality Nominee will receive an email to let them know the report is available to view at Edexcel Online.

# 9. Outcomes of your second sample

There are two possible outcomes of your second sample:

Report status	Outcome
Certification Release (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your Standards Verifier has agreed that you are now assessing learners to the national standard but may offer recommendations on how to improve on current practice. Your quality assurance procedures will also have been confirmed as adequate.</li><li>• This means certification is released for the academic year.</li></ul>
Remedial action required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your Standards Verifier still doesn't agree that you are assessing to national standards.</li><li>• At this point the Principal Standards Manager for the sector will meet with you to agree a remedial action plan. You'll need to complete the action plan before your Principal Standards Manager will release certification for the academic year.</li></ul>

# Standards verification checklist

We've provided a simple checklist to give you a guide to good practice for standards verification.

Checklist	✓
My Exams Officer has registered my learners on Edexcel Online and I have checked this for accuracy	
I have received notification of my Standards Verifier(s) contact details	
My Standards Verifier(s) has made their initial contact with me	
In preparation for standards verification, I have updated my <b><u>assessment plan</u></b>	
Assignment briefs: These have been written and all have been internally verified	
We have agreed an internal verification schedule and I know which Assessors and internal units will be internally verified.	
I have sent my Standards Verifier our assessment plan and they have selected the units for sampling. I am now ready to send the tracking information for the units	
<p>I have sent my Standards Verifier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment plan</li> <li>• Employer Involvement form (2016 Technical Level only)</li> <li>• Assignment brief(s)</li> <li>• Evidence of Internal Verification</li> <li>• Tracking data</li> <li>• Learner evidence (this can be sent electronically)</li> <li>• Authentication Declaration for each learner</li> <li>• Sample Consent permission form</li> </ul> <p>Assessment records for each learner including and resubmissions</p> <p>LIV declaration form</p>	



# Sample sizes

Level 1 Introductory Suite (2016)

Level 3 Nationals (2016)

2010 QCF

2012 Level 1/2 Firsts

# 1. Level 1

## Introductory Suite 2016

Below is a guide to what our Standards Verifier will require in terms of units that are to be sampled:

Number of Sectors offered within a Centre	Core Units verified	Optional Units verified	Extra learners at second sample
1-3	1 unit 4 learners (learners included from range of sectors offered)	1 unit x 4 learners	1 additional unit x 4 learners from the affected sector
4-6	1 unit x 4 learners (learners included from a range of sectors offered)	2 units x 4 learners	1 additional unit x 4 learners from the affected sector
7-9	1 unit x 4 learners (learners included from a range of sectors offered)	3 units x 4 learners	1 additional unit x 4 learners from the affected sector
10+	1 unit x 4 learners (learners included from a range of sectors offered)	4 units x 4 learners	1 additional unit x 4 learners from the affected sector

Typical BTEC sampling rules require the Standards Verifier to double the volume of assessed learner work that is verified when the cohort size exceeds 100. Additionally, within the Level 1 Introductory suite the largest sector in relation to the number of learners registered must be verified, and where a sector has more than 50 learners registered the sample size for that unit is doubled. The sample is only ever doubled once.

## 2. Level 3 Nationals (2016)

Below is a guide to what our Standards Verifier will require in terms of units that are to be sampled:

Number of registrations	Number of learner-unit samples		Extra requirement at second sampling
	Certificate, Ext Certificate, Foundation Diploma	Diploma, Ext Diploma	All Qualification Sizes
1-249 learners	1 units x 3 learners	3 units x 3 learners	+3 learners per affected unit &
250+ learners	1 units x 6 learners	3 units x 6 learners	+1 further unit x 3 learners

## 3. 2010 QCF

Below is a guide to what our Standards Verifier will require in terms of units that are to be sampled:

Number of registrations	Number of units Number of learners				Extra requirement at second sampling
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3 Certificate or Subsidiary Diploma	Level 3 90-Credit Diploma or Diploma or Extended Diploma	All qualification sizes
1 – 3 learners	1 unit x all learners	1 unit x all learners	1 unit x all learners	2 units x all learners	All learners per affected units
4-249 learners	1 unit x 4 learners	1 unit x 4 learners	1 unit x 3 learners	2 units x 4 learners	4 learners per affected unit
250+ learners	1 unit x 8 learners	1 unit x 8 learners	1 unit x 6 learners	2 units x 8 learners	

## 4. 2012 Level 1/2 Firsts

Below is a guide to what our Standards Verifier will require in terms of units that are to be sampled:

Size of Qualification	Number of learner-unit samples (number of learners double when more than 250 learners registered)	Extra requirement at second sampling
Award	2 units x 4 learners	+4 learners per affected unit & +1 further unit x 4 learners
Certificate	2 units x 4 learners	
Extended Certificate	2 units x 4 learners	
Diploma	3 units x 4 learners	

### Sampling Exceptions

**Applied Science:** All sizes and combinations: 3 units must be sampled - 1 unit from each science.

**Childcare:** There are specific rules for this sector and more information can be found on the [Standards Verification page](#) on our website.

## 5. Further guidance

You can receive further guidance about standards verification and the process on our support pages on our website [here](#). There you will also find specific information about sampling for BTEC Level 1/2 Applied Science and the 'Children and Young People' sector.

Alternatively if you require more support or have any questions you can contact the **Vocational Qualifications Assessment** team at: [btecdelivery@pearson.com](mailto:btecdelivery@pearson.com) or the **Vocational Quality Advisor** team at: [qualitynominees@pearson.com](mailto:qualitynominees@pearson.com)



# Timeline

We have tools to help LIVs and QNs plan their BTEC delivery [here](#).

QN's – make sure you sign up for our regular newsletter!

