BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification 2021/22

Which qualifications does this guide cover?

This guide provides essential information for **BTEC programme teams** on the planning and implementation of internal verification **for the following BTEC qualifications:**

- BTEC Level 1 Entry and Introductory Suite (from 2016)
- BTEC Level 1/2 Firsts
- BTEC Level 1/2 Tech Awards
- BTEC Level 2 and 3 Technicals
- BTEC 2010 (Legacy) Level 3 Nationals, Level 2, Level 1 and Entry Level
- BTEC RQF Level 3 Nationals

What is internal verification?

Internal verification is a quality control mechanism that ensures internally assessed units:

- have assignment briefs that are fit for purpose
- are assessed accurately to national standards against the unit criteria
- are consistently assessed and graded across the programme.

Internal verification is a key part of the BTEC quality assurance process in ensuring learners are assessed accurately to the national standard. It is not a standardisation activity and for assessment decisions, will be undertaken after assessment has taken place.

> **Remember**
> Assessors cannot internally verify their own work whether this is an assignment or the assessment of learner work.
>
> The Lead IV will organise the process and may be involved but **they are not** the only member of the team who can undertake internal verification activities.

Successful Internal Verification

Internal verification can be undertaken in several ways, but it should be a recognised activity and supported consistently across your centre.

To ensure a rigorous and robust approach to internal verification, you will need to have the following in place:

- A Lead Internal Verifier in place to oversee quality assurance for that subject
- A recognised team of Internal Verifiers, who meet regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures
- An internal verification policy which promotes a rigorous commitment to quality improvement
- A risk-based approach is taken to planning internal verification
- Internal verification processes that are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all members of staff delivering and assessing BTEC qualifications
- An internal verification process which is monitored at a centre level by the Quality Nominee and for the subject area by the Lead Internal Verifier.

The following are examples of best practice:

- BTEC internal verification forms are standardised across the centre
- Internal verification schedules are drawn up to ensure timely implementation of the process
- All experienced Assessors are involved in the internal verification role
- Standardisation meetings are recognised as pivotal to staff development
- The time required to carry out internal verification is acknowledged.

For detailed guidance on the role of the Lead Internal Verifier please see the Centre Guide to Quality Assurance [here.](#)

Retaining Documents

Internal verification documentation, along with other BTEC assessment documentation must be stored securely for a **minimum of three years** after the date of certification, either physically or electronically. Learner work must be retained for a **minimum of 12 weeks** after the date of certification.

Certification
The date of certification is the date that certificates are received by your centre.

BTEC Documentation to Retain
Assessment plans
Assignment briefs
Assessment records (learner feedback)
Learner authentication records
Internal verification records
Assessment tracking of learner achievement

Frequently Asked Questions

Can we store BTEC assessment documents electronically?
Yes. These documents can be stored securely electronically.

I'm the only BTEC Assessor in my centre. How can I approach internal verification?
We would encourage you to link up with an experienced centre who can support you with this activity. This would be arranged locally between the two centres and does not need prior Pearson approval. If this is not an option then a non-BTEC colleague in your centre would need to internally verify your decisions, however they will need to be familiarised with BTEC assessment and the requirements of the unit/component through standardisation activities.

Our Subject Community Pages host forums where you may be able to find support for this scenario.

If we have an Assessor for a specific subject, can they also register as the Lead Internal Verifier?

Yes. The Lead Internal Verifier has overarching responsibility for the quality assurance of and overview of the programme delivery and assessment, ensuring standards are met and assessments are accurate. This can be the Assessor for a specific subject however they cannot internally verify their own assessments.

Can the Lead Internal Verifier teach on the programme?

Yes. Your Lead Internal Verifier can also teach and assess on the programme.

Should the Lead Internal Verifier complete all internal verification activity?

No. They don't need to complete all internal verification activities but are able to undertake the activity and should also sub-sample other Internal Verifiers.

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myBTEC

myBTEC is a free online system designed to support the team delivering and assessing BTEC. The entire team can get access, whatever their department or role. It is designed to save you time by automatically generating the documents you need for assessment and providing access to these to your subject specific standards verifier.

This will save time with course planning, assignments, internal verification and progress tracking. The system will provide complete visibility and tracking of all courses, assessment, internal verification and results at your centre.

Further information and guidance on how to use myBTEC can be found here.

Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

> **Resources needed**
> - the unit/component specification
> - the assignment brief/s
> - internal verification of assignment brief form. A template can be found [here](#)

The Internal Verifier should check that the assignment brief:

- has accurate unit/component and programme details
- has clear deadlines and an appropriate timeframe for assessment
- has a suitable vocational scenario or context
- shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit/component(s) covered in the assignment
- indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted by the assignment
- clearly states what evidence the learner needs to provide
- is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient

If you plan to re-use an assignment from the previous academic year, you should check that the assessment dates are updated, and that the assignment is appropriate for the new cohort of learners.

You will need to review assignments annually, prior to use, to ensure they remain fit for purpose and to make any improvements based on your experience of delivering and assessing them. This includes the completion of an internal verification record on an annual basis. Instances of plagiarism and malpractice can be reduced when the assessment format is changed annually.

> **Key Point**
>
> All assignment briefs must be internally verified before being issued to learners.

Authorised Assignment Briefs

Please refer to the following table to confirm how Authorised Assignment Briefs (AABs) should be internally verified:

Pearson Authorised Assignment Brief 'off the shelf' as published	The Internal Verifier must ensure that hand out dates and submission deadlines are appropriate only
Adapted Pearson Authorised Assignment Brief to suit the needs of your learners	The Internal Verifier must ensure the full assignment brief is fit for purpose.
Your centre's own assignment briefs	

Giving feedback to the Assessor

Internal Verifiers should use the general comments section on the form to provide advice and guidance to the Assessor **if appropriate**. Any actions identified must be detailed by the Internal Verifier in the actions required section. Internal Verifiers should make any actions clear, using SMART principles.

If an action is identified by the Internal Verifier, the Assessor must complete this and return it to the Internal Verifier for sign off prior to an Assignment being issued to learners.

Timing

Assignment briefs must be internally verified, with any issues addressed, before being distributed to learners.

Assignments from other sources

There may be occasions where assignments may be used which have come either from published material or from other centres. These assignments still need to be internally verified to ensure that they match the specification that you are registering learners on, that the assignments are appropriate for your learners and that you have the resources to deliver them.

Pearson Assignment Checking Service

You can also submit assignments to an expert at our [free Assignment Checking Service](#) who will help make sure you have understood and applied the relevant assessment requirements and provide useful feedback.

You can submit assignments for 2 units per programme.

You should retain any feedback and ensure that it is sent to the standards verifier along with the assignment brief if this unit is selected for sampling.

Please note: This is a free support service and is not a replacement for internal verification, nor does it remove the need for standards verification. All assignment briefs must be internally verified.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do we have to use the Pearson internal verification templates?
No. This is not a requirement and you can design your own. However, you should ensure that any centre devised templates contain the minimum requirements in terms of content as the Pearson templates.

I'm using last year's assignment brief which was sampled by my Standards Verifier. Do I still need to internally verify the assignment?
Yes. You need to be sure that the assignment is still relevant, suitable for the new cohort of learners and has an appropriate timeframe for assessment.

Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

> Resources needed
> - the unit/component specification
> - the assignment brief/s
> - learner tracking documents (to select a range of achievement)
> - assessed learner work and accompanying assessment record
> - internal verification of assessment decisions form for individual or multiple learners. A template can be found [here](#)

The internal verification sample

During the lifetime of the programme, internal verification of Assessor decisions must cover the following as a minimum:

- every Assessor
- every unit/component
- learner work from every assignment
- learner work from every assessment site (for multi-site and consortia centres).

There is not a requirement that all learners must have been internally verified during the lifetime of a programme.

There is no prescribed sample size, but a well-constructed sample should consider the following and use a risk-based approach:

- the full range of assessment decisions made (pass, merit, distinction criteria and not yet achieved), should all be included in the sample if possible
- the experience of the Assessor. New or inexperienced Assessors should have more decisions internally verified than an experienced Assessor

- new BTEC programmes. When a unit/component or programme is first introduced, the internal verification sample should be increased
- the size of the group of learners
- known issues arising from previous internal verification or standards verification activity

Assessment Standardisation

When a programme is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation should be carried out before any formal assessment and internal verification has taken place. The aim of the standardisation process is to agree the standard of learner work by discussing and mutually assessing a sample of learner work as a team to reach consensus. This should be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided by Pearson in the qualification specification.

Once agreement has been reached, the Assessors can then individually assess the work of their learners, after which internal verification will take place.

Standardisation should be undertaken prior to an assessment taking place, as well as at the start of the academic year.

We provide Centre Standardisation Materials (CSMs) for each subject area, which the Lead Internal Verifier can access via the OSCA site on Edexcel Online.

Where the programme is delivered by one Assessor then the person acting as the Internal Verifier should standardise with that Assessor.

The Internal Verification Sample Size

We are often asked questions such as "how much internal verification do we need to do" or "what percentage of work needs to be internally verified".

There isn't a definitive answer to such questions – there are many factors that need to be considered when determining the size of the internal verification sample.

Lead Internal Verifiers should ensure that an appropriate internal verification process is undertaken which is based on risk. This will ensure support is provided to colleagues who need it.

We recommend that all BTEC programmes have an internal verification plan at the start of the course/unit to identify an appropriate sample size.

This will be based on risk factors such as:
- standards verification feedback about the assessment decisions made for the unit/component in previous years
- Assessor experience
- whether the unit/component has been delivered and assessed before
- any significant changes to the delivery of the unit/component

Internal verification plans are simply this, plans. We know that things are subject to change so teams may need to reflect on the internal verification sample size once delivery and assessment of the programme has commenced.

As a Lead IV or Internal Verifier, you will become aware of a range of issues that will need to be considered when it comes to selecting an internal verification sample. These include:

- grades awarded by Assessors
- quality of the assessment feedback provided to learners
- staff issues such as absence or role changes
- feedback obtained from other Pearson quality assurance processes
- other stakeholder feedback e.g., OFSTED, parents, colleagues at other centres etc.

Once assessment has taken place, you may choose to change the number of learners sampled for internal verification. For example, if the group has been awarded high grades you may choose to increase the number of learners sampled at this grade. You need to identify learners **after** assessment has taken place, rather than before as the internal verification process is about the assessment decisions made rather than the learners themselves.

The internal verification of assessment decisions process

The Internal Verifier reviews the Assessor's judgements against the learning aim, unit/component content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification.

This will include checking:

- the assessment criteria - this represents the national standard and all BTEC learners are measured against it
- the learner work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately
- coverage of the unit/component content in conjunction with the assessment guidance to see if the Assessor has taken this into account.

Please Note: It is not a requirement of the specification that all the content is assessed. However, the indicative content will need to be covered in a programme of learning to enable learners to be able to meet the standard determined in the assessment and grading criteria

- the feedback from the Assessor to learner is accurate, linked to the assessment criteria and to confirm the level of feedback provided to the learner is appropriate.

Remember

Feedback should show which criteria have been achieved and which have not, giving clear reasons

Feedback should not give specific instruction on how to improve the work for a higher grade

Where learners have achieved the higher-grade criteria, it is not necessary to give full feedback on the lower criteria achieved by default. e.g., if D3 is achieved there does not need to be detailed feedback on the M3 and P3 criteria that flow into this.

Following internal verification, if there are any assessment concerns, feedback should be provided to the Assessor with any actions applied to the whole cohort and not just the learners in the internal verification sample.

Timing

For internal verification of assessment decisions to take place, learner work must have been formally assessed. Internal verification must take place shortly after the assessment decisions have been made and before learners receive confirmation of their achievement and feedback. If any inaccuracies are identified by the Internal Verifier, these must be corrected by the Assessor before achievement and feedback is issued to learners.

Internally verifying resubmissions

If a request for a resubmission is made and providing there have been no issues with the Assessor's decisions at the first submission stage, then the resubmission does not need to be internally verified if the learner's grade has not improved. The Lead Internal Verifier should however check the decisions if the learner's grade has shown improvement, to safeguard against any potential malpractice issues.

Similarly, if the first submissions from learners show only pass criteria achievement and higher-grade criteria are awarded for the resubmitted work, then a sample of the resubmissions must be internally verified to ensure that the award of the higher-grade criteria is accurate; as this would not have been seen in the internal verification of the initial submissions.

Other Essential Guidance

BTEC qualification specification

The specification for each BTEC qualification is the document that programme leaders and teams should use as their first point of reference for all planning and assessment. Specifications are accompanied by important assessment and delivery guidance which provide instructions and advice for each unit in the qualification. All BTEC specifications are freely available on the BTEC website under the relevant subject page.

Forms and templates

We publish a range of useful forms and templates here for you to use in your centre. These templates are not mandatory, and you can devise your own:

They include:

- Assessment Plan
- Internal verification of assignment briefs
- Assignment briefs
- Internal verification of assessment decisions
- Assessment Record
- Record of Activity
- Record of Activity Guidance
- Learner declaration
- Lead Internal Verifier declaration.

You should also view our policies on assessment, which can be found here

> If you do have a question, please contact:
>
> **BTEC Assessment** or **Pearson Quality Advisors** using The Pearson Contact Portal
>
> In addition, you will find further information on the Quality Nominee Support Hub