Centre Guide to

Policies and procedures for vocational qualifications

2021-2022

Version 1.1 – September 2021
DCL1 - Public

Contents

Introduction

Welcome to this guide to Policies and procedures for vocational qualifications. The guide provides you with the information you need to ensure your BTEC policies and procedures meet requirements in 2021-2022.

The guide walks you through:

- the main policies & procedures that you need to have in place
- development templates for use by your centre

providing advice and guidance on best practice.

We're here to help

If you need more information or support at any stage, please contact the Pearson Quality Advisor Team by emailing the Pearson Support portal We are here to help you with all your vocational quality queries.

IMPORTANT: Please note that changes to our guidance are highlighted in *Red Italic print*

Why do we need policies and procedures?

Quality assurance is at the heart of vocational qualifications:

You use quality assurance to ensure that your Managers, Lead Internal Verifiers, Internal Verifiers and Assessors are standardised and supported. We use quality assurance to check that all centres are working to national standards. It gives us the opportunity to identify and provide support where it is needed in order to safeguard certification. It also allows us to recognise and support good practice.

To be able to ensure that your quality assurance continues to meet BTEC requirements for Pearson Centre Approval and Recognition, we advise that you should develop and maintain policies and procedures that support you to have
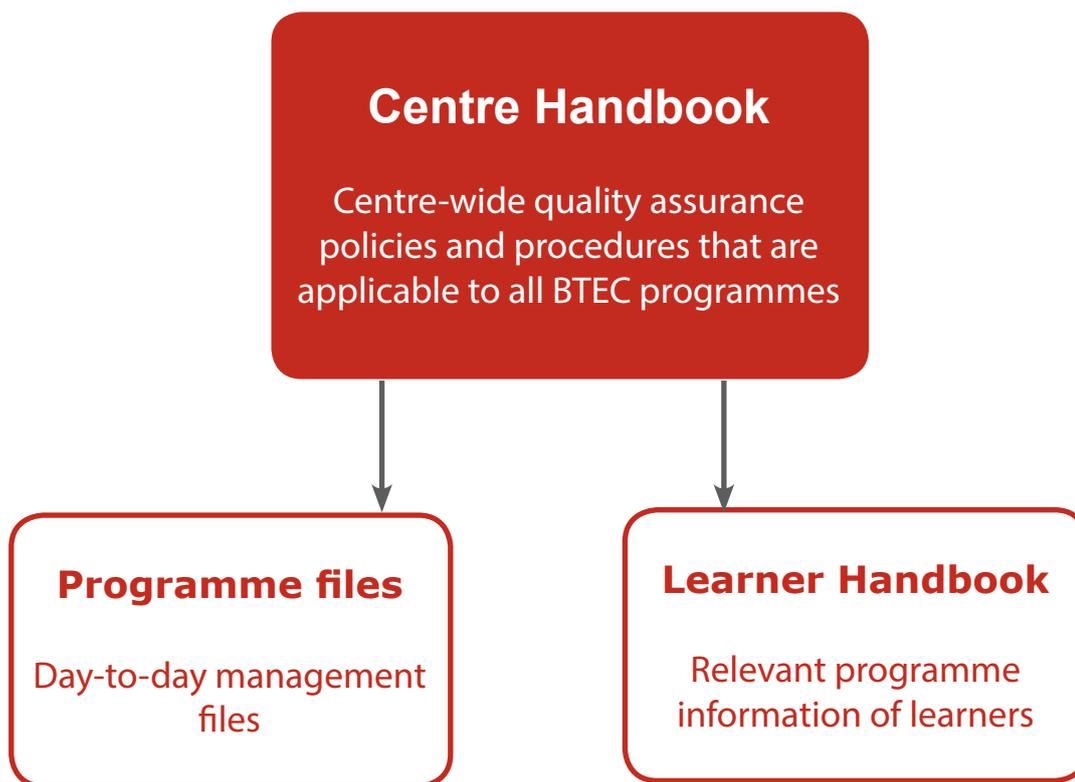
- operational quality systems appropriate to your centre's size that enable quality assurance management, review and improvement
- sufficient records that demonstrate the use of the quality systems and the outcomes of key monitoring activities
- effective internal and external communications
- systems that are compliant with current BTEC and regulatory requirements.

Documents will vary between centres and may be stored electronically. *All quality assurance documents must be reviewed and revised regularly[1].*

The next page is a suggestion of how they can be organised at centre and programme level.

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┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│        Centre Handbook          │
│                                 │
│    Centre-wide quality assurance│
│    policies and procedures that are│
│    applicable to all BTEC programmes│
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │           │
              ▼           ▼
┌──────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────┐
│  Programme files │  │ Learner Handbook │
│                  │  │                  │
│ Day-to-day       │  │ Relevant         │
│ management files │  │ programme        │
│                  │  │ information of   │
│                  │  │ learners         │
└──────────────────┘  └──────────────────┘
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- Holding centre policies and procedures electronically makes them easier to access and update
- These documents will contain much of the information required for your quality assurance, Lead Standards Verifier and SV sampling activities
- Standardised documentation aids the accuracy, consistency and audit of records.

Content varies according to the size and type of centre. For example, small centres may use a combined centre/programme file, while larger centres may opt for separate files.

The importance of developing consistency across all BTEC provision at your centre is key to your success and is good practice, which also supports Pearson representatives to undertake quality assurance monitoring activities.

The following lists are suggestions, rather than prescriptive. Only use records that are updated, useful and effective.

Centre Handbook

Centre wide quality assurance processes that are applicable to all BTEC programmes

Suggested centre handbook content:
Approval applications / confirmation
Registration & Certification policy
Assessment policy & procedures
Internal Verification policy & procedures
Distance & blended learning policy
Appeals policy & procedure
Assessment Malpractice policy/ procedures
Assessment & IV templates:
- IV of assignment brief
- IV of assessment decisions
- Tracking sheet - at grade criteria
- Tracking sheet - unit achievement
Year plan
Annual review cycle

Programme File

Day-to-day management file for BTEC programmes

Suggested Programme File content:

Programme Management
Programme details
Programme team
Timetable
Assessment Plan
IV schedule
Meeting minutes/ notes

Teaching & learning
Specification
Schemes of work / lesson plans
Employer Iinvolvement

Assessment & Learner Records
Class lists
Assignment Briefs
Tracking Sheets - grading criteria
Tracking sheets - unit achievement
Assessment Records/ Appeals
Other info - predicted grades etc.

Learner Support
Recruitment information
Advice & guidance
Diagnostic Testing / Learning styles, etc
Induction materials/ checklist
Parent evening docs
Tutorial records

Quality Assurance
IV records
SV reports
Withdrawal / transfer data
Programme review/ evaluation
Learner Voice feedback
Retention / achievement data

Learner Handbook

Relevant programme infomration for BTEC learners

Suggested Learner Hanbook contents:

Qualification details
Programme overview
Induction timetable/checklist
Health & Safety information
Programme timetable
Assessment plan
Unit details
Key skills / functional skills information
BTEC Assessment proceudres
Plagiarism and Malpractice
Appeals procedure
Study skills
Tutorial

What policies and procedures do I need?

We would advise that you need policies and procedures that cover the key aspects of BTEC quality assurance and management. This would include:

- Registration and Certification of learners
- Assessment
- Internal Verification
- Distance & Blended Learning policy
- Plagiarism and Assessment Malpractice
- Appeals and Complaints
- Collaborative arrangements policy & operational procedures (if appropriate).

How do I develop policies and procedures to meet Pearson requirements?

You can develop these to meet the structure and needs of your centre. You can either choose to have separate BTEC policy and procedure documents or you can choose to incorporate them into your overarching centre policies and procedures with specific reference made to individual BTEC procedures.

These examples are what your policies and procedures might look like. You can use them as a starting point for your own policies which you should customise and badge for your centre.

IMPORTANT: These on their own are not sufficient to meet the requirements of Pearson quality assurance. Specific procedures, based on the policies and processes relevant to your centre, should be developed.

Registration & Certification Policy

Aim:

1. To register individual learners to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
2. To claim valid learner certificates within agreed timescales.
3. To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner.

In order to do this, [add centre name] will:

- Register each learner within the awarding body requirements
- Register each learner on the appropriate programme code, before any assessment activity is completed
- Provide a mechanism for programme teams to check the accuracy of learner registrations
- Make each learner aware of their registration status
- Inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner details
- Ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- Audit certificate claims made to the awarding body
- Audit the certificates received from the awarding body to ensure accuracy and completeness
- Keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

Please note - Learners should be registered on Edexcel Online on the appropriate programme code, _before any assessment activity is completed._

Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc.)

Procedures for

- Registration
- Transfer
- Withdrawal
- Unit Certification
- Certification

Staff roles and responsibilities for each process, as appropriate

Key dates & actions

Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful when reading or using this policy & procedure:

Information manual: this is published by Pearson each year and provides detailed information for Exams Officers about registration and certification procedures for all Pearson programmes on our website.

Assessment Policy

Aim:

1. To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals
2. To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards
3. To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

In order to do this, [add centre name] will:

- Ensure that learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- Produce a clear and accurate assessment plan at the start of the programme/academic year
- Provide clear, published dates for handout of assignments and deadlines for assessment
- Assess learner evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria
- Ensure assessment practices meet current BTEC assessment requirements and guidance
- Ensure that assessment decisions are impartial, valid and reliable
- Not limit or 'cap' learner achievement if work is submitted late
- Develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions
- Maintain a robust and rigorous internal verification procedure
- Provide samples for standards verification/external examination as required by the awarding organisation
- Monitor standards verification/external examination reports and undertake any remedial action required
- Share good assessment practice between all BTEC programme teams
- Ensure that BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all BTEC staff
- Provide resources to ensure that assessment can be performed accurately and appropriately
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson Approval Centre Agreement

Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

Procedures for

- Assessment plans
- Assignment design / assignment brief
- Assessment
- Submission, resubmissions & retakes
- Assessment recording/ tracking for learners

Staff roles and responsibilities for each process, as appropriate

Key dates & actions

Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures. A few are already listed that may be useful. It is important that this document links to the BTEC Guide to Internal Assessment and other key documents related to assessment, such as:

Pearson Qualification Subject pages

BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Assessment

Assessment and verification templates

Internal Verification Policy

Aim:

1. To ensure there is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in each principal subject area (BTEC Entry Level - Level 3)
2. To ensure that Internal Verification is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and programme activity
3. To ensure that the Internal Verification procedure is open, fair and free from bias
4. To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

In order to do this, [add centre name] will ensure:

- Where required by the qualification, appoint a Lead Internal Verifier appropriately for each subject area, who is registered with Pearson and has undergone the necessary standardisation processes
- Each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective internal verification in their subject area
- Staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current internal verification procedures
- Effective internal verification roles are defined, maintained and supported. Internal verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff
- Standardised internal verification documentation is provided and used
- All centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose
- An annual internal verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place
- An appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and assessors is internally verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards
- Secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained
- The outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

- LIV registration
- OSCA accreditation / standardisation activities
- IV schedules
- Staff briefing / annual updating
- IV of assignments
- IV of assessment decisions
- Maintenance of IV records
- Standards verification (Entry to L3) / External Examination (L4-7) monitoring and review

Staff roles and responsibilities for each process, as appropriate

Key dates & actions for processes & procedures

Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures. A few are already listed that may be useful. It is important that this document links to the BTEC Guide to Internal Verification and and other key documents related to IV , such as:

[BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification](#)

[BTEC Centre Guide to Standards Verification](#)

[Assessment & verification tools/ templates](#)

Appeals Policy

Aim:

1. To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision
2. To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the assessor at the earliest opportunity
3. To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness
4. To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the Awarding Body and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (BTEC Level 4-Level 7), where appropriate
5. To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

In order to do this, [add centre name] will:

- Inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure
- Record, track and validate any appeal
- Forward the appeal to Pearson when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage them after the internal appeals process has been exhausted
- Keep appeals records for inspection by the Pearson for a minimum of 18 months
- Have a staged appeals procedure
- Take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results
- Monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.

> Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

- Learner induction, informing them about the appeals procedure
- Stages of learner appeals procedure (both internal and external stages)
- Recording each stage of the appeals procedure
- Monitoring appeals
- Roles / responsibilities of staff within the process

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures.

BTEC qualification specifications: These provide guidance on assessment for each BTEC qualification.

Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications and End Point Assessment Policy: This is Pearson's policy on learner appeals. Please note, this does not apply until internal centre processes have been exhausted

Assessment Malpractice Policy

1. To identify and minimise the risk of malpractice by staff or learners
2. To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
3. To standardise and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
4. To impose appropriate penalties and/or sanctions on learners or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
5. To protect the integrity of this centre and BTEC qualifications.

In order to do this, [add centre name] will:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using the induction period and the learner handbook to inform learners of the centre's policy on malpractice and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents of malpractice
- Show learners the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources
- Ask learners to declare that their work is their own
- Ask learners to provide evidence that they have interpreted and synthesised appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of Centre / Principal / CEO and all personnel linked to the allegation. It will proceed through the following stages:

    - Make the individual fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven

    - Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made

    - Inform the individual of the avenues for appealing against any judgment made

    - Document all stages of any investigation.

Where malpractice is proven, this centre will apply the appropriate penalties and/ or sanctions.

Definition of Malpractice by Learners

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Plagiarism of any nature
- Collusion by working collaboratively with other learners to produce work that is submitted as individual learner work
- Copying (including the use of ICT to aid copying)
- Deliberate destruction of another's work
- Fabrication of results or evidence
- False declaration of authenticity in relation to the contents of a portfolio or coursework
- Impersonation, by pretending to be someone else in order to produce the work for another or arranging for another to take one's place in an assessment/examination/test.

Definition of Malpractice by Centre Staff

This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this centre at its discretion:

- Improper assistance to candidates
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made
- Failure to keep candidate coursework/portfolios of evidence secure
- Fraudulent claims for certificates
- Inappropriate retention of certificates
- Assisting learners in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves centre staff producing work for the learner
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the learner has not generated
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the learner's own, to be included in a learner's assignment/task/portfolio/ coursework
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation
- Misusing the conditions for special learner requirements, for example where learners are permitted support, such as an amanuensis, this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment

- Falsifying records/certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the learner completing all the requirements of assessment.

Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

- How you minimise the risk of learner malpractice
- How you minimise the risk of staff malpractice
- How you deal with malpractice
- Informing Pearson of any malpractice

Staff roles and responsibilities for each process, as appropriate

Key dates & actions for processes & procedures

Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures. A few are already listed that may be useful.

Pearson Centre Guidance on dealing with malpractice and maladministration in vocational qualifications: This is Pearson's policy on dealing with assessment malpractice and maladministration relating to BTEC programmes

Plagiarism Factsheet

Collaborative arrangements policy *(new for 2021-2022)*

Aim

1. To ensure that all collaborative (consortia) arrangements are approved and meet requirements
2. To ensure delivery and assessment of each quaification delivered through the arrangement will meet the learning outcomes and assessment requirements set out by Pearson
3. To manage quality assurance processes to provide robust internal verification that fully meets Pearson requirements

In order to do this, [add centre name] will

- have a process in place to ensure that approval to deliver qualifications in partnership with another provider has been authorised by Pearson, prior to recruitment & ommencement of delivery of the qualification(s)
- make sure that we have qualification approval before applying for approval under a collaborative arrangement
- identify a Lead Centre for the collaborative arrangement, to coordinate the quality assurance for each qualification delivered
- ensure a Lead Internal Verifier (LIV) is registered appropriately for each qualification delivered
- ensure that the LIV completes annual standardisation activities and undertakes appropriate standardisation training with all staff completing assessment and internal verification
- make accurate learner registrations and claims under the appropriate consortium programme code or subsite, and have appropriate policies and procedures for registration and certification of learners in place
- ensure you have access to all quality assurance documentation linked to your registered learners
- ensure you have access to your learner progress and achievement records
- be included /participate fully in regular evaluation and review of all qualifications delivered in the collaborative arrangement
- retain all assessment evidence and quality assurance documentation relating to your registered learners in line with Pearson requirements
- participate as required in Pearson quality assurance monitoring through Lead Standards Verification(LSV) and Standards Verification(SV) as appropriate

- complete and submit an Annual Centre Declaration to confirm that all required Centre Quality processes and procedures are in place and operating effectively
- apply the outcomes of Standards Verication and support any essential actions required
- ensure we / or the Lead Centre communicate any changes or amendments to the collaborative arrangement to Pearson, including adding or withdrawing from a collaborative arrangement and adding or withdrawing qualifications.

Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

- Staff roles and responsibilities (i.e. Lead IV, Lead centre, assessors, IV, Exams Officers)
- Staff updating/ briefing (i.e. standardisation; meetings; review & evaulation)
- Standards verification review & monitoring
- Key dates & actions for processes & procedures
- Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures. A few are already listed that may be useful.

BTEC Centre Guide to Collaborative arrangements for vocational qualifications 2021- 2022
Collaborative and consortium arrangements
Collaborative and consortia arrangements application form

Blended Learning policy *(new for 2021-2022)*

Aim:

1. To ensure that distance and / or blended learning delivery meets the guidelines set by the awarding organisation.
2. To ensure that assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage any group or individual learners.

In order to do this the centre will:

- Ensure that teaching/delivery/assessment staff are timetabled to support distance / blended learning when learners are working remotely
- Ensure there is a process to manage feedback on assignments, questions are constructively answered, and feedback is provided in a timely manner
- Ensure the setting of assignments is undertaken in the face-to-face sessions and that deadlines are clear
- Ensure that when learners submit work measures are taken to ensure the work is authentic and has been completed by the learner
- Maintain and store securely all assessment and internal verification records in accordance with Pearson Centre Agreement.

> Top tip: You now need to add your centre specific procedures, making sure that you cover the following as a minimum requirement. You can do this in a format that suits you (i.e. flowchart, process map, bullet points or descriptive text etc)

Procedures for
- managing feedback on assignements
- constructive feedback in a timely manner
- submissions / resubmissions & retakes as appropriate
- authenticating learners work
- minimising assessment malpractice / plagiarism
- secure storage of all assessment and internal verification records

Staff roles and responsibilities with regard to support when learners are working remotely

Staff updating & training for remote delivery & assessment

Key dates & actions for processes & procedures

Policy review & update and version control details

Links

Add links here to key Pearson and /or centre documents that may be helpful for staff when reading or using the policy & procedures. A few are already listed that may be useful.

BTEC qualification specifications: These provide guidance on assessment for each BTEC qualification. All staff teaching on BTEC programmes must have access to the relevant specification. They are published on our website.

Other valuable resources for centres in planning, quality assuring and delivery BTEC programmes:

Pearson guidance for Distance Learning and Blended Learning

Frequently asked questions

Do we need to have seperate BTEC policies?

No, the policies and procedures can be included in your whole centre policies, as long as they refer to BTEC qualifications and all the requirements & guiadance in the exemplar content is covered.

Do I need to update policies annually?

Not neccessarily, but you should check the content those policies referring to BTEC policies and procedures on an annual basis, to ensure that any changes to BTEC requirements & guidance is updated. It is good practice to update/review all policies on a regular basis and 'version control' will help identify updated versions.

Do policies and procedures need to be hard/paper copies?

No. Electronic versions are easier to maintain, as updates can be made quickly and circulated to key staff. If you choose to do this, ensure that all appropriate staff have access to the documents via a shared folder or 'cloud' storage.

Do we need to use the exemplar policies included in this guide?

No, in fact we would encourage you to use them as a starting point, but develop policies and procedures to ake them 'fit for purpose' for your centre size and requirements. As long as the exemplar content is covered as a minimum, to ensure that you are meeting BTEC requirements for quality assurance of BTEC qualifications, you can develop your own format & style.

We only provide BTEC qualifications through a collaborative (consortium) arrangement with another centre. Our learners go to this centre to complete their qualification. Do we need BTEC policies and procedures?

Yes. If you register learners, you are responsible for the learner journey & experience. As a minimum you will need policies that cover Registration & Certification, Assessment Malpractice , Collaborative Arrangements and Appeals.