

## QN Quality Focus 3:

# Standards Verification

Knowing that most if not all of your BTEC programmes are going to be reviewed by a subject specialist could raise many questions for you and your teams. However, if you read and refer to all the guidance listed below and use the templates provided, you'll find that the process can be planned easily and can be supportive and helpful for development.

BTEC programmes are delivered across the whole country by very different types of institutions and providers. Pearson must be sure that these programmes are delivered effectively and that they are being assessed accurately and consistently. In order to do this we allocate a Standards Verifier, who is a subject expert, to conduct sampling of assessment instruments 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, and also to retain this person for three or four years so that you can establish a working relationship. Please note that this is an aim not a promise as life can often intervene!

To support this process, we publish a range of BTEC Quality Assurance Guides every year which provide the full details of each process for the coming academic year. Each process has a separate guide published on our [key documents page](#).

### Roles and responsibilities at the centre

First of all, you will require the support of senior staff. Their support is critical to the success of a BTEC programme in terms of the commitment required by the staff involved, and full understanding of the objectives and outcomes of delivering a BTEC programme (in terms of funding, performance league tables and time, etc). We have produced some guides to the roles of a BTEC team here: [Web link to roles and responsibilities](#)

A BTEC staff team will typically consist of:

- Head of Centre & Senior Management
- Quality Nominee
- Exams Officer
- Programme Leader
- Lead Internal Verifier
- Internal Verifier
- Assessor

## Preparing for Standards Verification

Ensure that you have all of your people in place and that they understand their roles (see other guides).

You should check that your Lead Internal Verifiers are registered and that they have followed the relevant process for their respective courses – standardisation for NQF or OSCA for QCF if required. You should also check that they have worked with their teams to create assessment plans and that they are fully conversant with the quality processes that they should have in place. Our guides on Internal Verification and the Role of the Internal Verifier will help here if you are unsure.

**Top Tip** – keep checking on progress throughout the process. Everyone is busy so don't assume things have been done as they can be easily overlooked in the thick of things.

## The process

**Sampling/Reporting Deadlines** – all first reports to be complete by 30th May 2017.

Any second reports following block of first report to be complete by 30th June 2017

**Allocation** – shortly after the close of registration of learners we will assess how many Standards Verifiers we need across the range of subject areas. Once we have a good picture of this our deployment team will start to process allocations to SVs.

**Notification** – once the Standards Verifier has accepted the allocation of your centre we will send you notification of their details and this will be available to view on Edexcel Online.

**Contact** – the first contact from the SV will be an email to the Quality Nominee as this is the centre contact that they are provided with. You should share these details with your Lead Internal Verifier and/or the Programme Leader/Manager. You may ask to be copied into all subsequent correspondence if you wish.

**Assessment plan** – this is the first thing your Standards Verifier will ask for so that they can see how the completion of units is spread across the academic year.

**Sample units chosen** – completed units will be selected by agreement between the SV and the Lead Internal verifier or Programme Manager. This will also provide a framework for the time-scale of the sample. The SV will aim to see different assessors across the programme if possible.

**Grading sheets** – as the selected units are completed the SV will ask to see the tracking sheets for those units so that they can select the learners for the sample. It is helpful to identify which learners' work has been internally verified so that the SV has that information as well. The SV will aim for a spread across the grade range if possible.

**Sample supplied** – You should always ensure that the sample has been checked before sending it to the SV. Remember that the SV is looking at the assignment briefs and their fitness for purpose, the accuracy of assessment decisions and the accuracy and robustness of internal verification. Instructions for sending the sample using Parcelforce can be found here (insert link).

**Report written** – the SV will work on the sample and complete the report, normally within a ten day window. Where Pearson’s own quality assurance processes are being actioned this may mean that the report takes slightly longer.

## The Sample

Your sample should contain the assignment briefs, internal verification of the assignment briefs, copies of the learner work, feedback to the learners and internal verification of the assessment decisions. Always send copies rather than original documents – just in case – and note that if work is held electronically then it can be supplied to the SV in that format.

## Accessing the report and outcomes

Once the SV has worked through the sample they will compile their report, usually using an online form and can take up to ten working days before it will be submitted to the Pearson system. Once this has been done you will receive an email notifying you that the report is available for you to view on Edexcel Online. From here you will be able to download the report as a PDF or save it so that it can be used to inform your quality assurance process moving forward.

**Release** – no issues have been identified and certification will be released.

**Recommendations** – are suggestions for improvement that will help improve the overall quality processes within your centre.

**Block** – if there is an issue with the assignment briefs and their fitness for purpose, the accuracy of assessment decisions and the accuracy and robustness of internal verification then the report can result in a block and action will be required as set out by the SV. This will lead to a second sample being submitted. In the event of a second block then the Principal Standards Manager will contact you with an action plan designed to ensure that measures are put in place to resolve the issues and ultimately remove the block once progress has been made.

**Essential Actions** – are compulsory and must be responded to as soon as possible.

## Support

[Web link to BTEC Quality Nominee Information Hub](#)