



Pearson

## A guide to recruiting with integrity and enrolling learners onto qualifications

Quality Services and Governance

### Who and what is this guide for:

This guide is for centres who are delivering Pearson qualifications. It is intended to help centres and learners make the right decisions when recruiting for, or enrolling onto, our qualifications.

If you have any questions about recruiting with integrity you can contact [qualitymanagement@pearson.com](mailto:qualitymanagement@pearson.com) for advice and support.

# Pearson Education Ltd – Our Mission and Values

Welcome to Pearson, the world's leading learning company. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. Whether it's at home, in the classroom or in the workplace, learning is the key to improving our life chances. We are the UK's largest awarding body and we are regulated by Ofqual (England), SQA Accreditation (Scotland), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). We offer academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked, with educational excellence rooted in names like Edexcel, BTEC, and LCCI.

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## 1. What does this guide cover?

- 1.1 This guide aims to support you in recruiting learners onto Pearson qualifications and assessments in a fair, equal and appropriate way. This includes recruitment for non-regulated and regulated qualifications offered in the UK and internationally.
- 1.2 Some qualifications may have recruitment restrictions for legal reasons (such as serving alcohol or using firearms) or other restrictions relating to funding rules. You should refer to the qualification specification to check, before accepting someone on to a course, that they meet all the necessary criteria.

## 2. What are the aims of this guide?

- 2.1 To support you in taking the right decisions when considering enrolling learners onto qualifications and helping learners make appropriate choices.
- 2.2 To make sure that there is a fair and consistent approach to recruiting with integrity across our qualifications.
- 2.3 To clarify our recommendations of the age at which learners should begin studying for our general, vocational, higher national and apprenticeship qualifications.
- 2.4 To help you understand what we mean by 'recruiting with integrity' and how you can make sure that you meet your commitments in relation to recruitment under our Terms and Conditions. It's important that you understand this essential activity and that not recruiting with integrity may lead to removal of your centre or programme approval (Read more about this in our [Removal of centre or programme approval policy](#))

## 3. What is 'recruiting with integrity'?

- 3.1 When we say that you need to 'recruit with integrity' we mean that you must make sure that learners are enrolled onto qualifications that will benefit them and that will meet their aims and aspirations. You should enrol learners onto qualifications that they have the capability and opportunity to achieve.

## 4. Recruiting with integrity: what to check

- 4.1 Below is a list of things to consider to help your learners make the right choices. You can apply these across all types of qualification. Before enrolling onto a programme, your learners should:
  1. Be able to meet the eligibility criteria if there is any set. For example some apprenticeships in the UK require learners to have the right to work in England.
  2. Understand whether the programme they are being enrolled on leads to a nationally recognised qualification or not, and what that qualification can lead to.
  3. Understand how they will be assessed, and what is meant by creating and authenticating their own work.
  4. Be given the correct information and advice on their selected qualification(s).
  5. Choose qualifications that will meet their needs and aspirations.

6. Have language skills that meet the required level for the assessment (where the language of the assessment is not the learner's first language).
7. Understand the options for, and are given, adequate access arrangements<sup>1</sup> to enable them to meet the requirements of the qualification. This requirement is also necessary for you to comply with the [UK Equality Act 2010](#)<sup>2</sup>.
8. Understand where they may not be able to achieve parts of assessment for the qualification(s) (for example if their particular requirement, even with reasonable adjustments, will prevent them from undertaking an assessment) and any limits on progression routes that may result from this.

## 5. Enrolling onto vocational qualifications

**5.1** In addition to the above, if you are recruiting learners onto vocational qualifications, you should make sure that they:

- Choose qualifications that are at an appropriate level - neither too high so as to restrict their ability to achieve, nor too low so as to prevent them from achieving their potential. (There may be some instances where a qualification outcome at a lower level than the learner's ability is a requirement for employment or further study).
- Are enrolled and registered onto the programme before the published qualification end date (available in the specification, on our website and on the relevant Regulator's register – for example Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>).
- Know what options are available to help them successfully demonstrate achievement across all assessment requirements, for example, whether it is possible for them to use evidence from previous learning and experience.
- Have the capability and opportunity to achieve. It's good practice, if you aren't already familiar with a learner's ability, to carry out a diagnostic assessment to help clarify their level of ability and how that may match to a qualification level and requirements. There are a range of tools and activities for this, but as a minimum it should enable you to assess the confidence, commitment and level of the learner. You should make justifiable and professional judgements about each learner's potential to successfully achieve the qualification, including checking the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of mandatory units and selecting the most appropriate optional units.
- Understand the possible progression routes from the qualification and consider whether these are matched to their aims.
- Are able to plan and study independently to complete their assignments.
- Have access to the necessary resources and facilities to complete any practical activities.
- Have access to relevant work-based contexts such as work experience and real work environments.
- Are in a position to make an informed choice. This may include the opportunity to watch or participate in activities from different vocational areas, or participation in a preparatory programme to familiarise themselves with assessment methods and learn techniques for managing their own learning, for example how to plan time, to research, to make notes.

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<sup>1</sup> Read more about this in our [access to assessment/reasonable adjustments guidance](#)

<sup>2</sup> To learn more about how Pearson complies with this please read our [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)

## 6. Age entry recommendations for qualifications

- 6.1 We cannot consider applications for special arrangements or special considerations for learners made on grounds related to the learners' age, so please make sure that you have checked the qualification specification and guidance to make sure that you are aware of any age restrictions.
- 6.2 The sections below give general guidance regarding the age requirements for different qualification types. Where there are restrictions (for example relating to certain Vocational Qualifications) these are published in the specification.

### Guidance on the age of learners taking GCSE and A Levels

- 6.3 There are **no formal entry requirements or age restrictions**. However, learners being enrolled onto these qualifications **need to be able to understand** what is expected of them, including what is meant by **authenticating their own work**, and what is required of them under **exam conditions**. To study a subject at A level, learners will usually need to have studied it already at level 2 in a BTEC or GCSE, although this is not mandatory.

### Guidance on the age of learners taking vocational qualifications

- 6.4 **We recommend** that you enrol learners **no younger than age 14** years onto our vocational qualifications. This is because younger learners:
- May find it hard to respond appropriately to work-based or vocational contexts.
  - May not have access to appropriate practical experience, for example work experience because of health and safety or other concerns.
  - May find that routes to work and further study are blocked on completion of the qualification.

### Guidance on the age of learners taking Higher National qualifications

- 6.5 We have designed these qualifications to be **appropriate for learners aged 18 or over**, however in some cases younger learners can be entered onto a [Pearson BTEC Higher National](#) programme.
- 6.6 Your responsibilities with regard to consumer protection law as a Higher Education (HE) provider are set out in the following guide: [Advice on Consumer Protection Law](#).

### Guidance on the age of learners taking Apprenticeships

- 6.7 [Apprenticeships](#) are packages of training and, sometimes, qualifications, which have been designed by industry bodies to give employees the appropriate skills and knowledge for a particular sector or job role<sup>3</sup>. They are supported by the UK government and **cannot be undertaken by people aged under 16**.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> You should ensure support is given for employers as well as apprentices in making decisions about suitable frameworks and their associated qualifications.

<sup>4</sup> Find out more about our apprenticeships on our [website](#).

## 7. Our specifications and handbooks

- 7.1 All of our specifications state any entry requirements for that qualification, including any prerequisite qualifications and age restrictions and the reasons for these.
- 7.2 Statements are made across all of our centre handbooks that make clear any entry requirements and age restrictions for all our qualifications and units.
- 7.3 Our qualifications and handbooks are available online at <http://qualifications.pearson.com/>

## 8. Other useful resources

There are other policies, documents and laws which will support you to recruit with integrity:

- [General Conditions of Recognition \(Ofqual, June 2016\)](#)
- [JCQ Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration General and Vocational qualifications, September 2016 – August 2017](#)
- [Pearson Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Pearson Late registration and certification policy](#)
- [Pearson Policy for the removal of centre and programme approval](#)
- [Pearson Supplementary guide for reasonable adjustment and Special considerations in vocational internally assessed units](#)
- [Pearson Recognition of Prior Learning policy and process](#)
- [SQA Accreditation's Regulatory Principles \(2014\)](#)
- [UK Equality Act 2010](#)

## 9. Review date

- 9.1 This guide will be reviewed in March 2019.