



**Pearson**

## **Pearson's Self Regulated Framework Policy**

**Quality Services and Governance**

### **Who and what is this policy for:**

This policy is for centres who are developing, delivering and assessing qualifications available on Pearson's Self Regulated Framework.

The criteria set out in this policy are the minimum requirements that must be met by qualifications on the Self Regulated Framework.

# 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.

Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate in a consistent way how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and learners with the design, delivery and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

## Contents

1.	Scope of policy .....	3
2.	Criteria for developing qualifications for Pearson's Self Regulated Framework.....	3
	Qualification overview .....	3
	Qualification title .....	3
	Qualification aim.....	3
	Qualification structure .....	4
	Qualification level .....	4
	Unit structure .....	5
	Title, aim and level .....	5
	Unit content .....	5
	Outcomes of learning and assessment .....	6
	Unit and qualification size .....	6
	Unit size .....	6
	Qualification size .....	6
3.	Qualification assessment, grading, and quality assurance .....	7
	Assessment.....	7
	Grading .....	7
	Quality assurance .....	8
4.	Diversity, equality and inclusion, branding and marketing .....	8
	Diversity, equality and inclusion .....	8
	Branding.....	9
	Marketing .....	9
5.	Regulatory references .....	9
6.	Appendix A: Glossary.....	10

# Introduction

Qualifications available on Pearson's Self Regulated Framework (SRF) are developed to meet specific needs not already met by regulated qualifications. Pearson Self Regulated Qualifications are not regulated by Ofqual, SQA Accreditation or any other regulatory body. This policy provides information about qualifications to be submitted onto Pearson's Self Regulated Framework.

## 1. Scope of policy

- 1.1 This policy applies to all qualifications on Pearson's SRF. The '[Self Regulated Framework Quality Assurance Handbook](#)' should be read alongside this policy. This policy does not apply to Pearson's International Advanced Levels (IALs) or International GCSEs.
- 1.2 Pearson's SRF is designed to ensure that all qualifications on the Self Regulated Framework meet agreed minimum standards. Qualifications on Pearson's SRF are developed to the same high quality and standards as UK regulated qualifications. However, they are not accredited or regulated by any UK regulatory body.
- 1.3 Self regulated qualifications are designed to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders where those needs cannot be met by our standard regulated qualifications. They are qualifications devised and developed in agreement with a centre(s)/consortium, or employer.
- 1.4 This policy provides the criteria for developing qualifications for Pearson's SRF. **These criteria are the minimum requirements that need to be met by our SRF qualifications on this framework.** They are designed to ensure each qualification is coherent, of appropriate demand and provides consistent measurable outcomes so that they can be effectively quality assured.

## 2. Criteria for developing qualifications for Pearson's Self Regulated Framework

### Qualification overview

#### Qualification title

- 2.1 The qualification title must include the level and indicate the content of the qualification. If the qualification is a single unit, the unit title will be the same as the subject title of the qualification.
- 2.2 The title must be 150 characters or less, accurately reflect the qualification content and not contain ambiguous language.
- 2.3 The qualification title must not replicate a Pearson regulated or legacy regulated title. The title must not indicate regulated status.

#### Qualification aim

- 2.4 Each qualification must have an aim that is clear and informative to learners and other users and explains the purpose of the qualification.
- 2.5 The aim summarises who the qualification is for and its basic aims and objectives.
- 2.6 If the qualification is part of a suite of qualifications, an aim must be provided for the suite and each qualification within it.

- 2.7** There are some specialist vocational areas that we may not approve for the SRF. This may be because it's an area for which we do not have the relevant expertise or authority, or because our association with a type of qualification could reflect negatively on our public reputation. These areas include (but are not limited to):
- Some professional specialisms such as medical, legal and 'licence to practise' sectors
  - Life and death situations
  - Counterterrorism
  - Handling/discharging firearms and/or explosives
  - Hostage situations
  - Safety in high risk environments
  - Administering pharmaceuticals.

### **Qualification structure**

- 2.8** The qualification structure must not replicate that of a Pearson regulated qualification.
- 2.9** All rules of combination within an SRF qualification should ensure that more than 50% of units and their associated credit/value are not replicated in any rules of combination of a live regulated qualification. The appropriateness of proposed rules of SRF unit combination will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
- 2.10** All possible combinations of units must be considered to make sure that all routes to certification are comparable.
- 2.11** Qualification structures must be designed to ensure that any route in the qualification has a distinct purpose.

### **Qualification progression**

- 2.12** SRF qualifications must not imply an automatic progression route, unless this has been formally agreed between a centre and with specific employers, education institutions or professional bodies. In these cases, the progression routes must be described in the specification and be made clear to learners.
- 2.13** Written evidence of progression routes must be made available during the qualification proposal and development stages, and throughout the lifespan of the qualification.
- 2.14** You must make sure that information about progression routes is accurate and kept updated in the specification and all marketing materials.
- 2.15** Where a qualification is claiming a progression route, the specification must show clearly where it gives learners the opportunity to prepare for employment, progress in employment and/or to continue in further or higher education.

### **Qualification level**

- 2.16** SRF qualifications are set at a single level equivalent to the level descriptors in a recognised level framework for example, RQF.<sup>1</sup> Other non-UK frameworks will need to be approved by us as fit for purpose.
- 2.17** Applications including proposed units must specify which level descriptors have been used. Unless stated, we will assume the units have been evaluated against the [RQF level descriptors](#).

---

<sup>1</sup> Regulated Qualification Framework

- 2.18** The proposed level will be checked against the relevant descriptors during the qualification development stage to ensure that it has been set correctly, including making use of any existing NOS<sup>2</sup> or competency frameworks.
- 2.19** The standard of a qualification is set by aligning the demand of its assessment and outcomes of learning against level descriptors.
- 2.20** Although qualifications can contain units at different levels, there must be a clear rationale for the overall qualification level. At least 50% of the Notional Learning Hours (NLH) or Total Qualification Time (TQT) must be at the level of the qualification.
- 2.21** Qualifications will be kept under review to ensure that the content remains relevant to the subject area and that the assigned level is appropriate.

## Unit structure

### Title, aim and level

- 2.22** Each unit must have a title that reflects the content and outcomes of the unit.
- 2.23** Units must have an aim that summarises who the unit is for and what the learners can expect to learn from the content.
- 2.24** The level of a unit is set by profiling its assessment and related outcomes of learning against the assigned level descriptors. Units must be set at a single level. Mandatory unit levels must not be above the level of the qualification.

### Unit content

- 2.25** Units from regulated frameworks can be used in SRF qualifications, subject to suitability and approval.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.26** Units must be classified as mandatory or optional to the achievement of the qualification. Where a qualification contains optional units, you must provide clear guidance for learners on what combination of units makes a complete qualification.
- 2.27** Units must contain a set of outcomes of learning and must be coherent within the qualification structure.
- 2.28** You can choose an appropriate approved delivery and assessment mode to meet the requirements of learners. You will need to state your preferred delivery method on the [approval application form](#).
- 2.29** A single assessment can be designed to cover the assessment criteria of:
- A single unit
  - Components of different units
  - Groups of units.

---

<sup>2</sup> National Occupational Standards

<sup>3</sup> Please note that these units are not certificated with their regulatory references such as Guided Learning when incorporated within an SRF qualification.

## Outcomes of learning and assessment

- 2.30** Outcomes of learning must detail all, and no more, of what a learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do on completion of the SRF qualification.
- 2.31** Outcomes of learning cannot contain language or branding that may lead to learners with particular characteristics<sup>4</sup> being excluded. See section 4, *Diversity, equality and inclusion* for more information.
- 2.32** Learning content will be developed from the outcomes of learning.
- 2.33** Outcomes of learning must be capable of being assessed. Outcomes of learning contain assessment criteria, all of which must be evidenced by a learner to demonstrate the outcome.
- 2.34** Assessment criteria must be appropriately linked to a specific outcome of learning and must specify a standard of performance that is specific and measurable by assessors.

## Unit and qualification size

### Unit size

- 2.35** All units, including those available on the SRF, have an indication of size which is based on the total number of hours an average learner is expected to take to complete the unit to the required standard. This includes teaching, self-study, and assessment time. This will be expressed as NLH or TQT.
- 2.36** Credit or Value is assigned to each unit based on the NLH. The qualification is achieved when the learner achieves a valid combination of units.

### Qualification size

- 2.37** Qualification NLH or TQT is the total number of hours a learner is expected to take to complete the qualification to the required standard. This includes teaching, self-study and assessment time.
- 2.38** Qualification NLH or TQT must be calculated, during the development, by those with expertise in the delivery of the qualification based on the rules of unit combination within the qualification.
- 2.39** Based on the amount of NLH or TQT required to complete the qualification, an SRF qualification can be:
- Award
  - Certificate
  - Diploma.
- 2.40** SRF qualifications will either use the term 'Value' or 'Credit' (both calculated in the same way).
- 2.41** 'Value' is normally associated with the use of NLH. Value is calculated using the formula  $NLH/10$ . 'Credit' is normally associated with the use of TQT. Credit is calculated using the formula  $TQT/10$ . Credit and/or Value will always be a whole number.
- 2.42** "Credit/Value" is listed on the Notification of Performance which accompanies the Certificate.
- 2.43** The use of TQT and/or Credit does not imply regulated status on any SRF qualification.

---

<sup>4</sup> [UK Equality Act 2010](#).

## 3. Qualification assessment, grading, and quality assurance

### Assessment

- 3.1** The assessments of all qualifications will be subject to external verification.
- 3.2** The same person cannot deliver the learning, assess the learners' work and verify the assessment decisions, to claim certificates.
- 3.3** Internal verification of assessment requires an element of third party involvement in the delivery, setting and/or marking of an assessment to ensure there is no conflict of interest between teaching, assessment and verification.
- 3.4** Assessments must be designed to be fit for purpose and produce consistent outcomes when repeated under equivalent conditions. The assessment must be:
- Valid
  - Reliable
  - Manageable
  - Affordable
  - Achievable
  - Rigorous
  - Secure.
- 3.5** If the qualification is an SRF BTEC First or SRF BTEC National, it will be subject to the [BTEC Internal Assessment rules](#). If the qualification is an SRF HN and was developed after September 2016, it will be subject to the [HN \(RQF\) Assessment rules](#).
- 3.6** There may be multiple forms of assessment for a qualification whereby different methods of assessment may be used in different units. The chosen method of assessment must be appropriate to the outcomes of learning and the demand on the learner must reflect the qualification level and criteria for assessment.
- 3.7** SRF qualifications need to be comparable with other similar qualifications in terms of assessment outcomes, and over time.
- 3.8** Where there is no requirement for the qualification to be delivered in English, you may deliver the SRF qualification in other languages. Please refer to our [Use of languages in qualifications policy](#). The language used for delivering and assessing the qualification must be stated on the approval form. It is your responsibility to ensure that materials used for Standards Verification are translated into English.

### Grading

- 3.9** Qualifications must be valid and reliable with clear objectives for learning. Any assessment and/or grading criteria should clearly reflect the intended learning objectives.
- 3.10** If an SRF qualification is a variant of a regulated qualification, grading must follow the grading principles of the original. For example, an overall grade of Pass, Merit or Distinction will be awarded for an SRF Higher National Certificate (HNC) or Higher National Diploma (HND) qualification that follows the size and requirements of the equivalent regulated title.
- 3.11** All other SRF qualification outcomes are Pass or Not Achieved only.

- 3.12** Information on how grading decisions are reached and the differentiation between grades must be clearly available.
- 3.13** An explanation of how grades are derived must be provided for learners within the specification. This must cover both unit and qualification level grading.
- 3.14** You may provide graded assessment opportunities as part of the formative assessment process. These will not form part of an overall grade for a graded qualification, or define any grading outcomes for a qualification.

### Quality assurance

- 3.15** You must have [Pearson Approved Centre status](#) to deliver SRF qualifications and assessments. This means that you have in place the necessary physical and staffing resources, and appropriate policies and procedures to deliver the qualification.
- 3.16** SRF qualifications will only be approved if they can be appropriately quality assured by us. We keep copies of all SRF qualification specifications.
- 3.17** You must not start to deliver any SRF qualification until you have centre and qualification approval to do so.
- 3.18** Every year Standards Verifiers (SV) or External Examiners (EE) will review assessment and internal verification decisions against the current approved specification. It is your responsibility to:
- Provide materials selected for SV/EE samples in English
  - Ensure that the qualification has not expired when recruiting learners onto the programme.

## 4. Diversity, equality and inclusion, branding and marketing

### Diversity, equality and inclusion

- 4.1** Qualifications must not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignments, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, gender identification or sexual orientation. This corresponds with our beliefs as an organisation and our commitment to the [UK Equality Act 2010](#), and any other relevant legislation, except in circumstances where the law applies for example dealing with alcohol or where competence requirements must be met.
- 4.2** Qualifications, and their assessment, must be reviewed at every stage of development to identify and, if possible, remove any barriers.
- 4.3** Qualifications must meet the legislative requirements that apply in the countries where the qualifications are to be delivered and assessed.
- 4.4** You must make sure that learners are recruited onto your qualifications with integrity<sup>5</sup>, ensuring that any age entry requirements are made clear, including the reason for any external restrictions.
- 4.5** In certain circumstances, we reserve our right not to develop a qualification.

---

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to our [Recruiting with Integrity guide](#).



## Branding

- 4.6 Qualifications available on the SRF can be branded with the name of the organisation requesting the development.
- 4.7 Branding choices are limited depending on the qualification title chosen. For example, where qualifications have BTEC in the title, the qualification structure must follow existing guidelines for BTEC qualifications.
- 4.8 The specification must clearly state the responsibilities between Pearson and the branded organisation. This must be agreed at the proposal stage. Branding in a specification can include reference where a qualification is likely to be delivered.
- 4.9 All branding decisions are subject to our approval process. The qualification cannot be branded in any way that could lead learners to believe it is regulated by [Ofqual](#) or other regulators.
- 4.10 We reserve the right to use other descriptions such as 'International' in SRF qualifications delivered outside of the UK.
- 4.11 Certificates for qualifications on the SRF may feature the logo or reference to an organisation.
- 4.12 Any change to standard Pearson certificate templates must be agreed with our Customer Operations Manager, the Head of Regulation and our Responsible Officer before use.

## Marketing

- 4.13 Your marketing and promotional materials must use the approved qualification title to avoid any confusion to learners.
- 4.14 Marketing materials must make it clear that SRF qualifications are qualifications which are available on Pearson's Self Regulated Framework, and are not regulated by [Ofqual](#) or other regulatory bodies.
- 4.15 You must not market the programme to learners as a qualification until the specification has been completed and the qualification approved.
- 4.16 Reference to qualification progression must not be included in marketing materials unless this has been formally agreed between a centre and with specific employers, education institutions or professional bodies.
- 4.17 If the qualification is being marketed as a commercial training programme, all promotional material must state by name who has created the standards upon which the qualification has been defined for example, centre devised standard; centre and employer devised standard; centre and professional body devised standard.

## 5. Regulatory references

- 5.1 Please note that qualifications on Pearson's SRF are not nationally regulated qualifications but are subject to the same quality assurance arrangements as Pearson's regulated qualifications.

## 6. Appendix A: Glossary

### Accredited/Regulated qualifications:

Qualifications that are recognised, reviewed and monitored by regulatory bodies such as Ofqual and SQA Accreditation, in order to ensure that those qualifications meet specific criteria and quality standards.

### Credit/Value:

Credit/Value is assigned to each unit and to the qualification overall. Credit or Value will always be NLH or TQT divided by 10 and rounded to the nearest whole number.

### External Examiners:

Representatives of Pearson who will review and assess the accuracy and consistency of centre decisions relating to internal assessment for Higher National Certificates and/or Diplomas.

### Formative Assessment:

The evaluation of learner achievement during the programme of study.

### Notional Learning Hours (NLH):

An estimate of the total amount of time expected to be required in order for a Learner to achieve, and demonstrate the achievement of the qualification. NLH and TQT are comprised of two elements: a) the number of 'guided hours' (taught and supervised activities) and b) the number of hours the Learner would be reasonably expected to spend in a non-supervised setting such as preparation for assessments.

### Qualification aim:

Qualification aims develop the title to explain what a learner can expect to cover by taking a qualification.

### Qualification assessment:

A process of reliably measuring learner work against outcomes of learning and any associated criteria to produce results that are a valid interpretation of learner performance.

### Qualification grading:

All qualifications are graded with a minimum of two grades e.g. pass/not achieved, however it is sometimes appropriate to have additional grades to discriminate candidate performance.

### Qualification level:

The level of a qualification indicates the complexity and demand expected for its achievement and places it on a framework of comparability with other qualifications at that level. You can find out more about qualification levels from the Ofqual website.

### Qualification pathway:

Where the learner may specialise within the qualification, e.g. a dance pathway within a performing arts qualification or suite.

### Qualification progression:

The process that enables a learner to move into employment, progress in employment or progress onto further learning opportunities through the completion of a qualification.

### Qualification size:

Size provides an indication of the time necessary to complete the qualification. Self Regulated qualifications sizes are measured in Notional Learning Hours (NLH) or Total Qualification Time (TQT).

### **Qualification structure:**

The relationship between mandatory, specialist and optional units within a qualification. The structure must be clear, appropriate and distinctive from regulated qualifications.

### **Qualification suite:**

a group of qualifications of differing sizes or pathways e.g. Pearson SRF BTEC Level 3 Award in Business, Pearson SRF BTEC Level 3 Certificate in Business, and Pearson SRF BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Business, would make a suite.

### **Qualification title:**

The title is a short description of the level and content of a qualification.

### **Qualification units:**

A unit is a coherent body of learning that can be taught and assessed individually or as part of a programme. Qualifications can be built up from one or more units.

### **Qualification unit criteria for assessment:**

Where outcomes of learning have associated criteria, these demonstrate how to achieve a qualification. Criteria of assessment are the minimum standard required to achieve the outcome of learning.

### **Self Regulated qualification:**

A qualification that is designed specifically to meet a need not met by a regulated qualification.

### **Standards Verifiers:**

Representatives of Pearson who will review and assess the accuracy and consistency of centre decisions relating to internal assessment for qualifications that are not Higher National Certificates and/or Diplomas.

### **Summative Assessment:**

The evaluation of learner achievement at the end of the programme of study.

### **Total Qualification Time (TQT):**

An estimate of the total amount of time expected to be required for a Learner to achieve, and demonstrate the achievement of the qualification. TQT is comprised of two elements: a) the number of 'guided hours' (taught and supervised activities) and b) the number of hours the Learner would be reasonably expected to spend in non-supervised setting such as preparation for assessments.

### **Total Unit Time (TUT):**

This is an estimate of the total amount of time expected to be required for a Learner to achieve, and demonstrate achievement of the unit.

### **Unit outcomes of learning:**

Outcomes of learning state what a learner can be expected to know, understand or be able to do because of completing a programme of study.

### **Verification:**

The process that reviews and assesses centre decisions on the assessment of learners for accuracy and consistency.