




Pearson  
BTEC



# Centre Guide to Academic Management Review

2024/25

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# Introduction

Welcome to this guide to Academic Management Review (AMR). The process for this academic year has been revised, this guide provides you with the information you need to be prepared for the new process in 2024-25.

Academic Management Review is how we quality assure our Alternative Providers and centres in exceptional collaborative arrangements delivering: BTEC Higher National Level 4-5 and BTEC Strategic Management Level 7.

The guide walks you through:

- what you need to do
- who is responsible at each stage

and provides additional advice and guidance on best practice.

We've aimed to cover all relevant points to help you successfully meet the requirements outlined in the Quality Measures framework. We hope you find this guide useful.

## We're here to help

For all queries, please visit the [Pearson Support](#) page of our website, so your questions can be answered as quickly as possible by the relevant Pearson team.

# How to use this guide

## What you need to do

### Step 1: Quality Assurance

If you are new to delivering Higher Nationals qualifications it may be useful to start by familiarising yourself with the term 'Academic Management Review', and how we quality assure a centre's processes and procedures for managing the delivery and quality of their vocational provision. This document provides more information on the process and offers support to help you prepare for the annual activity.

### Step 2: Read this guide

This guide provides you with the additional information you need to undertake the Academic Management Review process for:

Academic Management Review	
What qualifications are in scope	What qualifications are not in scope
<p>Alternative providers delivering the following qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BTEC Higher Nationals at Level 4-5</li> <li>• BTEC Strategic Management Level 7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmes delivered under licence from Higher Education Institutions</li> <li>• BTEC Customised and Self-Regulated Framework</li> <li>• Programmes delivered within BTEC Apprenticeships</li> <li>• All skills programmes</li> <li>• All levels of stand-alone NVQ/SVQ.</li> <li>• BTEC from Entry Level to Level 3</li> <li>• BTEC Education &amp; Training at Level 4-5</li> </ul>

There's detailed, step-by-step guidance for your Quality Nominee and internal teams so you can be confident that you have everything covered.

# What you need to know

## How we review Academic Management

Academic Management Review is designed to assure Pearson that Alternative Providers and centres collaborative arrangements are managing higher level provision in line with national standards. This takes the form of an annual visit that critically reviews centre-wide quality assurance systems. It confirms that you have measures in place to ensure effective management, delivery, and assessment of higher level BTEC qualifications. It focuses on cross-centre management of vocational provision and scrutiny of current centre records.

We allocate a Centre Quality Manager (CQM) to conduct a review of your centre-wide quality assurance systems against the Quality Measures framework to provide judgements and feedback. The CQM team will support you in identifying good practice and areas for further development. If found that your centre-wide systems do not meet the requirements outlined in the Quality Measures framework, they may recommend suspension of registration and/or certification. This process is undertaken to safeguard the safe certification of BTEC qualifications.

***Important:***

***AMR visits will take place between January and 31 April annually***

Please note: Academic Management Review is in addition to External Examiner verification, which must still be completed successfully to claim certificates for students.

Academic Management Review applies to Alternative Providers and FE Colleges where an exceptional arrangement is in place.

Other types of Centres that deliver BTEC programmes at Levels 4-7 and between Entry Level to Level 3 will be required to participate under the Quality Assurance model for 2024-25.

## What's new for 2024 -25

Quality assurance activity in Academic Management Review will be undertaken by your regional Centre Quality Manager (CQM) either in a remote or physical capacity.

Your Centre Quality Manager will confirm to you whether they will be visiting your centre.

Pearson reserve the right to retain flexibility between virtual visits and face-to-face visits in 2024/25 and may choose to operate face-to-face or remote visits as appropriate to centre support requirements based on but not limited to:

- previous AMR report outcomes
- External Examiner outcomes
- newly approved centre / qualifications
- the delivery of qualifications within an exceptional / formal collaboration

Therefore, the use of the term “visit” in this guide may refer to remote or face-to-face.

The review window for 2024/25 is scheduled to take place between **January and April 2025**

## Guidance for The Office for Students

Established by the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, the [Office for Students \(OfS\)](#) became active in January 2018 and is the government approved regulatory body for Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) in England. Their strategic aim is to ensure that every student, whatever their background has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers. The OfS works with the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to ensure that they have the data, and the quality assurance processes in place to deliver on their strategic aims. The OfS Register provides a single list of English HEIs and their regulatory status. Registration with the OfS is optional but a centre must register if they want to access:

- Any public grant/funding/student support funding
- A tier 4 licence to recruit international students (or to maintain an existing licence)
- Degree awarding powers and/or a university title.

## The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

As well as meeting the quality requirements for the delivery of Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals, centres should also meet the quality and standards expectations of the [Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education \(QAA\)](#). This is the independent body responsible for monitoring (not in England) and advising on standards and quality for UK higher education, and this includes UK qualifications delivered outside the UK. As

such, Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals should also be delivered by centres in a way that meets the guidance in the [QAA Quality Code](#).

## Exceptional Collaborations

Where a Further Education College enters an Exceptional Collaboration with an Alternative Provider, both centres must participate in Academic Management Review in relation to the programme(s) being offered under that Collaboration. The college of Further Education will have direct responsibility for the students on the programme(s) and overview and responsibility of the Quality Assurance process. The college of Further Education will be expected to act as the Lead centre in the AMR process. **All Exceptional Collaborations will receive a face-to-face visit for 24/25 at a delivery site.**

## Assessment Board reminder

The requirements for 2024/25 remain the same as last year. We would like to remind you that centres offering Level 4 to 7 Qualifications must have in place an Assessment Board. Each provider is expected by Pearson to hold Assessment Boards for all its BTEC Higher level programmes.

The main purpose of an Assessment Board is to make recommendations on:

- the grades achieved by students on the individual units
- extenuating circumstances
- cases of cheating and plagiarism
- progression of students on to the next stage of the programme
- the awards to be made to students
- referrals and deferrals.

Assessment Boards may also monitor academic standards. It is only when the unit results of students' achievement have been considered by an Assessment Board that certification can be awarded. Prior to this the External Examiner will have sampled work, and the report will be received by the Assessment Board.

## Timing of Assessment Boards

The main boards are normally held annually, although if the provider operates on a semester system there may be (intermediate) boards at the end of the first semester.

Where a provider does not currently have such a process then the External Examiner (EE) should discuss this with the Quality Nominee and Programme Leader, stressing

the requirement for Assessment Boards by Pearson and that Assessment Board reports and minutes provide valuable evidence for the QAA's Review of College Higher Education process (Higher Education Review).

Please refer to [QAA's Code](#) for further guidance.

## Completing your Annual Quality Declaration

All centres will be required to complete and submit their Annual Quality Declaration.

This confirmation needs to be **completed and submitted by 14<sup>th</sup> October 2024**.

For further support with the completion of the Annual Quality Declaration, please visit [Quality Assurance: Annual Quality Declaration](#)

*Important: You will be required to re-sign your terms and conditions of approval to offer Pearson programmes as part of annual audit, through the AQD.*

## During your visit

To confirm that your recording processes are in place, the Centre Quality Manager (CQM) will select several students on our system registered at your centre. The CQM will track selected student records between registration and certificate claims to ensure that everything is accurately recorded. Selection will be made at random on the day of the visit. The CQM will also discuss completion rates for programmes where end dates have passed. The CQM will also request to interview learners on the programme(s) of study.

The CQM will make a judgement against each quality measure in their report and provide a commentary based upon the evidence presented to justify their decisions. During the visit, a brief audit check of the resources you have available for your Higher Education students.

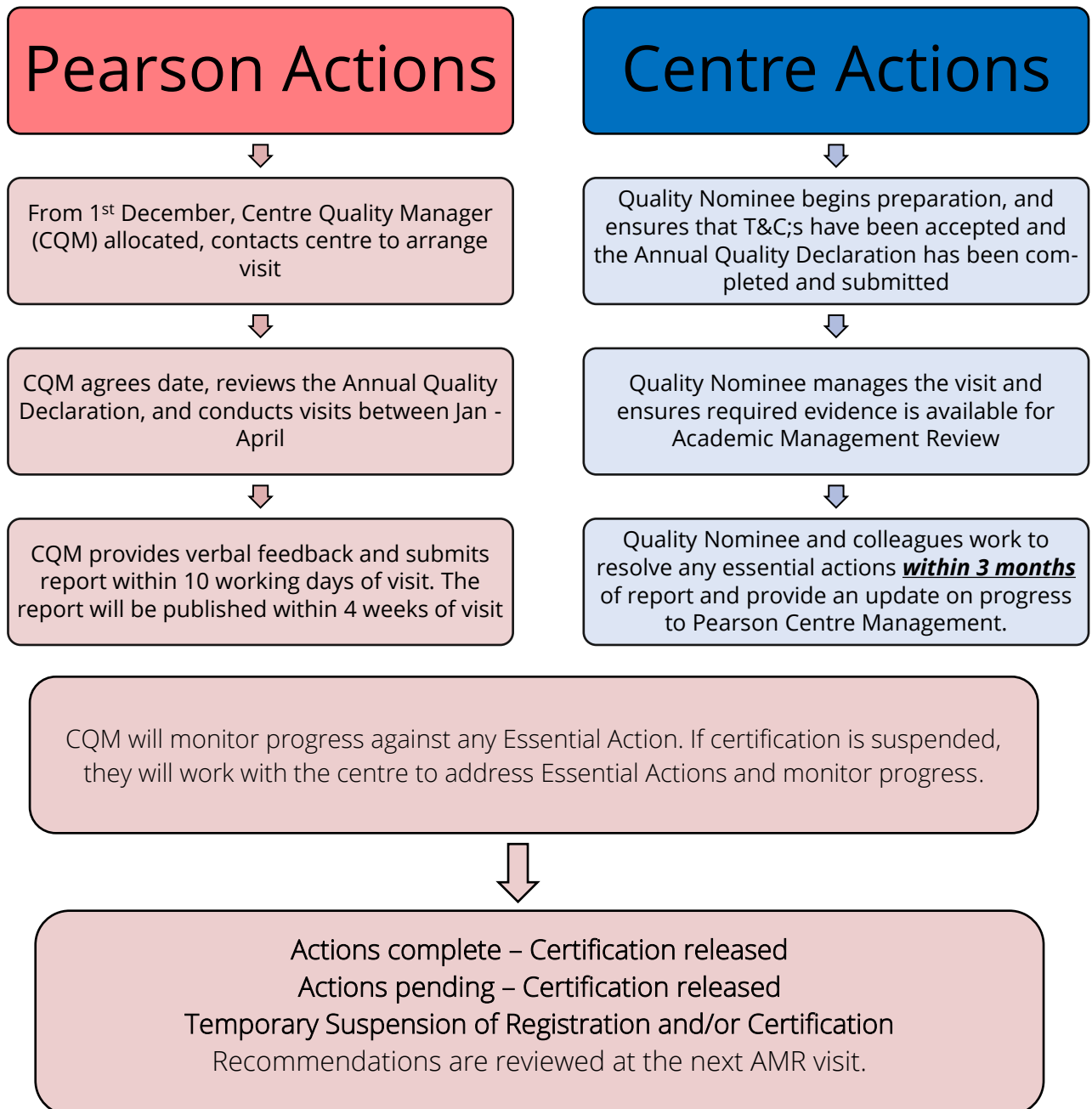
*To ensure that standards are being applied consistently, where a centre has additional sites the Academic Management Reviewer visit will include each additional site separately. The findings from these visits will be collated into a single report for the centre.*



We strive to ensure consistency of judgment across all alternative providers. To achieve this, we undertake a two-part process. Whilst you will be provided with informal feedback at the end of your review visit, all AMR Reports will be checked and finalised by Centre Management. This ensures that any actions, recommendations, or restrictions re: certification that may be implemented are fully supported by Pearson prior to the report being made available to the centre, normally within four weeks of the initial visit.

The report provided by Pearson is final and where Essential Actions are recorded these will be reported on in the Monitoring Report completed by the CQM within three months of the report being sent to the centre.

# Academic Management Review



# Roles and responsibilities

## Centre Quality Manager

We will aim to provide you with the details of your Centre Quality Manager (CQM) by end of December. If you are a new BTEC centre starting after September, then we will tell you within four to six weeks after you first register students.

Our Centre Management team will undertake the Academic Management Review process for 24/25. The team completes the AMR report and confirms the outcome. We will then send you a copy of the report as soon as it has been finalised and will brief you on any further steps that need to be taken to help you to meet current standards or make improvements.

Pearson has internal standards procedures that periodically monitor completed centre reports to ensure quality and consistency. For this process, these monitoring activities will be conducted by the CQM.

Academic Management Review responsibilities	
Centre Quality Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirms centres in scope</li> <li>• Liaises with you to arrange a visit between start of January and end of April</li> <li>• Provides advice and guidance on the process</li> <li>• Reviews your Annual Quality Declaration (AQD)</li> <li>• Reviews any Actions or Recommendations from the last Academic Management Review visit</li> <li>• Conducts the visit, meeting with the Quality Nominee and Senior Managers as required.</li> <li>• Scrutinises your systems, the accuracy of current records, and range of resources</li> <li>• Makes initial judgements against each of the quality measures, confirming whether quality processes are in place and effective</li> <li>• Provides informal feedback at the end of the visit, confirming their findings and offering constructive advice</li> <li>• Submits an Academic Management Review report to Pearson within 10 working days of the visit. (If visiting separate subsites, the report will</li> </ul>

	<p>be collated and submitted within 10 working days of the final visit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides the final report to you within four weeks of the visit.</li> <li>• Ensures that the Academic Management Review standards are maintained</li> <li>• Conduct on-going review of all completed Academic Management Review reports.</li> <li>• Monitor identified Essential Actions within 3 months of submission of the report to the centre.</li> </ul>
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## Centres

### Quality Nominee

Each centre appoints a member of staff as the Quality Nominee to act as the main point of contact between Pearson and the centre. The Quality Nominee should be someone who has the capacity and authority to act for the centre.

*Top Tip: Check details of your Quality Nominee are correct on your Edexcel Online*

As a Quality Nominee, you should ensure the effective management of BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice.

*Top Tip: Wherever possible, involve all your internal team in the review.*

<b>Academic Management Review responsibilities</b>	
Quality Nominee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiates and agrees the date for the Centre Quality Manager (CQM) to visit</li> <li>• Agrees the agenda for the visit with the CQM</li> <li>• Completes the Annual Quality Declaration (AQD) on Pearson Progress by 14<sup>th</sup> October</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages the visit, bringing together the relevant practitioners and required evidence, which must be available on the day of the review</li> <li>• Receives feedback from the CQM at the end of the visit</li> <li>• Manages the resolution of any identified Actions or Recommendations identified in the final report</li> <li>• Provides the CQM with an update on progress in resolving any Essential Actions within three months of receiving the report</li> <li>• Provides the CQM with access to systems and evidence as required</li> </ul>
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### Examinations Officer

Each centre appoints a member of staff as the Examinations Officer to act as the main administrator for Edexcel Online and the person responsible for ensuring that student registration and certification claims are managed effectively.

<b>Academic Management Review responsibilities</b>	
Examinations Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide Centre Quality Manager (CQM) with access to systems and evidence as required</li> <li>• Discuss registration and certification processes and confirms evidence that these meet BTEC requirements.</li> </ul>

### Judgements made against quality measures

For each quality measure, the Centre Quality Manager (CQM) will make a judgement whether there is 'sufficient evidence that all quality processes are in place and effective' for each quality measure. The CQM will also provide commentary where a quality measure is not met and actions are required.

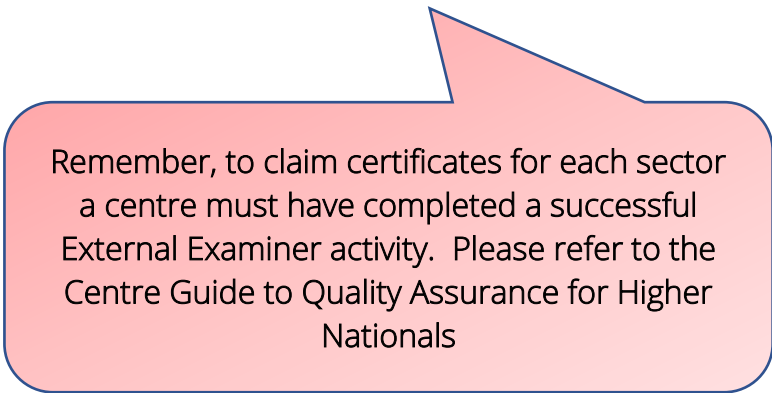
If it is judged that any quality measure is not being met, an action will be identified. Recommendations may be identified at any point to help you make further improvement.

## Academic Management Review and Certification

To ensure that all centres have effective procedures in place, the outcome of the report is linked to certification. If we have serious concerns about your centre's ability to meet the quality objectives, we may suspend certification while we provide extra support to resolve the issues. We will respond as quickly as possible to support you, to help ensure standards are met.

If it is judged that there is insufficient evidence for any Quality Measure:

- They will confirm the judgement in the Academic Management Review report sent to you
- This will affect certification of all BTEC programmes within your centre
- The AMR report will identify the actions required
- They will provide a monitoring report, to show progress against the actions required to release certification.



Remember, to claim certificates for each sector a centre must have completed a successful External Examiner activity. Please refer to the Centre Guide to Quality Assurance for Higher Nationals

# Outcomes

Overall Judgement	Outcome
No actions required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre Management has judged that your centre is meeting the expectations outlined in the Quality Objectives and Measures Framework.</li> <li>This means that certification at Centre Level is released for this academic year pending External Examiner outcomes.</li> </ul>
Actions required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre Management has judged that your centre has essential actions that need to take place to ensure full compliance with the Quality Measures Framework.</li> <li>This means that, although certification at Centre Level is released for this academic year, and progress must be made by the centre to meet the essential actions identified within 3 months.</li> </ul>
Temporary Suspension of Registration and/or Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre Management has judged that there is “insufficient evidence that effective quality processes exist” for one or more of the Quality Measures.</li> <li>A Centre Quality Manager will work with you to address the concerns.</li> </ul>

## Checklist

We have provided a checklist for you to use to support the Academic Review Process, which can be found at the end of the guide on page 20.

# Quality Objectives and Measures Guide

This guide provides details of the quality measures that the Centre Quality Manager (CQM) follows when making judgements. They have been developed to ensure that you have a clear understanding of the standards against which judgements are being made.

Quality measures are prescriptive and have been developed to:

- Provide guidance on our requirements
- Encourage a common understanding within your centre
- Promote consistent application across all Pearson vocational centres.

*Please note that whether your AMR is a visit or a remote review, the process is the same. Evidence to support each of the quality objectives & measures should be made available on the day of the review. Where evidence is not available, this will result in an action.*

## QM1: Centre Details and Management

1.1	Pearson centre approval and recognition requirements are complied with fully.
1.2	Approval to deliver BTEC programmes is gained prior to advertisement, recruitment, or delivery of the programme.
1.3	Collaborative arrangements with additional sites, centres or organisations are approved by Pearson and appropriately recorded on Pearson systems. Approval must be sought prior to advertisement, recruitment, or delivery of Pearson qualifications under any of the following partnership arrangements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consortia</li> <li>• Formal Collaboration</li> <li>• Exceptional Collaboration</li> </ul>
1.4	Where delivery is via distance learning, this has been approved by Pearson and the centre continues to adhere to the criteria outlined in Pearson's Distance Learning and Assessment (DLSA) policy.



## QM2: Student recruitment, registration, and certification

2.1	The centre publishes information that is accurate and provides students with sufficient information for making an informed choice.
2.2	Robust processes are in place to assure the integrity of student recruitment onto the centre's Level 4-7 provision. This includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an effective review of whether the applicant has a sufficient level of English language</li> <li>• where the applicant has English as a second language and has not studied the last two years of their education in English; and</li> <li>• evidence which demonstrates how the English language requirement has been met is retained.</li> </ul>
2.3	There is a student recruitment process that enables the applicant to discuss learning needs, additional support that might be required on programme, and takes account of progression aspirations.
2.4	There is a procedure for the timely and accurate registration and certification of students that is operational and monitored and is compliant with Pearson and regulatory requirements.
2.5	There is a mechanism for checking the accuracy of student registrations and Pearson set registration caps, where applicable, are adhered to.

## QM3: Staff resources

3.1	Staffing on Level 4-7 programmes is continuously monitored to maintain adequate numbers of appropriately qualified and vocationally experienced personnel.
3.2	There is an effective recruitment and selection process which ensures the maintenance of adequate and appropriate staffing.
3.3	Teaching and assessing staff are given sufficient time for programme planning, delivery, assessment, verification, and evaluation activities.
3.4	There are suitable recruitment processes and programmes of induction and development for the centre's staff (academic and administrative) new to delivery, assessment, and management of qualifications.
3.5	There is an ongoing and formally recorded programme of continuous professional development for staff (academic and administrative) to ensure that knowledge, skills, and qualifications are appropriate and up to date.
3.6	There is an organisation chart, providing clear reporting relationships, which is communicated to all members of the organisation.

## QM4: Physical resources

4.1	There are suitable specialist and general resources available that are sufficient for student volumes and specific qualifications delivered.
4.2	The centre monitors all resources regularly to ensure they are adequate, fit for purpose and safe to use.
4.3	The centre considers the sufficient provision of general and subject specific resources when planning the introduction of new programmes.

## QM5: Policies and procedures

5.1	<p>Policies and procedures are in place for managing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration and certification</li> <li>• Assessment &amp; Internal Verification</li> <li>• Student/staff malpractice, including plagiarism &amp; AI</li> <li>• Attendance and behaviour</li> <li>• Special Consideration &amp; Reasonable Adjustments</li> <li>• Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)</li> <li>• Student Appeals</li> <li>• Distance and /or Blended learning and assessment, if applicable</li> <li>• Collaborations and or Exceptional Collaborations</li> <li>• Conflict of Interest</li> <li>• Centre Contingency &amp; Adverse Occurrences (Student Protection Plan)</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Equality and diversity</li> <li>• Access arrangements for all enrolled students regardless of ability, disability, or other protected characteristics.</li> </ul>
5.2	<p>Centre policies are reviewed in accordance with the centres' stated review cycle, incorporating student feedback, improvement planning and actions, including actions arising from the Pearson Annual Programme Monitoring Review (APMR).</p> <p>BTEC specific policies and processes should be reviewed annually against updated Pearson centre guidance &amp; Terms and Conditions.</p>
5.3	<p>There is a means for ensuring all students and staff are aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what constitutes an appeal and what is considered assessment malpractice</li> <li>• the provider processes for appeal or investigating and reporting malpractice</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the possible consequences of both internal and external outcomes of appeals/malpractice</li> <li>• the process that exists to enable students to make an appeal to Pearson</li> <li>• there are robust systems for recording and managing all assessment appeals and malpractice, including plagiarism and the use of AI</li> <li>• there is a process for reporting serious assessment malpractice to Pearson.</li> </ul>
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## QM6: Exceptional collaborative arrangement

6.1	<p>Roles and responsibilities of individuals and organisations within the partnership are clearly defined, up to date and includes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational delivery of all programmes under the arrangement</li> <li>• Shared administration and management of programmes</li> </ul>
6.2	<p>The teaching and learning resources are regularly reviewed, to ensure that they meet the requirements of the qualifications delivered under the arrangement, including.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appropriate general and specialist resources, and the learning environment for all programme/s offered;</li> <li>• physical resources which are limited and/or shared are identified and regularly reviewed;</li> <li>• hard resources and virtual resources are fit for purpose</li> </ul>
6.3	<p>There are contractual agreements in place to ensure that external resources and facilities are safe, fit for purpose, and appropriate for the delivery of the programme.</p>
6.4	<p>The Centre Contingency &amp; Adverse Occurrences (Student Protection Plan) considers the impact on students within any arrangement and details contingency plans should the partnership cease or suffer any adverse effects.</p>

# Checklist

We've provided a simple checklist to support you with the Academic Management Review process.

<b>Before allocation of an Academic Management Reviewer</b>	<b>Completed</b>
I have familiarised myself with the Academic Management Review process	
I have reviewed what evidence we have in place against the Quality Measures Framework and identified any gaps	
I have briefed my internal team on the process for the current academic year and we have an action plan in place to address any gaps identified through my review	
I have ensured all our registrations data on EOL is up to date	
<b>From allocation</b>	<b>Completed</b>
I have received notification of my Centre Quality Manager and advised my internal team	
My Centre Quality Manager has made initial contact with me	
Annual Quality Declaration and Terms & Conditions have been submitted online	
<b>Visit</b>	<b>Completed</b>
I have agreed a visit date with my Centre Quality Manager and internal team between 2 January and 30 April	
I have confirmed the agenda and arrangements for the visit with my internal team and my Centre Quality Manager	
I have briefed the Examinations Officer and the Lead Internal Verifier(s) on the visit	
I have collated all the evidence required for the Centre Quality Manager during the visit and arranged access as appropriate (hard copies, OneDrive, SharePoint etc)	
<b>Following the visit</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Pearson Centre Management have provided our report with 4 weeks of the visit	
I have shared the report with my internal team and if required, we have an action plan in place to address any essential actions within the 3-month window and a strategy for considering any recommendations before next year's AMR activity	
I have provided a progress update to Centre Management within the stipulated 3-month window	

# Additional Support

Further support can be accessed via the Quality Assurance webpages where you will find guidance and support for quality assurance:

[Quality Nominees | Pearson qualifications](#)

[Quality Assurance - Higher Nationals | Pearson qualifications](#)

[Quality Assurance - Work-based Learning \(WBL\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

[Quality Assurance - BTEC Tech Awards, L2 and L3 | Pearson qualifications](#)

[BTEC forms and guides | Pearson qualifications](#)

[BTEC Annual Quality Declaration Guidance](#)

If you have any questions, please contact us via the [Pearson Support Portal](#).