



Pearson BTEC Higher Nationals Programme Approvals Guidance

2021-22

Introduction

Centres must seek approval to deliver all Higher Nationals programmes. Pearson provide different approvals processes to ensure that Centres meet the expectation of our quality assurance measures that are aligned with Higher Education expectations.

Approval to deliver the new Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications will specify the following:

- The title of each new Pearson BTEC Higher National programme that your centre is approved to deliver.
- The maximum number (which will include up to 50% growth each year) of students your centre can register on the approved Pearson BTEC Higher National programme each year, before seeking additional approval for increased growth.
- The length of approval for each new Pearson BTEC Higher National programme; and the approved mode(s) of programme delivery.
- The programme approval process will also set out the terms and conditions for delivery of the new Pearson BTEC Higher National qualifications, which will need to be accepted before approval can be granted.

Types of Approval

New Approvals

If your centre is intending to deliver a HN programme for the first time, you must apply through the standard new programme approvals process.

- For UK Centres, please email: UKapproval@Pearson.com.
- For International Centres, please email your regional Pearson office.

Full list of all Higher National Programmes is available on [our website](#).

Re-Approvals

If your centre is already delivering a HN programme in a subject that needs re-approval, there are three available routes:

1. **Automatic Approval** – we will internally apply predefined criteria and if your centre meets the criteria you will be automatically eligible for approval to deliver the new Pearson BTEC Higher National qualification(s). If your centre is eligible for automatic approval you will receive a letter from us confirming your eligibility. The letter will invite you to accept our new terms and conditions by signing the enclosed declaration, and to confirm you will pay the £108.00 fee. The declaration will include the new terms and conditions and your estimation of the maximum number of students you intend to register each year. Please remember that your maximum number will need to include your planned percentage growth, which can be up to 50% each year. The figure of up to 50% growth will provide your centre with the scope for manageable growth.
2. **Desk-based review** – if your centre is ineligible for automatic approval then you will be given the option to go through a desk-based review. Before the desk-based review can commence, your centre will need to indicate that you wish to proceed and that you will settle the fee of £270.00 in full once the desk-based review has been conducted. Pearson will then internally carry out more in-depth approval analysis, including a review of External Examiner reports, QAA Reports, Ofsted reports (where applicable) and OfS register (where applicable) etc. A Pearson reviewer will fully consider those reports and information from both internal and external sources before recommending one of the following outcomes:

- 2.1. Approval granted; or
 - 2.2. Further enquiries required and a full visit will be needed.
3. We will advise you in writing of the outcome of the desk-based review and if approval has not been granted, then you can decide if you would like to proceed to a full visit.
4. **Full visit** - if approval is not granted after a desk-based review then Pearson can take the decision to carry out a full visit in order to determine if your centre is eligible for approval. Once you have indicated your intention to proceed, you will be invoiced the fee of £540.00 in advance (if a visit is needed). If you are a UK centre and you have had an Academic Management Review (Alternative Providers) visit within 10 weeks prior to the desk-based review, then the details of that visit will be considered rather than conducting another visit. If a visit is not required, then you will not be invoiced £540.00. For International centres, a recent External Examiner visit within the previous 10 weeks period would be considered rather than arranging a separate visit. The outcomes following a full visit could be:
- 4.1. Approval granted and letter issued including declaration and new terms and conditions; or
 - 4.2. Refusal of approval confirmed in writing

We will advise you in writing of the outcome of the visit. It is not possible to appeal against a decision by Pearson to refuse approval.

Approval fees

£108.00- For auto-approval

£270.00- For the desk-based review, which is a more in-depth approval process, including a review of External Examiner reports, QAA Reports, Ofsted reports etc.

£540.00- For existing providers requiring a visit so that Pearson can be assured that the provider has the necessary resources to deliver the programme (this includes the £270.00 for the desk-based review and £540.00 for the visit)

Approval periods

As a centre eligible for RQF re-approval you are able to submit your approval request at any point during the year. However, due to available resources we can only process these applications during three distinct periods during the year. These periods are outlined in the dates below. If you submit an approval declaration outside one of these windows your application will be accepted, but we will let you know the date when it can be processed, which will most likely be within the next approval window.

| August Approval Window | January Approval Window | May Approval Window |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| Closes 3rd week of October | Opens 3rd week of January Closes 2nd week March | Opens 2nd week of May Closes final week of June |

If you need to talk to us about this, please contact us at hnqa@pearson.com