

Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication

Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication

(Northern Ireland)

Specification

First teaching September 2016

Edexcel, BTEC and LCCI qualifications

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1 Qualifications overview

Qualification title	Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills - Communication
Qualification Number (QN)	603/0442/X
Regulation start date	02/09/2016
Operational start date	01/09/2016
Approved age ranges	14–16 16–18 19+
Total qualification time (TQT) ¹	60 hours
Guided learning (GL)	45 hours.
Assessment	Internal assessment and external assessment (see <i>Section 6 Assessment</i>).
Grading information	The qualification, components and assessments are graded pass/fail.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification. However, centres must follow our access and recruitment policy (see <i>Section 4 Access and recruitment</i>).

Qualification title	Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills - Communication
Qualification Number (QN)	603/0441/8
Regulation start date	02/09/2016
Operational start date	01/09/2016
Approved age ranges	14–16 16–18 19+
Total Qualification Time (TQT) ¹	60 hours
Guided learning (GL)	45 hours
Assessment	Internal assessment and external assessment (see <i>Section 6 Assessment</i>).
Grading information	The qualification, components and assessments are graded pass/fail.
Entry requirements	No prior knowledge, understanding, skills or qualifications are required before learners register for this qualification. However, centres must follow our access and recruitment policy (see <i>Section 4 Access and recruitment</i>).

¹ All qualifications have a Total Qualification Time (TQT) value that indicates the size of the qualification.

TQT is the estimated number of notional hours that could reasonably be expected by a learner for them to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the attainment required for the qualification to be awarded.

TQT consists of:

- (a) the number of hours assigned for Guided Learning (GL)
- (b) an estimate of the number of hours a learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by, but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of a teacher, tutor, assessor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

2 Introduction

The Essential Skills qualifications in Communication and Application of Number at Levels 1 and 2 have been redeveloped in response to the Department for the Economy's (DfE) review of Essential Skills qualifications. They apply to a wider cohort of learners with increased emphasis on rigour of assessment.

The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment Regulator (CCEA Regulation) Essential Skills criteria have been used as a basis for this specification.

Qualification titles covered by this specification

- Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication
- Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication

Qualification purpose

Essential Skills Communication qualifications have been designed to give learners in Northern Ireland the skills to operate confidently, effectively and independently in education, work and everyday life. The qualifications focus on the practical application of these skills.

The aims of Essential Skills Communication qualifications are to develop understanding and skills in:

- speaking and listening
- reading and writing.

Relationship with previous qualifications

These qualifications are direct replacements for the Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication (600/8791/2) and the Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication (600/8794/8), which will expire shortly.

Progression opportunities

Learners who achieve the Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication can progress to the Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication. Essential Skills qualifications also serve as a progression route to GCSEs. Additionally, Essential Skills qualifications are currently a component of Apprenticeship frameworks in Northern Ireland, and as such offer opportunity for progression in employment through Apprenticeships.

3 Centre requirements

All centres are required to enter into an approval agreement with Pearson, in which the head of centre or principal agrees to meet all the requirements of the qualification specification and to comply with the policies, procedures, codes of practice and regulations of Pearson and relevant regulatory bodies. If centres do not comply with the agreement, this could result in the suspension of certification or withdrawal of centre or qualification approval.

As part of the approval process, centres must make sure that the resource requirements below are in place before offering the qualifications.

- Centres must have appropriate physical resources (for example IT, learning materials, teaching rooms) to support delivery and assessment.
- Staff involved in the assessment process must have relevant expertise and occupational experience.
- Centres must have appropriate health and safety policies in place that relate to the use of equipment by learners.
- Centres must have in place robust internal verification systems and procedures to ensure the quality and authenticity of internally assessed learners' work as well as the accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions between assessors operating at the centre. For information on the requirements for implementing assessment processes in centres for Essential Skills Communication, please refer to the *Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland)* available on our website.
- Centres must deliver the qualifications in accordance with current equality legislation. For further details on Pearson's commitment to the equality, please see *Section 4 Access and recruitment*.

4 Access and recruitment

Our policy on access to our qualifications is that:

- they should be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- they should be free from barriers that restrict access and progression
- there should be equal opportunities for all wishing to access the qualifications.

Centres must ensure that their learner recruitment process is conducted with integrity. This includes ensuring that applicants have appropriate information and advice about the qualification to ensure that it will meet their needs.

Centres should review applicants' prior qualifications and/or experience, considering whether this profile shows that they have the potential to achieve the qualification.

Prior knowledge, skills and understanding

No prior knowledge, skills, understanding, or qualifications are required for learners to register for this qualification.

Access to qualifications for learners with disabilities or specific needs

Equality and fairness are central to our work. Pearson's Equality Policy requires all learners to have equal opportunity to access our qualifications and assessments and that our qualifications are awarded in a way that is fair to every learner.

We are committed to making sure that:

- learners with a protected characteristic are not, when they are undertaking one of our qualifications, disadvantaged in comparison to learners who do not share that characteristic
- all learners achieve the recognition they deserve from undertaking a qualification and that this achievement can be compared fairly to the achievement of their peers.

For learners with disabilities and specific needs, the assessment of their potential to achieve the qualification must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to them during delivery and assessment of the qualification.

5 Delivery

Centres are free to offer these qualifications using any mode of delivery (for example full-time, part-time, evening only, distance learning) that meets their learners' needs. Whichever mode of delivery is used, centres must make sure that learners have access to the resources identified in the specification and to the subject specialists delivering qualifications.

Centres may also wish to access the Initial Assessment Tool available at qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-functional-skills/teaching-support/initial-assessment-tool.html

6 Assessment

The table below gives a summary of the assessment methods used in the qualifications.

Component 1 – Speaking and listening
Overview of assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internally assessed.• The assessment model for all components is summative and should be conducted after a period of teaching and learning.• Availability: throughout the year.• Pearson will provide guidance on devising activities to meet the skills standard to centres.
Component 2 – Reading and writing
Overview of assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Externally assessed through a single written examination paper, set and externally marked by Pearson• The assessment model for all components is summative and should be conducted after a period of teaching and learning.• Assessments comprise a reading section and a writing section, and learners are required to complete both sections.• Available in paper-based or onscreen formats.• Both paper-based and onscreen assessments are available on demand, throughout academic year.

Each component, and the qualifications overall, are graded pass/fail.

Language of assessment

Assessments for these qualifications will be available in English only.

A learner taking the qualifications may be assessed in British or Irish Sign Language where it is permitted for the purpose of reasonable adjustment.

For further information on access arrangements, please refer to *Reasonable adjustments* later in this section.

Internal assessment (speaking and listening component)

The speaking and listening component of the Pearson Edexcel Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication qualifications is assessed through internal assessment.

Speaking and listening in Essential Skills qualifications is defined as non-written communication, normally conducted face to face.

In exceptional circumstances, assessment may take place remotely, provided that the medium through which the remote assessment takes place meets the requirements specified in the CCEA Regulation *General Conditions of Recognition 1st February 2016 - Reasonable Adjustments*.

The term 'speaking and listening' as used by these standards is intended to be interpreted in a broadly inclusive way and is not intended to create any unnecessary barriers to learners with speech or hearing impairment.

The needs of individual learners will vary, but as guidance the term should be interpreted as meaning communication, discussion and presentation that:

- can include the use of sign language (for example British Sign Language (BSL), Irish Sign Language (ISL), sign-supported Communication) provided this is made accessible to all participants in the discussion. (It is recognised that BSL and ISL are languages in their own right and not a form of Communication. BSL and ISL are, however, permitted as an alternative to Communication for the assessment of speaking, listening and communication where BSL and ISL are the learner's normal way of communicating in the contexts described by the standards.) No other languages are permitted as alternatives to Communication
- can include access to augmentative speech equipment and such software as constitutes the learner's normal way of working
- does not depend solely on the use of written language or require the individual/s with whom the learner is communicating to be able to read (as these skills are covered by the requirements for reading and writing).

Controlled assessment (speaking and listening component)

The speaking and listening component must be undertaken through controlled assessment. Controlled assessment is a form of internal assessment in which control levels are set at the following stages of the assessment process:

- task setting
- task taking
- task marking.

Task setting

Pearson will provide guidance on our web site, to centres on devising their own speaking and listening tasks for learners at each level. Learners must complete activities to cover **all the requirements of the skills standards** at the level they are studying.

Task taking

Preparation

Learners' preparation for a test should include the development of essential skills. Preparation may take place under informal supervision.

- **Authenticity control:** preparatory work may be completed under limited supervision.
- **Supervision:** an appropriate person should supervise the learner. It is acceptable to use an assessor/invigilator who the learner feels comfortable with and knows well.
- **Feedback:** teacher support can be provided to support learners through the preparation process i.e. mock assessment, assisting with research, or clarifying requirements. Teacher support **cannot** be provided during the actual assessment.
- **Collaboration:** learners may collaborate in preparation but must provide an individual response to the speaking, listening and communication activities.
- **Resources:** learners should use the range of appropriate resources available to the centre. The same range of resources must be made available to all learners within a centre.

Controlled conditions

The completion of the assessment must be under controlled conditions. During the assessment the learner must be in the direct sight of the supervisor at all times. Input such as clarification of requirements, reading the questions etc is acceptable. Learners must be provided with a suitably quiet, undisturbed location.

The accommodation normally used by learners may be used for assessment. There is no need to remove posters, displays or materials containing information relevant to what is being assessed. However, displays should not provide the learner with a prepared answer. It is acceptable for the learner to draw on external sources (with the exception of direct help from the assessor) during the assessment period.

Learners will be able to complete an assessment activity only when supervised. Whilst preparation may take place over more than one session, each task must not take place over more than one session. The completed Assessment Record Sheet and assessment evidence should be retained at the end of the controlled assessment for a sample of the cohort for verification purposes.

Learners with agreed particular requirements, in relation to their mode of learning or assessment, can have their usual support, unless this compromises the outcome of the assessment. Those providing assistance should refer to the JCQ document *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

Learners can have access to notes but they must be checked to ensure they do not include a prepared response.

Learners must not have access to a prepared response.

Time

The total assessment time should be approximately 30 minutes at **each** level. This time includes individual contributions **and** interactions with others. The time may be distributed over one or more sessions at the centre's discretion.

- At Level 1, the assessment time includes the learner contributions to both discussions. Each discussion should take sufficient time to allow each learner to demonstrate their ability for each of the criteria

- At Level 2, both the length of the presentation and the contribution to a discussion make up the time allocation
- The assessment can be distributed over more than one session at the centre's discretion.

Authentication

Learners' work must be authenticated by the centre.

Task marking

Tutors/assessors mark the controlled assessment task using the provided assessment record sheet.

Pearson will sample the assessment outcomes through standards verification.

For more information on the Essential Skills standards verification process, please refer to the *Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland)* available on our website.

Please refer to *Quality assurance (speaking and listening component)* later in this section for requirements concerning speaking and listening verification.

Quality Assurance (speaking and listening component)

Pearson monitors and supports centres in the effective operation of assessment and quality assurance. The methods which it uses to do this for Essential Skills include:

- a requirement that all centres appoint a Lead Internal Verifier for essential skills speaking, listening and communication and to ensure that this person is trained and supported in carrying out that role
- a requirement that the Lead Internal Verifier completes compulsory standardisation related to assessment and verification decisions for the designated programme
- assessment sampling and verification, through requested samples of completed assessed learner work and associated documentation
overarching review and assessment of a centre's strategy for assessing and quality assuring its speaking, listening and communication Essential Skills programmes – centre quality review and development.

For more information on the Essential Skills quality assurance arrangements, please refer to the *Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland)* available on our website.

Quality Assurance Handbook

Centres must refer to the ***Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland) Levels 1 and 2*** (available on our website) for detailed guidance on quality assurance for speaking and listening.

An overview is given below.

Centres must make certification claims only when authorised by Pearson and strictly in accordance with requirements for reporting.

Centres that do not fully address and maintain rigorous approaches to quality assurance will be prevented from seeking certification for individual programmes or for all Essential Skills programmes. Centres that do not comply with remedial action plans may have their facility to deliver qualifications removed.

Pearson's qualification specifications clearly set out the standard to be achieved by each learner in order to achieve the award of the qualification. Pearson operates a quality assurance process, which is designed to ensure that these standards are maintained by all assessors and verifiers. It achieves this through the following activities.

Internal verification

Centres are required to have robust processes in place to ensure that each assessor's decisions are reviewed so that they are correctly interpreting and

applying the standards set out in the specifications. Choice and application of an appropriate system is a matter for individual centres. Pearson fully supports the use of the centre's own quality assurance systems where this ensures robust internal standardisation.

For more information on the Essential Skills internal verification, please refer to the *Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland)* available on our website

Administrative arrangements for internal assessment (speaking and listening component)

Records

Centres are required to retain completed Assessment Record Sheets for each learner. The Assessment Record Sheet should include assessments taken, decisions reached and any adjustments or appeals. Centres are also required to keep supporting evidence such as preparation notes or handouts. Further information can be found in our *UK Information Manual*. We may ask to audit centre records, so they must be retained as specified.

Reasonable adjustments to assessments

Centres are able to make adjustments to assessments to take account of the needs of individual learners, in line with the guidance given in the Pearson document *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units* (available on our website). In most instances, adjustments can be achieved by following the guidance, for example allowing the use of assistive technology or adjusting the format of the evidence. We can advise you if you are uncertain as to whether an adjustment is fair and reasonable. Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the normal learning or working practice of a learner in a centre or a learner working in the occupational area.

Further information on access arrangements can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational qualifications*.

Both documents are on the policy page of our website.

Special consideration

Centres must operate special consideration in line with the guidance given in the Pearson document *Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internally assessed units*.

Centres cannot apply their own special consideration; applications for special consideration must be made to Pearson and can be made on a case-by-case basis only.

A separate application must be made for each learner. Certification claims must not be made until the outcome of the application has been received.

Further information on special consideration can be found in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration for General and Vocational qualifications*.

Both of the documents mentioned above are on our website.

Appeals against assessment

Centres must have a policy for dealing with appeals from learners. Appeals may relate to assessment decisions being incorrect or assessment not being conducted fairly. The first step in such a policy is a consideration of the evidence by a Lead Internal Verifier or other member of the programme team. The assessment plan should allow time for potential appeals after learners have been given assessment decisions.

Centres must document all learners' appeals and their resolutions. Further information on the appeals process can be found in the document *Enquiries and Appeals about Pearson Vocational Qualifications policy*, available on our website.

External assessment (reading and writing component)

The reading and writing component of the Pearson Edexcel Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication qualifications is assessed through external assessment.

'Reading' in Essential Skills qualifications is defined as the independent decoding and understanding of written language and text in a purposeful context.

'Writing' in Essential Skills qualifications is defined as the independent construction of written text to communicate in a purposeful context.

'Text' is defined as materials that include the use of words that are written, printed, on screen or presented using Braille.

As a reasonable adjustment, learners who are classed as having a disability under the terms of the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, and who use assistive technology as their normal way of reading or producing written texts can demonstrate that they are able to meet the requirements of the standards independently through the use of screen-reader software for reading and a computer and appropriate software for writing.

As a last resort for learners with disabilities who cannot use assistive technology, a human reader may be used for reading and a human scribe for writing. Centres must seek approval from Pearson in advance.

Up to 50% of the marks in the reading section of the reading and writing tests will be fixed response. 100% of the marks in the writing section of the reading and writing tests will be open response.

Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries are allowed in the reading and writing assessment.

Sample assessment materials

A set of sample assessment materials (SAMs) of the external assessments are available in paper-based and onscreen formats for both levels of the Pearson Edexcel Certificate in Essential Skills – Application of Number qualifications. The SAMs are there to provide an example of what the external assessment will look like in terms of the feel and level of demand of the assessment.

SAMs show the range of possible question types that may appear in the actual assessments and give a good indication of how the assessments will be structured.

While SAMs can be used for practice with learners, as with any assessment the content covered and specific details of the questions asked will change in each assessment. A copy of each of these assessments can be downloaded from the qualification page on our website.

Administrative arrangements for external assessment (reading and writing)

It is essential that learners have full knowledge of the skills standards before being entered for the test.

Centres need to make sure that learners are:

- fully prepared to sit the external assessments
- entered for the tests at appropriate times, with due regard for resit opportunities as necessary.

Information about registering learners for the test and the systems requirements for delivering the onscreen tests is available on our website.

Access arrangements requests

Access arrangements are agreed with Pearson before an assessment. They allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to:

- access the assessment
- show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.

Access arrangements should always be processed at the time of registration.

Learners will then know what type of arrangements are available in place for them.

Granting reasonable adjustments

For external assessment, a reasonable adjustment is one that Pearson agrees to make for an individual learner. A reasonable adjustment is defined for the individual learner and informed by the list of available access arrangements.

Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors, including:

- the needs of the learner with the disability
- the effectiveness of the adjustment
- the cost of the adjustment; and
- the likely impact of the adjustment on the learner with the disability and other learners.

Adjustment may be judged unreasonable and not approved if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the integrity of the assessment.

Special consideration requests

Special consideration is an adjustment made to a learner's mark or grade after an external assessment to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time of the assessment. An adjustment is made only if the impact on the learner is such that it is reasonably likely to have had a material effect on that learner being able to demonstrate attainment in the assessment.

Centres are required to notify us promptly of any learners who they believe have been adversely affected and request that we give special consideration. Further information can be found in the special requirements section on our website.

Conducting external assessments

Arrangements for paper-based and onscreen assessment are detailed in the Pearson document ***Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations, Essential Skills (Northern Ireland) Levels 1 and 2***, available on our website.

Centres must make arrangements for the secure delivery of external assessments. All centres offering external assessments must comply with:

- the current Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document ***Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE)***, which is updated each academic year, available on our website
- the Pearson document ***Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations, Essential Skills (Northern Ireland) Levels 1 and 2***, available on our website.

Dealing with malpractice in assessment

Malpractice means acts that undermine the integrity and validity of assessment, the certification of qualifications and/or may damage the authority of those responsible for delivering the assessment and certification.

Pearson does not tolerate actions (or attempted actions) of malpractice by learners, centre staff or centres in connection with Pearson qualifications. Pearson may impose penalties and/or sanctions on learners, centre staff or centres where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice have been proven.

Malpractice may arise or be suspected in relation to any type of assessment within the qualification. For further details on malpractice and advice on preventing malpractice by learners, please see Pearson's *Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice*, available on our website.

The head of centre must report all cases of suspected or actual malpractice to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com

Internal assessment

Centres are required to take steps to prevent malpractice and to investigate instances of suspected malpractice. Learners must be given information that explains what malpractice is for internal assessment and how suspected incidents will be dealt with by the centre. The *Centre Guidance: Dealing with Malpractice* document gives full information on the actions we expect you to take.

Pearson may conduct investigations if we believe that a centre is failing to conduct internal assessment according to our policies. The above document gives further information and examples, and details the penalties and sanctions that may be imposed.

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

External assessment

For external assessments, centres must follow the JCQ procedures set out in the latest version of the document *JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures* (available on the JCQ website, www.jcq.org.uk).

In the interests of learners and centre staff, centres need to respond effectively and openly to all requests relating to an investigation into an incident of suspected malpractice.

Learner malpractice

The head of centre is required to report incidents of suspected learner malpractice that occur during Pearson examinations. We ask centres to complete JCQ Form M1 (www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) and email it with any accompanying documents (signed statements from the learner, invigilator, copies of evidence, etc) to the Investigations Team at pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. The responsibility for determining appropriate sanctions or penalties to be imposed on learners lies with Pearson.

Learners must be informed at the earliest opportunity of the specific allegation and the centre's malpractice policy, including the right of appeal. Learners found guilty of malpractice may be disqualified from the qualification for which they have been entered with Pearson.

Teacher/centre malpractice

The head of centre is required to inform Pearson's Investigations Team of any incident of suspected malpractice by centre staff, before any investigation is undertaken. The head of centre is requested to inform the Investigations Team by submitting a JCQ M2(a) form (downloadable from www.jcq.org.uk/malpractice) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff, anonymous informants), the Investigations Team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the head of centre to assist.

Incidents of maladministration (accidental errors in the delivery of Pearson qualifications that may affect the assessment of learners) should also be reported to the Investigations Team using the same method.

Heads of centres/principals/chief executive officers or their nominees are required to inform learners and centre staff suspected of malpractice of their responsibilities and rights, please see 6.15 of *JCQ Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures*.

Pearson reserves the right in cases of suspected malpractice to withhold the issuing of results/certificates while an investigation is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, results and/or certificates may not be released or they may be withheld.

We reserve the right to withhold certification when undertaking investigations, audits and quality assurances processes. You will be notified within a reasonable period of time if this occurs.

Sanctions and appeals

Where malpractice is proven, we may impose sanctions or penalties.

Where learner malpractice is evidenced, penalties may be imposed such as:

- mark reduction for affected external assessments
- disqualification from the qualification
- debarment from registration for Pearson qualifications for a period of time.

If we are concerned about your centre's quality procedures we may impose sanctions such as:

- working with centres to create an improvement action plan
- requiring staff members to receive further training
- placing temporary blocks on the centre's certificates
- placing temporary blocks on registration of learners
- debarring staff members or the centre from delivering Pearson qualifications
- suspending or withdrawing centre approval status.

The centre will be notified if any of these apply.

Pearson has established procedures for centres that are considering appeals against penalties and sanctions arising from malpractice. Appeals against a decision made by Pearson will normally be accepted only from the head of centre (on behalf of learners and/or members or staff) and from individual members (in respect of a decision taken against them personally). Further information on appeals can be found in our *Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualification policy* on our website. In the initial stage of any aspect of malpractice, please notify the Investigations Team (via pqsmalpractice@pearson.com) who will inform you of the next steps.

Centre quality review and development

Pearson has a commitment to a strategic, risk-based approach to safeguarding security for the awarding of qualifications where assessment is delegated to centres. Quality assurance arrangements are deliberately focused on the ability of centres to manage the delivery of programmes and effective internal quality assurance, to ensure that assessment is carried out to the appropriate standards. Each centre will receive periodic visits to review centre quality and development.

7 Entry and results

Learner entry

Details of learner entry requirements and codes can be found in our *UK Information Manual*, which is sent to all examinations officers. The *UK Information Manual* is regularly updated and can also be found on our website. Learners should be entered for all components including speaking, listening and communication.

Qualification results

The assessments and overall qualification will be at Pass grade only (pass/fail). Learners must pass each component to be awarded a qualification Pass. Where no exemption has been granted, the result for the speaking, listening and communication component must be entered to enable learners to receive their qualification result. The result for a learner who fails to reach the minimum standard in the reading and writing component for a Pass to be awarded will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not be certificated.

Resitting

If learners do not pass any components of assessment, they may resit. They may carry forward the results from component tasks that have been achieved. Learners must take a different version of the component task to that originally taken.

Learners must complete all components at the level, or above the level, for which they claim certification.

8 Pearson Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication

RQF level: 1

Guided learning: 45

Both components are mandatory and need to be achieved before the qualification can be awarded.

The criteria for this qualification specify requirements in terms of skill standards, and coverage and range.

To pass this qualification, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all skills standards for both components of the qualification. The coverage and range statements provide an indication of the type of communication content that learners are expected to apply in functional contexts, and determine the standard required to achieve the qualification.

The level 1 skills standards, weightings, and coverage and range are shown below.

Skill standard	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Speaking and listening</p> <p>1. Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects.</p>	<p>a) Make relevant and extended contributions to discussions, allowing for and responding to others' input</p> <p>b) Prepare for and contribute to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions (<i>applicable to formal discussions only and not informal discussions</i>)</p> <p>c) Use an image to support discussion</p> <p>d) Make different kinds of contributions to discussions</p> <p>e) Present information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language.</p>	<p>Pass/fail</p>

Skill standard	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Reading and writing</p> <p>2. Read and understand a range of straightforward texts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Identify the main points and ideas and how they are presented in a variety of texts. b) Read and understand texts in detail c) Utilise information contained in texts d) Identify suitable responses to texts e) In more than one type of text 	<p>50%</p>
<p>Reading and writing</p> <p>3. Write a range of texts to communicate information, ideas and opinions, using formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Write clearly and coherently, including an appropriate level of detail b) Present information in a logical sequence. c) Use language, format and structure suitable for purpose and audience d) Use correct grammar, including correct and consistent use of tense e) Ensure written work includes generally accurate punctuation and spelling and that meaning is clear f) In more than one type of text 	<p>50%</p>

Assessment structure at Level 1

	Component 1: Speaking and listening	Component 2: Reading and writing
Assessment	Internally set and internally marked through controlled assessment. Pearson will provide guidance on devising activities to meet the skill standard to centres.	Externally set and marked by Pearson.
Availability	Internal assessment can be conducted throughout the year.	Available in paper-based and onscreen formats, on demand throughout the year by arrangement with Pearson.
Assessment structure	Learners must complete the following two activities: 1 a formal discussion 2 an informal discussion. Learners must achieve all the Level 1 criteria across the two activities at least once (with the exception of coverage and range statement b which applies to formal discussion only)..	A single test comprising a reading section, and a writing section. The reading section will include two realistic texts on a single context, which will comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one narrative text (e.g. newspaper article) • one informative text (e.g. letter, timetable, leaflet). Learners will answer questions on the texts. The writing section will require learners to complete two writing tasks with separate contexts. 40% of the marks for the writing section will be allocated to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Assessments provide realistic contexts, scenarios and problems.
Assessment time	The total assessment time should be approximately 30 minutes.	1 hour 30 minutes
Marks	Pass/fail	40 marks in total (20 marks for reading and 20 marks for writing)
Grading	Pass/fail	Pass/fail. The result for a learner who fails to reach the minimum standard for a Pass to be awarded will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not be certificated.
Additional information		Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries are allowed

9 Pearson Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in Essential Skills – Communication

RQF level: 2

Guided learning: 45

Both components are mandatory and both need to be achieved before the qualification can be awarded.

The criteria for this qualification specify the requirements in terms of skill standards and coverage and range.

To pass this qualification, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all skills standards for both components of the qualification. The coverage and range statements provide an indication of the type of communication content that learners are expected to apply in functional contexts, and determine the standard required to achieve the qualification.

The level 2 skills standards, weightings, and coverage and range are shown below.

Skill standard	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Speaking and listening</p> <p>1. Make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar, and make effective presentations.</p>	<p>a) Consider complex information and give a relevant, cogent response in appropriate language</p> <p>b) Present information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others</p> <p>c) Use an image to support discussion</p> <p>d) Adapt contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation</p> <p>e) Make significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward</p>	<p>Pass/fail</p>

Skill standard	Coverage and range	Assessment weighting
<p>Reading and writing</p> <p>2. Select, read, understand and compare texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Select and use different types of texts to obtain and utilise relevant information b) Read and summarise, succinctly, information/ideas from different sources c) Identify the purposes of texts and comment on how meaning is conveyed d) Detect point of view, implicit meaning and/or bias e) Analyse texts in relation to audience needs and consider suitable responses. f) In two or more texts. 	<p>50%</p>
<p>Reading and writing</p> <p>3. Write a range of texts, including extended written documents, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Present information/ideas concisely, logically and persuasively b) Present information on complex subjects clearly and concisely c) Use a range of writing styles for different purposes d) Use a range of sentence structures, including complex sentences, and paragraphs to organise written communication effectively e) Punctuate written text using commas, apostrophes and inverted commas accurately f) Ensure written work is fit for purpose and audience, with accurate spelling and grammar that support clear meaning in a range of text types 	<p>50%</p>

At Level 2, the skills standards and coverage and range statements subsume those at Level 1. This supports progression from Level 1 to Level 2.

Assessment structure at Level 2

	Component 1: Speaking and listening	Component 2: Reading and writing
Assessment	Internally set and internally marked through controlled assessment. Pearson will provide guidance on devising activities to meet the skill standard to centres.	Externally set and marked by Pearson.
Availability	Internal assessment can be conducted throughout the year.	Available in paper-based and onscreen formats, on demand throughout the year by arrangement with Pearson.
Assessment structure	Learners must complete the following two activities: 1 a formal presentation 2 an informal discussion. Learners must achieve all the Level 2 criteria across the two activities at least once.	A single test comprising a reading section, and a writing section. The reading section will include two realistic texts on a single context, which will comprise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one narrative text (e.g. newspaper article) one informative text (e.g. letter, timetable, leaflet). Learners will answer questions on the texts. The writing section will require learners to complete two writing tasks with separate contexts, one of which will be extended. 40% of the marks for the writing section will be allocated to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Assessments provide realistic contexts, scenarios and problems
Assessment time	The total assessment time should be approximately 30 minutes.	1 hour 45 minutes
Marks	Pass/fail	50 marks in total (25 marks for reading and 25 marks for writing)
Grading	Pass/fail	Pass/fail. The result for a learner who fails to reach the minimum standard for a Pass to be awarded will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not be certificated.
Additional information		Dictionaries and bilingual dictionaries are allowed

10 Further information and useful publications

To get in touch with us visit our 'Contact us' pages:

- Edexcel, BTEC and Pearson Work Based Learning contact details:
qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html

Key publications:

- *Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, Access and Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments, General and Vocational qualifications* (Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ))
- *Instructions for Conducting of Examinations (ICE)* (Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ))
- *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (ICE), Essential Skills (Northern Ireland) Levels 1 and 2* (Pearson)
- *Quality Assurance Handbook for Essential Skills in Communication (Northern Ireland)* (Pearson)
- *General and Vocational qualifications, Suspected Malpractice in Examination and Assessments: Policies and Procedures* (JCQ)
- *Equality Policy* (Pearson)
- *Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process* (Pearson)
- *UK Information Manual* (Pearson)

All of these publications are available on our website.

Our publications catalogue lists all the material available to support our qualifications. To access the catalogue and order publications, please visit our website.

11 Support from Pearson

Your Pearson support team

Whether you want to talk to a sector specialist, browse online or submit your query for an individual response, there's someone in our Pearson support team to help you whenever – and however – you need:

- Subject Advisors: find out more about our subject advisor team – immediate, reliable support from a fellow subject expert
- Ask the Expert: submit your question online to our Ask the Expert online service and we will make sure your query is handled by a subject specialist.

Please visit our website at qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/contact-us.html

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