



Pearson

Skilled for Life

Quality Assurance Handbook

2016 - 2017

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Introduction to Skilled for Life

Skilled for Life is a flexible toolkit designed to support you to build and deliver personalised programmes of study that effectively equip your learners with the skills and knowledge required to secure and sustain work. It comprises units of learning, accompanying teaching and learning resources and optional diagnostic tools for initial assessment of skills and attitudes.

Flexibility is the main feature – whatever the needs of your learners, however you want to deliver training, Skilled for Life will allow you to build a course that is just right for you.

Roles and responsibilities

Pearson

Standards Verifier

We appoint a Standards Verifier to your Skilled for Life programmes. The primary focus is to ensure you are assessing to national standards, level 2 units will have a subject specific Standards verifier.

This includes:

- assessing learners to the standard set out within Skilled for Life unit specifications
- maintaining effective mechanisms for the internal verification of Skilled for Life programmes
- demonstrating effective recording of assessment and internal verification.

Senior Standards Verifier

We have a Senior Standards Verifier who takes an overview of standards within Skilled for Life and ensures that all Employability Quality Advisors and Standards Verifiers have appropriate standardisation and training. The Senior Standards Verifier may be asked to become involved with you at our request.

Principal Standards Manager

The Principal Standards Manager oversees the standards within this framework.

For Skilled for Life, your Principal Standards Manager will:

- support you at all stages of the process
- support Standards Verifiers where particular quality matters are raised

- help you to resolve any Essential Actions and Recommendations, where required.

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. It is extremely important that Quality Nominee details are kept up-to-date. You can do this easily via Edexcel Online.

As a Quality Nominee, you should ensure the effective management of BTEC programmes and actively encourage and promote good practice. For Skilled for Life you should liaise with appropriate practitioners and Internal Verifiers to ensure that Standards Verifiers are able to carry out their role.

For standards verification, you will:

- be the initial point of contact for all Standards Verifiers
- liaise with appropriate practitioners to ensure that Standards Verifiers are able to carry out their role
- ensure that records of assessment and verification are available for scrutiny by the Standards Verifier
- ensure that current learner work is available for scrutiny by the Standards Verifier
- liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, where required.

Practitioners

Practitioners are centre staff actively engaged in delivering Skilled for Life programmes. They may be Curriculum or Programme Managers, Lead Internal Verifiers, Assessors or Internal Verifiers.

It is the responsibility of the practitioners to make sure that the correct units and level are delivered to the learners, if any qualification is claimed through Skilled for Life units must be identified by the unit number because the title may be shared with other units.

Standards verification for Skilled for Life

We will assure quality through centre visits for standards verification for your Skilled for Life programmes.

- Standards verification is the way in which we check that centres are conducting both internal quality assurance and assessment to the right standards.
- Standards Verifiers will provide advice and guidance, and work with you to support you in demonstrating that you are working to the standards and addressing possible areas of weakness.
- Standards verification ensures that you have accurate assessment records and are assessing learners appropriately, consistently and fairly.
- There will normally be one visit each year for your Skilled for Life at level 1 and 2. Level 2 programmes may require additional samples in sector areas if the Standards Verifier is not a specialist in them all (these would be postal).

Standards verification process for Entry and Level 1

How does it work?

We allocate a Standards Verifier to those approved centres that have registered learners on the Skilled for Life programme.

- Your Quality Nominee is automatically notified that a Standards Verifier has been allocated.
- A Standards Verifier will be allocated to all programmes with active student registrations.
- The Standards Verifier will contact your Quality Nominee in the first instance. The Quality Nominee should contact the relevant programme leader.
- An appropriate visit date is agreed for standards verification based on an assessment plan submitted by the Programme Leader and a visit plan is agreed. The Standards Verifier will submit a copy of this visit plan to the Programme Leader.
- The Standards Verifier works collaboratively with you to consider and review the quality of the assessment planning, the validity of the assessment decisions and the consistency of the assessment and internal verification process.
- A report on the effectiveness of processes and assessment decisions is produced by the Standards Verifier. Where necessary certification may be blocked until appropriate remedial action is taken.

When does it take place?

- Standards verification takes place through an annual visit; the visit will take the format detailed in the process maps for level 1 and level 2.

- You need to think about when students will be completing and when evidence can be made available. The annual cycle starts in October and finishes in mid-August.
- Your Standards Verifier will be allocated **only when** you make registrations. Once they accept their contract, you are able to view their contact details via Edexcel Online.
- However, they should contact you as soon as possible after accepting the allocation to discuss your programme plans and processes.
- You will not be able to claim certificates until sampling has been successfully undertaken.

Sampling learner evidence

The sampling of learners is central to standards verification. The Standards Verifier will sample learner work on a visit to the centre to assess the quality of the programme and the assessment procedures. You must make learner work available for sampling on the visit. If you do not make learner work available when requested, the Standards Verifier report will identify actions. If no work is sampled for the programme then certification cannot usually be allowed.

The Standards Verifier will sample across units within Skilled for Life. They will select units from each 'Learning Area'.

Units being delivered
English, Maths and ICT
Skills for Work
Industry Knowledge
Work Experience
Social and Personal Skills

Sampling of learner evidence:

- will be carefully planned to ensure that the Standards Verifier can reach a judgment on standards
- will be based on completed units
- should include summative feedback
- may be portfolio based or in alternative formats, for example video, CD/DVD, audio tape, e-portfolio
- will include the support and guidance offered to learners.

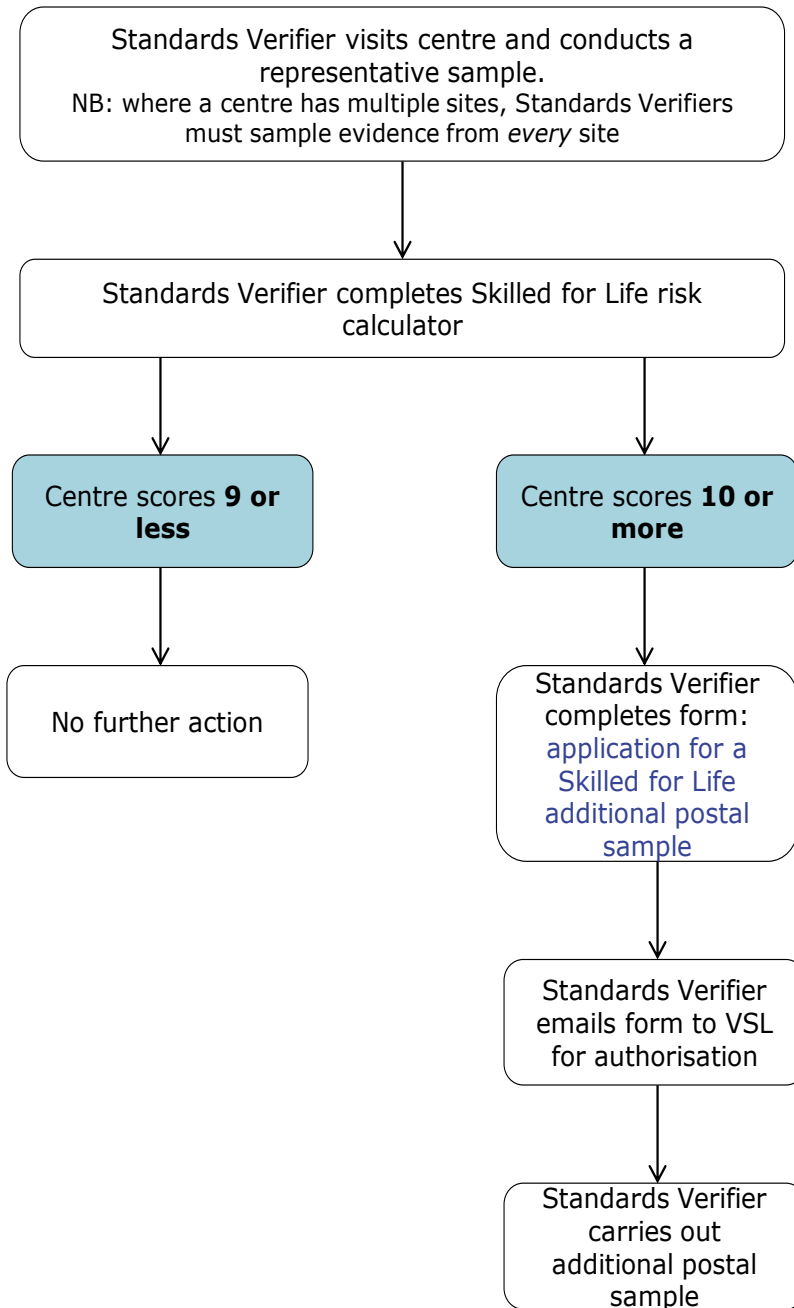
There is no prescribed size of sample and the selection of your sample will vary according to your centre's needs and the number of learners on the programme. Standards Verifiers will ensure that they can select independently some of the learners who are sampled to ensure the validity of the sampling process.

The Standards Verifier will select their sample based on:

- the assessment strategy you provide for the programme

- reliability (to be sure sufficient work and Assessors have been seen)
- every Learning Area you offer
- number of assessment sites and satellites
- number of learners
- coverage of units across different industries/sectors and employability-related units and, in particular, any problem units
- inclusion of verified and non-verified assessment decisions
- opportunities to access assessment
- any special requirements of the assessment strategy.

Level 1: Skilled for Life standards verification – additional postal sampling



Additional postal sampling Level 1

During a standards verification visit, the Standards Verifier will complete a Skilled for Life Risk Calculator. This will give a risk value according to the number of expected learners, number of Assessors and a centre's experience in delivering assessment processes. The Risk Calculator is illustrated below:

	Risk factors	Rating	Control factors	Rating	Value
Number of learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased difficulty in tracking learners Additional resource needs for effective delivery of any/all aspects of programme Additional risks re. small number of early certifications and / or short period roll on roll off programmes 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective management structure including identified programme leader, sufficient internal verifiers for assessors (eg 1:5) team structure Sufficient staff resources, such as use of permanent contract staff, ratio of staff to learners; training and CPD Full learner records covering induction, performance tracking and assessment 	1	■
	Rating: NB – please rate according to the number of expected learners and not the number of registered learners				
	1 Up to 49 learners				
	2 50-249 learners				
	3 250-699 learners				
	4 700-1499 learners				
5 1500+ learners					
			Rating:		
			1 All control factors evident and fully effective		
			2 All control factors evident but not all fully effective		
			3 One or more control factors not evident		
Number of assessors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased risk of lack of standardisation Increased risk of poor assessment practice 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective use of standardisation meetings Effective use of internal verification including clear planning in advance of sampling 	1	■
	Rating:				
	1 Up to 3 assessors				
	2 4-6 assessors				
	3 7-12 assessors				
	4 13-24 assessors				
5 25+ assessors					
			Rating:		
			1 All control factors evident and fully effective		
			2 All control factors evident but not all fully effective		
			3 One or more control factors not evident		
Experience in delivery of assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of inappropriate standards Lack of effective record keeping Inappropriate learner induction, support and assessment 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New staff are already experienced in Skilled for Life and/or have access to appropriate development Continuity within the centre and/or programme team for delivery Appropriate use of external training, networking and support 	1	■
	Rating:**				
	1 Centre, team and programme manager are fully experienced in delivering vocational qualifications				
	2 Centre is fully experienced in delivering vocational qualifications; several members of the team new to delivering vocational qualifications				
	3 Centre is fully experienced in delivering vocational qualifications but inexperienced programme manager				
	4 Centre has some experience of delivering vocational qualifications and some members of staff are inexperienced				
5 Centre has no experience of delivering vocational qualifications					
			Rating:		
			1 All control factors evident and fully effective		
			2 All control factors evident but not all fully effective		
			3 One or more control factors not evident		

** please apply a 'best fit' approach

Where a centre is given a score of 10 or greater, then an additional postal sample is required. Please note that **postal samples must not be original learner work.**

The Standards Verification process for Level 2

How does it work?

We allocate a Standards Verifier to those approved centres that have registered learners on the Skilled for Life programme, if the programme has more than one sector you may be allocated more Standards Verifiers.

- Your Quality Nominee will be contacted to which sector units are being used at Level 2.
- A Standards Verifier will be allocated who specialises in your biggest sector, although it is often the case that this is generic employability skills.
- The Standards Verifier will contact your Quality Nominee in the first instance. The Quality Nominee should contact the Skilled for Life programme leader.
- The centre should supply an assessment plan, an appropriate visit date is agreed for standards verification and a visit plan is agreed. The Standards Verifier will submit a copy of this visit plan to the Programme Leader.
- The Standards Verifier visit involves working collaboratively with you to consider and review the quality of the assessment process, the validity of the assessment decisions and the consistency of the assessment and internal verification process.
- Some sector specific units where the Standards Verifier is not a specialist may need to be postally sampled by a separate Standards Verifier; this will feed into the report.
- A report on the effectiveness of processes and assessment decisions is produced by the Standards Verifier.
- The Standards Verifier may need a second postal sample. This still involves working collaboratively with you to consider and review the quality of the assessment planning, the validity of the assessment decisions and the consistency of the assessment and internal verification process of the sector area.
- A report on the effectiveness of processes and assessment decisions is produced by the Standards Verifier. Where necessary certification may be blocked until appropriate remedial action is taken.

Please note that postal samples must not be original learner work.

Centre allocated Standards Verifier for biggest sector or generic employability

