Internal Verification Procedure for BTEC (non-vrq) Programmes

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Head of Quality, Excellence and Development.

Summary of Contents
The purpose of the procedure is to provide guidance to all staff involved in the preparation, grading and internal verification of all BTEC (non-vrq) programmes.

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1.0 Change History

Changes to this SOP are documented in Appendix 1 of this document. When reading electronic copies of this document, you can click here to view the change history.

2.0 Introduction

This standard operating procedure relates to the internal verification of all BTEC (non-vrq) programmes. It recognises the importance of a robust assessment and internal verification procedure.

3.0 Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the SOP is to provide guidance to all staff involved in the preparation, grading and internal verification of all BTEC (non-vrq) programmes.

4.0 Definition of Internal Verification

Internal Verification is the quality assurance system used to monitor assessment practice to meet awarding organisation requirements. This involves:

- Planning the assessment process
- The scrutiny of assignment briefs prior to issue to learners
- Reviewing the Assessor's judgements against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification.
- Providing appropriate feedback to lecturers, with an action plan where necessary
- Monitoring consistency across teams/ lecturers on one or several sites through a standardisation programme

5.0 Principles

SERC is committed to an assessment process that is:

- Fair and free from bias.
- Based on a range of assessment methods to reflect the learning needs of learners.
- Adheres to Awarding Organisation requirements.
- Provides clear and accurate learner feedback linked to the assessment criteria.
- Underpinned by a quality assurance process based on team responsibility through robust internal verification.

In order to do this, the centre will ensure that:

- A lead internal verifier for each principal subject area is appointed and accredited where required.
- Each lead internal verifier oversees effective internal verification systems within each principal subject area.
- Staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current internal verification procedures.
- Effective internal verification roles are defined, maintained and supported.

- Internal verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff.
- Standardised internal verification documentation is provided and used.
- All centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose.
- An annual internal verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place.
- An appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, sites and teams is internally verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards and standards verification requirements.
- Secure records of all internal verification activity are maintained.
- The outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

6.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementation of the procedure will be monitored by the college management team and evaluation of its effectiveness will be naturally occurring through the course review procedures, and the quality cycle.

7.0 Archive and Storage

- Assessment records for every student and internal verification records must be completed online and kept on the Course Team Site. Records must be retained by the Lead IV for 3 years following certification. Lead IV should immediately inform IT (Networking) should any records go missing.
- Learners' work should be retained until certification plus 12 weeks and after the appeal period.
- Results should be archived and held in perpetuity.
- Student portfolios should be stored securely.

8.0 Staff Roles Within Internal Verification Process

8.1 Role of Quality Nominee

The Head of Quality Excellence and Development will act as Quality Nominee (QN) for BTEC programmes.

Key tasks:

- Act as a link for Awarding Organisation requirements.
- Liaise with accredited Lead Internal Verifiers. Link with Head of School to replace Lead IV as required.
- Ensure Lead IVs are nominated by Heads of School and complete the registration processes required by the Awarding Organisation.
- Ensure Awarding Organisation policy requirements and approval conditions are being implemented consistently and effectively.

8.2 Role of Lead Internal Verifier

Key tasks:

- Satisfy the Awarding Organisation requirements for Lead Internal Verifier.
- Ensure that there is an assessment and verification plan for the programmes in areas of responsibility.

- Ensure that the assessment schedule is issued to learners.
- Sample a minimum of 20% of assignment briefs of a programme, within the academic year, according to risk.
- Plan, allocate and manage Internal verifiers for the programmes in areas of responsibilities.
- At suitable points ensure that the Plan is being implemented and IV records maintained
- Lead standardisation meetings across teams and campuses
- Manage, sample, and assure internal verification processes and procedures by internal verifiers.
- Undertake some IV and/or assessment for individual units within at least one of the programmes.
- Liaise with awarding organisations external verifier requirements.

8.3 Role of Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier is at the heart of quality assurance both within the national framework and within the quality and management system of SERC. The Internal Verifier has overall responsibility in ensuring that the Internal Verification Process (detailed below) is carried out for the appointed programme of study. The Internal Verifier will be appointed by the Lead Internal Verifier for specific units and/or areas of a programme.

Key Tasks:

Preparation of Assignment briefs and role in assessment planning

- Attend course team meetings and lead a team approach to assessment of the programme to ensure cohesiveness.
- Ensure that only College documentation and layout is used for both assignments and the internal verification process. The approved documentation can be found at QED Public site.
- Ensure that the quality of assignment briefs is fit for purpose and reflect the unit learning outcomes, content, assessment and grading criteria and assessment guidance. Once the IV has signed off the assignment brief using the college designated form it means that it meets the awarding organisation requirements.
- Where an assignment brief does not meet awarding organisation requirements the IV must indicate the remedial action required and discuss the issue with the staff writing the assignment and arrange for the changes. The IV is responsible for ensuring that the remedial action is completed, the assignment and IV documentation updated prior to issue. Assignment briefs must not be issued without this stage of the IV process being completed.

Key Tasks:

Internal Verification of assessed student work

- Use subject knowledge to agree the grading criteria awarded within the sample.
- Where the grading criteria awarded is not agreed this **must be** noted on the IV documentation. The IV should then undertake a professional discussion with the assessor to agree the remedial action required.

- Where the IV and assessor cannot reach agreement, the Lead IV can be consulted for assistance.
- Ensure that the appropriate corrective action is taken where necessary and the results noted on the IV documentation.
- Monitor and ensure student feedback meets College requirements. This includes **annotation on the script and on the feedback sheet.**
- Provide advice and support to lecturers on a regular basis.
- Ensure your own assessment decisions are sampled.
- Ensure that the internal verification process is carried out on time.
- Ensure all accurate records regarding internal verification monitoring activities are stored online in the appropriate Course Team Site.
- Liaise with Lead Internal Verifier.
- Support quality assurance by taking a key role in quality reviews.
- Advise the course team on any training needs.
- Provide feedback of the assessment system to the programme team, senior management and awarding organisation.
- Take part in the formal stage of any appeal.

8.4 Role of the Assessor

The following list of tasks is indicative of the areas normally covered by a module /subject lecturer any variations will be agreed with line manager when agreeing timetables.

Key Tasks:

Preparation of assignments and internal verification

- Active participation in all team meetings, the preparation of assignments, assessment schedule and future course development.
- The assessor will have a detailed knowledge of the units to be assessed regarding learning outcomes, content, grading criteria and assessment guidance. They will ensure that these are followed in assessment practices.
- Scheme of work, all assessments/assignment briefs passed to programme leader as required.
- Correct College documentation must be used in the preparation of assignment briefs.
- Learning outcomes and grading criteria must be clearly displayed on the assignment brief. The wording of the learning outcomes and grading criteria **cannot be altered in any way** from that within the unit specification.
- Assignment briefs must not be issued to learners unless the IV process has been fully completed and the brief has been signed off the IV and any issues resolved.
- Assessors must attend and participate in internal verification events within the school.
- A sample of assessed work must be provided for internal verification events. It is the assessor's responsibility to manage the assessment process to ensure that a sample of graded, annotated work is available at these events. Failure to provide such a sample must be agreed in advance with the HOS.

Key Tasks:

Assessment of student work

- Undertake prompt marking of assessed work with return to learners within a maximum of 3 weeks following awarding organisation guidelines.
- Learner feedback should be accurate and linked to the assessment criteria.
- Maintain accurate records of formative and summative assessment decisions using the required College systems and documentation.

Key Tasks:

Teaching and delivering Learning

- Prompt attendance at all timetabled classes, maintenance of module registers and appropriate action taken in the case of poor attendance in line with course team procedures.
- Unit specification and schedule/plan of work to be issued to learners during the first week of study.
- Ensure that all relevant teaching has been covered prior to planned assessment activities.
- Provide clear guidance to learners regarding grading criteria and unit/module objectives to be assessed and, adherence to planned submission dates in line with course, College and Awarding Organisation guidelines.
- Forward completed student unit portfolios with final grades to programme leader within 1 week of unit completion.
- Ensure that all Awarding Organisation, College and course team policies are followed in terms of cross marking and IV procedures.
- Follow submission procedures as outlined in the College student handbooks and relevant Standard Operating Procedures.
- Provide learners with support and signpost individual learners with specific learning needs to the course tutor.
- Completion of e-ILPs as required.
- Reflect upon and evaluate own performance and contribute to course review and evaluation procedures.

8.5 Role of Course Coordinator/Programme Leader

Key tasks:

Within the internal verification process the course co-ordinator/programme leader will:

- Ensure that all schemes of work and assignment briefs are available to learners on Moodle.
- Complete the plan for the allocation and completion of IV for their area of responsibility and forward to the Lead IV for agreement.
- Liaise with the Lead IV as required.

9.0 The Internal Verification Procedure

All staff involved with the Internal Verification procedure must ensure that they understand their role as indicated above before commencing the IV procedure.

Internal Verification is the quality assurance system used to monitor assessment practice. This involves:

- The scrutiny of assignment briefs prior to issue to learners.
- Reviewing the Assessor's judgements against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification.
- Verifying the quality of lecturer decisions (including student feedback) for all units and providing appropriate feedback to lecturers, with an action plan where necessary.
- Monitoring consistency across teams/ lecturers on one or several sites through a standardisation programme.
- Judging learner evidence against the assessment criteria.

The Internal Verification Procedure should provide a sampled check of all aspects of the assessment process and should take account of:

- every Assessor
- every unit
- work from every assignment
- every assessment site (for multi-site and consortia centres).

There is not a requirement that all learners must have been internally verified during the lifetime of a programme.

If following a review of the sample and there are any assessment concerns, the sample can be reselected. For example, if the group has been awarded high grades you may choose to increase the number of learners sampled at this grade.

There is no prescribed sample size, but a well-constructed sample should consider:

- The full range of assessment decisions made: pass, merit, distinction criteria, and not yet achieved, should all be included in the sample if possible.
- The experience of the Assessor: new or inexperienced Assessors should have more work internally verified than an experienced Assessor.
- New BTEC programmes: when a unit or programme is first introduced, the sample should be increased.
- The size of the group of learners.
- Known issues with internal verification: these may have been identified previously.

The Lead IV should use a 'risk based' approach as required. This means that the Lead IV will take into account the previous outcomes from internal verification and standard verification, experience of assessor and whether the unit is new or has been delivered before.

Designated College forms and assessment documents

The Lead IV will be responsible for ensuring that the College designated assessment forms as found within the QED Public site are used across the teams for which they are responsible.

9.1 Cross College Standardisation Events

The Lead IV must organise three cross-college events annually:

- Standardisation event in June or August using Pearson OSCA material and/or a sample of learner work and the relevant assessment criteria to agree the standard. This is achieved through a professional discussion with all the assessors and should bring cross-campus teams together. Following this exercise formal assessment and internal verification can occur.
- Internal Verification during inter-semester January
- Internal Verification during May/June

The Lead IV should arrange for attendance to be recorded and stored from these events.

9.2 Internal Verification Process

Stage 1: Preparation of Programme Assessment Plan

The Assignment Schedule for the Programme is a live document which should be reviewed regularly by the Lead Internal Verifier and agreed by the Programme team on the relevant Form. The Assessment Plan should ensure that assignments are timely and provide opportunity for a reasonable student workload. A variety of modes of assessment should be used as appropriate.

Stage 2: Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

All assignment briefs must be internally verified, prior to issue to the learner. This task is carried out by the IV. The Lead IV will sample a minimum of 20% of assignment briefs. This is to verify the brief is fit for purpose:

- Ensuring the tasks and evidence will allow the learner to address the targeted criteria.
- Is written in a clear and accessible language.
- Learners' roles and tasks are vocationally relevant and appropriate to the level of the qualification.
- Equal opportunities are incorporated.

Internal verification of assignment briefs should be reported and recorded on the relevant Form. If action is required, the lecturer should complete this and return it to the Internal Verifier for sign off. Only when the brief is verified as fit for purpose, may it be issued to the learners.

Stage 3: Agreement of Internal Verification Plan

The Lead IV must prepare annually a risk-based internal verification plan for each programme for which they are responsible. The IV plan should reflect the needs of the programme including risk-based issues, the principles of internal verification and may use a mix of campus and cross-campus internal verification as required.

Stage 4: Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions

A sample of assessment decisions for each unit of study must be internally verified. Team/Cross Campus internal verification should be recorded on the relevant Form and should follow the guidance below under Sample size. Where a programme is offered across SERC there should be evidence that internal verification has occurred between the campus delivery teams.

This is to ensure:

- Assessment decisions accurately match learner work (evidence) to the unit learning outcomes, content, grading criteria and assignment guidance.

- Assessment and grading is consistent across the programme on all sites.
- Evidence confirmed by the lecturer is valid, authentic, reliable, current and sufficient.
- Awarding Organisation standards are being met.
- Feedback is timely and accurate, linked to assessment criteria.

Internal verification activities between programme team members should be completed and recorded on the relevant Form. Feedback should be provided to the module lecturer and forms forwarded to the IV for monitoring. If assessment decisions are not agreed the IV should ensure appropriate corrective action is taken. The IV is responsible for ensuring that all remedial action is completed. The sample for Internal Verification must represent all sites where a programme is offered.

Stage 5: Lead Internal Verification

A sample of verified decisions by Internal Verifiers across units, programmes and Campuses, must be reviewed by the Lead IV. The Lead IV should use a risk approach and must be satisfied that each step of the verification process has been followed and the Awarding Organisation standards met.

Sample size

All assessors' work must be internally verified annually. All units and as wide a spread of learners should be sampled. The Lead IV should work with the Co-ordinator to ensure spread.

Team at Campus level

As a team each unit should be internally verified. A minimum of three pieces of work for each assessment to cover all grades of performance and a range of learners. This step is used at the Lead IV discretion and will be highlighted within the IV plan.

Internal Verification by Team at Cross Campus Level

Where the programme is delivered cross campus there should be two internal verification standardisation meetings per year to ensure parity of assessment decisions. For every unit, a minimum of three pieces of assessed work from each campus to cover all assessors, grades of performance and a range of learners.

Preparation of sample for the Awarding Organisation Verifier

The Lead IV should follow the guidelines of the awarding organisation. This applies for all levels and includes External Examiners for level 4-7.

10.0 Further Information

Pearson annually produce Centre Guides to Assessment and Internal Verification which are available on the QED Public site and Pearson website.

11.0 Communication Plan

This SOP will be uploaded to the College intranet and referred to in staff induction and training.

12.0 Review

This SOP will be reviewed annually, or when the need for change has been identified.

Appendix 1: Document Change History

Version	Date	Change Detail
1.0	May 2016	Created
1.1	July 2023	Transferred to new Accessibility Template
1.2	Nov 2023	Section 8.1 Update on Quality Nominee
1.3	June 2026	Annual review completed. Minor amendments made to terminology, archive and storage wording, Quality Nominee responsibilities, Assessor role wording and internal verification process wording. No substantive change to the purpose or scope of the SOP.