

BTEC Provision Made Easy 2009-2010

Signposts to Quality

BTEC

Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications including
Short Courses Levels 1-3

BTEC mission statement

We aim to reduce the bureaucratic burden of assessment and assessment-related processes on centres whilst maintaining the quality of provision. We will achieve this through effecting a change of focus from an Edexcel-driven model of 'Quality Control' to one of centre-driven 'Quality Assurance'.

Preface

At Edexcel, we strive to make life straightforward and less bureaucratic for centres. We have worked with centres to produce a guide, in plain English, that helps staff further improve the quality of their programmes.

This document should be shared with BTEC programme managers, assessors, internal verifiers and staff development managers. For example, it could be used to cascade information on BTEC procedures during centre INSET, placed on a staff intranet for quick reference, and included in internal guidance documents. We have tried to keep the information brief and to the point, but more detailed guidance on all the issues are included in:

- The Edexcel Information Manual.
- Quality Assurance Handbook 2009-2010.
- Centre Briefing National Standards Sampling 2009-2010.
- Centre Briefing: Centre Risk Assessment 2009-2010.
- BTEC Centre Risk Assessment: Risks and Controls Guide 2009-2010.

These documents are on the Edexcel website.

This guide is written for centres that are running BTEC programmes.

If you are not running BTEC programmes, you need to inform us of what you want to offer and gain approval. You can find out how to apply for approval through the 'I want to' tab at www.edexcel.com, and then click on the 'full A-Z list of topics' and then on 'approval'.

Summary of BTEC Quality Assurance Process

Approval:

What?

- Ensures that all centres are ready to start programmes and carry out assessment.
- Gives centres access to full support.
- Allow centres to register learners and obtain study materials for them.

When?

- Before learners are recruited.
- At any time of the year.

Find out more: Click on the "I want to" tab at www.edexcel.com, and then click on the "full A-Z list of topics" and then on "Quality Assurance".

Centre Quality Management:

What?

- Each centre appoints a Quality Nominee (QN).
- QN ensures that each BTEC programme is run to meet approval conditions.
- QN acts as the key point of contact for Edexcel.

When?

- Immediately on approval for any BTEC programme.
- Information checked and updated annually as a minimum.

Find out more: Click on the "I want to" tab at www.edexcel.com, and then click on the "full A-Z list of topics" and then on "Quality Assurance".

Centre Risk Assessment:

What?

- A review of the quality management across BTEC programmes.
- Through a structured assessment against criteria at a centre visit or through on-line self-assessment.

When?

- Centres will be notified when the process begins.
- Process will take place between 1st November 2009 and 28th February 2010.

Find out more: Signposts 6, 7, 8 and 9

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Signpost 1 - Communications

Each centre must nominate one member of staff to act as the BTEC Quality Nominee (QN).

We will send information about assessment and quality matters to this person, who will be responsible for communicating BTEC information to programme teams. We normally e-mail so please check and update e-mail details regularly.

Each centre is allocated a Regional Quality Manager. The Regional Quality Manager is a full time member from BTEC Assessment, who is responsible for managing quality monitoring processes and issues for a number of BTEC and NVQ centres within a geographical centre range. The Regional Quality Manager monitors quality assurance procedures for NQF BTEC programmes. The work of the Regional Quality Manager complements that of the Edexcel Curriculum Development Manager.

Further information can be obtained by contacting:

For general BTEC enquiries:

Telephone 0844 576 0026

Email enquiries@edexcel.com

For specific enquiries you can use the following email addresses:

Allocations: OAS@edexcel.com

Approvals: approvals@edexcel.com

BTEC delivery : BTECdelivery@edexcel.com

CRA: CRA@edexcel.com

Monitoring: BTECAAMonitoring@edexcel.com

Quality matters: qualitystandards@edexcel.com

Registration, withdrawal, and certification: serviceoperations@edexcel.com

When you contact us by e-mail please help us to deal with it quickly by including:

Subject line: Qualification and subject sector

Body text: Name; telephone number; centre name; centre number; programme title; programme number; the enquiry.

Centre details:

In order to support effective communications between Edexcel and your centre please update your centre details via Edexcel Online (EOL) regularly. We need to be able to contact the exams officer, QN and your head of centre as these people are our main link for communications.

BTEC updates:

It is recommended that centres register for the email 'BTEC alert' to obtain up to date information from the website. You can register by going onto our website at:

www.edexcel.com/alerts/Pages/EmailAlertsHomePage.aspx

BTEC Bulletin is also put onto the website giving updates about all BTEC products and levels.

Signpost 2 - Marketing

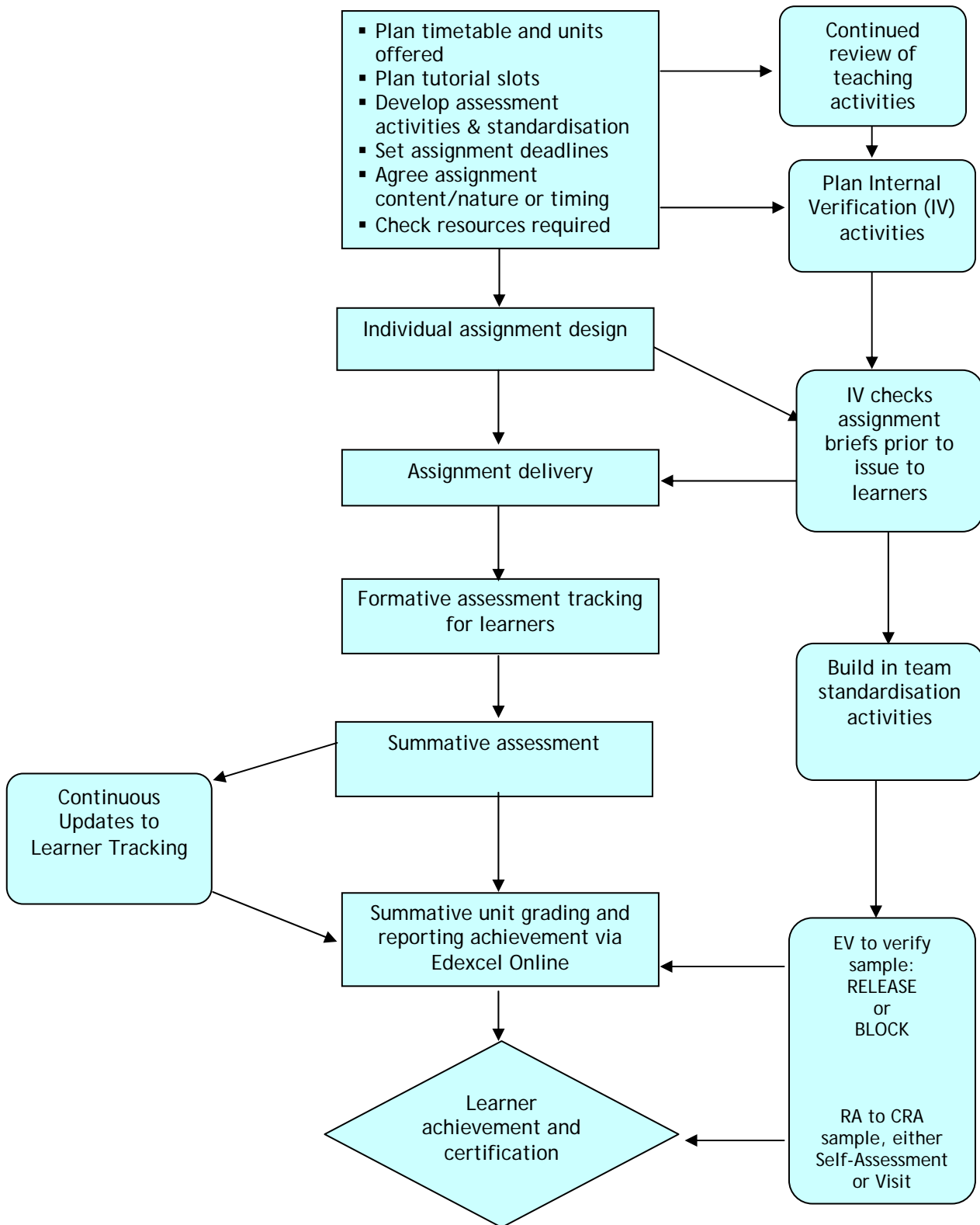
It is important to make sure that you give the correct titles and descriptions in all your publicity materials when promoting BTEC qualifications. If unsure, you can check these by looking at your centre's BTEC approval documents.

A programme cannot be delivered or assessed without approval. It is not possible to register learners onto unapproved qualifications.

Marketing checklist

- Check the title of each BTEC qualification in all publicity materials against your centre's approval documents - this includes your prospectus, the centre's website and all printed and broadcast media.
- Ensure that all centre personnel are aware of the importance of using the correct qualification titles in all internal and external marketing materials.
- Ensure that "BTEC" always precedes the qualification title on all centre documents.
- Ensure that every BTEC qualification publicised is described accurately.
- Use the resources on the Edexcel website www.edexcel.com. See particularly the Key Features or Student Guide documents as listed under the qualifications for the various sectors.
- A centre should not market any BTEC qualification for which it has not applied for approval. If approval is pending, any marketing must include the words "subject to approval by Edexcel."

Signpost 3 - Planning and Delivering a new BTEC programme



Signpost 4 - Learner Recruitment

Your recruitment staff should be fully briefed on the programme, assessment method and certification requirements of BTEC programmes and be able to advise potential learners.

Edexcel expects centres to recruit with integrity. This means that centres must ensure that learners are recruited onto the BTEC programme that best meets their needs and abilities and for which they have the potential to achieve.

The recommended entry requirement for each programme is in the relevant specification and the student guides, available on the Edexcel website.

Recruitment checklist

Recruitment staff should be aware of:

- The level of all programmes.
- The size of all programmes.
- Entry requirements.
- The number of units in each programme.
- The amount of time learners need to spend in the college/school/centre.
- The estimated weekly amount of personal study time needed.
- Any special requirements such as work placements, equipment and clothes.
- Methods of assessment and deadlines.
- Expectations for progression of achievers.
- Rules relating to Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations.

Signpost 5 - Enrolment, Registration and Withdrawals

Enrolment and registration details are available in the Edexcel Information Manual.

Learners starting in September must be registered on the correct qualification by 1st November 2009 and the centre management information system (MIS) must be accurately maintained.

Registration will trigger the allocation of an external verifier for **National Standards Sampling (NSS)** and inclusion in the **Centre Risk Assessment (CRA)** process. Certification of the learners is dependent on successful outcomes.

Registration should be completed through Edexcel Online or EDI. Centre wishing to use paper forms should contact Operational Services. Registrations can be checked using Edexcel Online. Tutors wishing to use Edexcel Online will need to obtain a password allowing the relevant level of access from their examinations officer.

Withdrawals can be made via Edexcel Online and should be done appropriately. It is good practice for a centre to review its registrations on a regular basis.

MIS and enrolment checklist

- Check programme managers have the correct level of access to Edexcel Online.
- Check that each BTEC approved title is correctly set up on the centre's MIS.
- Check that all BTEC learners who started programmes in September 2009 are registered with Edexcel by 1st November 2009 and that the correct completion date is inserted.
- Check that learners who want to transfer from one type of programme to another, (e.g. Certificate to Diploma) are eligible to do so.
- Regularly update registrations, transfers, top-ups, withdrawals, and certification claims through Edexcel Online as required. Internal centre records should similarly be maintained.

Signpost 6 - What is Centre Risk Assessment (CRA)?

What is it ?

- CRA is part of the BTEC Quality Model.
- It is used to monitor the effectiveness of controls put in place by a centre to ensure effective delivery.
- It provides a positive, consultative process designed to assist centres to improve the quality and delivery of BTEC programmes in a centre.

Why is this process necessary ?

- To ensure that the risks inherent in approving a centre to run BTEC qualifications are adequately controlled.
- To encourage the promotion of good practice amongst centres delivering and assessing BTEC qualifications.
- To aid the improvement of quality in the delivery and management of BTEC programmes within centres.

Centre Selection

- This academic year all BTEC centres with registered learners will either have a visit assessment, using a BTEC risk assessor, or undertake a self assessment, completed by the centre online.
- Centres will be informed in September 2009 which assessment process they will undertake in 2009-2010. A Centre Information Pack will be provided which explains the process. Further information will be posted on the Edexcel web site or can be obtained from a centre's Regional Quality Manager.

Edexcel personnel involved:

- Regional Quality Manager.
- Risk assessor.

Centre personnel involved:

- Quality nominee(QN).
- Programme managers.
- Teachers/tutors.

Where to find out more information:

- Centre Briefing: CRA 2009-2010; and BTEC CRA Quick Reference Guide 2009-2010.
- From your Regional Quality Manager.

CRA checklist for centres

Centre needs to know:

- Whether a visit assessment or self assessment is required in 2009-2010.
- Which programme area titles (PAT) will be included.
- Background information about CRA and the Risk Control Guide which can be found [here](#).

The BTEC quality nominee should:

- Where appropriate liaise with the risk assessor to confirm the visit.
- Where appropriate liaise internally to meet the needs of a self assessment.
- Ensure documents and evidence for risk assessment clearly demonstrate quality management at centre and programme level.
- Ensure that up-to-date centre contact email addresses are available.

Programme managers should:

- Ensure that all team members are fully conversant with the requirements for and timing of risk assessment.
- Make preparations appropriate to the assessment method being conducted.

CRA requirements:

- A visit assessment usually lasts between 4 and 6 hours, it involves senior staff and selected teachers. Staff involved provide information and evidence about quality systems. The risk assessor also considers oral evidence.
- The centre will provide the risk assessor with access to team members for the two PATs selected.

Signpost 7 - Preparing for CRA Visits

Centres identified for risk assessment will be contacted by a risk assessor. Identified risks are categorised into three risk sections:

Managing Assessment Risks

Managing Learning Risks

Managing Resource Risks

Further information on these risks can be found in the CRA documents located [here](#).

Summary of visits and outcomes

Risk assessment report:

- Is a summary of findings from the risk assessor.
- Will be completed within 10 days of the visit.
- Will be available for viewing via EOL.
- Informs the centre to address any actions or recommendations arising out of the risk assessment within the time scale agreed.
- Identifies the Managing Assessment Risks actions which will normally be resolved within three months of the risk assessment or by 31 May 2009.
- Provides advice and guidance on quality improvement.

Head of Centre:

- Should ensure that reports from risk assessors are distributed and actioned appropriately.

Signpost 8 - Following CRA

The centre should use the actions and recommendations to form a basis for supporting centre quality improvement and making planned changes to the centre's management of BTEC programmes. Non-completion of the required action points could affect programme approval and in exceptional circumstances centre approval.

CRA follow-up checklist

Centre development plan details specific actions which the centre is required to address:

- Actions against Managing Assessment Risks will normally be resolved within three months from the date of the report.
- Actions against Managing Learning Risks and Managing Resource Risks will be resolved by the next risk assessment (usually in one year).

Centre development plan also details recommendations which the centre is advised to address:

- Progress against recommendations will be reviewed at the next risk assessment.

When addressing actions and recommendations in CRA reports, a centre will need to consider improvements such as staff training and changes to current practice.

Signpost 9 - Timeline for CRA

By September 2009	Centres operating BTEC qualifications are informed of their selection to either a visit assessment or a self assessment in 2009/2010, and are provided with an information pack to facilitate preparation.
By October 2009	Where appropriate, QNs are informed of the risk assessor for their centre. Risk assessors should contact QNs to finalise programmes for CRA, and to finalise the documentation that is required for the assessment visit.
By 2 nd October 2009	Final date for approval of BTEC qualifications for learners studying in the current teaching year, and where Edexcel can guarantee that quality monitoring and certification can occur within the timescales laid down. Non standard year provision is not affected by this deadline.
By 1 st November 2009	Centres must register learners for programmes that started in September and October 2009.
1 st November 2009-28 th February 2010	CRA visit assessments and self assessments will take place.
End December 2009	QNs of centres included in the visit assessment schedule must check that the CRA visit is either planned or has taken place.
By 28 th February 2010	QNs should check that risk assessment has taken place and that all remedial action is being undertaken promptly. By 28 February 2010, the CRA process should be completed. This includes any action planning activities.
By 31 st May 2010	Managing Assessment Risk actions listed in the CRA report to be completed within three months from the date of the report or by this date whichever is the shorter period.

Signpost 10 - Non-Standard Delivery

This information applies to centres that deliver BTEC programmes outside the standard academic year, particularly those with 'roll-on, roll-off' programmes, those using BTEC programmes as part of modern apprenticeship training, and youth organisation centres where the standard academic year does not apply.

For programmes that do not follow the academic year (i.e. programmes where learners have enrolled between November and August), or for any programmes of less than one academic year in length, and for individual units, registration is due within one month of enrolment.

Non-standard programme checklist

- Register learners within 4 weeks of the start of the programme.
- Clearly identify completion dates of the programme.
- Be aware of deadline requirements for progression.
- Negotiate appropriate deadlines with your allocated external verifier and risk assessor.
- Ensure that all assessors understand the assessment and verification requirements and deadline dates.
- Ensure that deadlines are incorporated into the internal verification schedule.

Signpost 11 - Programme Teams

Each BTEC programme, or group of similar programmes should have a programme team. The QN should know who to contact about any BTEC programmes within the centre.

Each programme delivery team needs a programme manager to co-ordinate delivery and assessment and an internal verifier (IV) to organise the internal verification across the programme. This could be the same person.

It may be helpful to coordinate activities across BTEC teams. Most centres use the same set of planning and assessment documents. In schools, established teams can be used to support new teams when further programmes are introduced.

Programme team checklist

Ensure that:

- Each programme team has a programme manager and an internal verifier(IV).
- All teams understand the role played by the centre BTEC QN in cascading information and in maintaining links with the BTEC Assessment department at Edexcel.
- Your programme team organises regular meetings and has opportunities for standardisation of assessors where BTEC programmes are run at more than one site or there is more than one assessor on a programme.
- All staff have had professional development to familiarise them with BTEC assessment.
- Teams plan an assessment timetable that fits in with the key BTEC data for registrations, NSS, and certification.
- Staff development is planned to develop and maintain vocational competence. It should also take account of issues raised during centre risk assessment and national standards sampling.
- An IV does not internally verify units for which they are also an assessor.

Signpost 12 - Assignment Design

BTEC Specification Structure Aids Assignment Design

Each unit within a BTEC specification is structured to facilitate assignment design at centre level. Although the structure of specifications may vary, there are common elements:

- Learning outcomes indicate what learners will be able to do on successful completion of the unit. Learning outcomes have prescribed key phrases or concepts with a range of related topics. An indicative range to support the specific topic item is given.
- Unit content provides the programme of learning to complete the learning outcomes. Evidence to meet the grading criteria will include relevant areas of the unit content.
- Content provides the breadth and depth of coverage expected for each learning outcome. It describes the knowledge required to meet the grading criteria.
- Assessment guidance is provided as a grid defining the grading criteria. Some guidance on assessment strategies is provided but is not prescribed. It can be used to contextualise assignments.
- Learner achievement should be recorded as achievement against the grading criteria for individual units. There should be a tracking system to record ongoing assessment.
- Essential information for teachers is illustrative and for guidance. Centres may deliver and assess in ways which suit their local context.

Relating assignments to unit grading criteria

Assessment is mode free, but must lead to valid and reliable outcomes. BTECs are usually assessed via assignments.

Assignments must enable valid, reliable and consistent assessment within a centre. To provide this, assignments must clearly relate to the grading criteria set out in the units of the qualification specification.

When Edexcel reissues a specification, a centre must check that its assignments and delivery plan continue to meet the requirements of the new specifications.

Successful assignment design should follow this basic guidance:

- The requirements of the unit the assignment relates to should be closely followed.
- A number of assignments may be required to cover the unit grading criteria.
- The sequence of assignments planned in the programme team's delivery scheme should ensure that learners are not given excessive assessment tasks at one time.
- No assignment should be presented to learners without having been internally verified.
- Assignments from sources outside of a centre have to be internally verified and should be relevant to the centre's delivery programme.
- Assignments **should not** be used year on year without being reviewed, revised and re-internally verified as required.

Assignments should take account of the learning requirements of learners locally and of local training needs.

A good assignment:

- Is interesting and motivating for learners.
- Is up to date and relevant.
- Provides evidence for the assessment criteria.
- Can be used to validly assess a group of learners against the assessment criteria.

Assignment Briefs

A written brief should be issued for each assignment or group of related assignments, e.g. if several assignments are set for one unit. There is no prescribed layout or format for the written brief, but it will contain the following information:

<p>Title and level of the qualification.</p> <p>Title and number of Unit(s) being assessed.</p> <p>Title/Reference of the assignment.</p> <p>Date the assignment is issued and the required submission date.</p> <p>Overview and Aims (& Scenario if used)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Opportunity for the assessor to place the assignment/project within a context; perhaps referring to prior teaching and learning, vocational aspects, where the project fits into the overall programme, and so on.▪ This is also an opportunity to state which Learning Outcomes (stated on the first page of the unit specification) the activities and assessment address. <p>Tasks and Preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The detailed description of specific activities the learners will undertake in order to produce assessment evidence to address the grading criteria targeted.▪ The design of the brief should reference the tasks to the grading criteria they address. <p>Grading Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The written brief states exactly which assessment and/or grading criteria are being assessed.▪ Note: Centres must not re-write any aspect of the unit criteria, nor add their own centre-devised criteria. <p>Forms of Evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A clear statement of what the learner is expected to produce as evidence, and how that evidence will be assessed. <p>Other information might include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Resources.▪ Reference materials.▪ Key skills opportunities built into the assignment.▪ Employer links.
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Signpost 13 - Grading and Assessment

Grading may be applied for each unit as a result of tracking several assignments or a single assignment designed to allow learners the opportunity to meet all the criteria for that unit.

It is important that a final grade is only applied once all the assignments for a unit are complete.

Grading checklist

- All pass criteria must be met by a learner to be awarded a Pass grade.
- All pass and all merit criteria must be met by a learner to be awarded a Merit grade.
- All pass, all merit and all distinction criteria must be met by a learner to be awarded a Distinction grade.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment involves both the assessor and the learner in a process of **continual review** of the learner's performance in relation to the grading criteria for each unit and takes place **prior** to summative assessment. Learners are provided with feedback on their draft evidence or performance and are empowered to act to improve. This process could be used to enable learners to progress to higher grades through their programme.

Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is carried out in order to make **final** judgements about the learner's performance in relation to the grading criteria of each unit. It is the **definitive assessment** and the learner's achievement must be measured against national standards.

Signpost 14 - Internal Verification

Centre Internal Verification (IV) assures the quality and consistency of assessment and the correct interpretation of the unit grading criteria in BTEC specifications are being correctly interpreted and applied. A centre agrees the following internal assessment procedures at approval:

- That learners' work is reviewed and judged by assessors.
- To quality assure assessors' decisions by appointing an **Internal Verifier**. This role ensures that all assessment decisions are accurate, valid, fair and consistent.
- A senior manager responsible for managing quality has oversight of assessment.

Every programme team member is subject to the IV process and must make work available to the internal verifier at a planned time, act on identified actions promptly, and take responsibility for identified professional development.

The internal verifier manages the process. (S)he should be an experienced teacher/tutor and assessor, carry out the role in a supportive and authoritative manner and be familiar with the specification. Documentation should be produced for NSS when required, together with the appropriate BTEC specification and details of centre delivery and assessment methodology.

There are three main strands to internal verification: interpreting standards, assuring standards, and managing assessor resource. A good internal verification system will:

- Meet the requirements of NSS and CRA by making IV records available.
- Provide a standardisation process. This is part of the internal quality assurance process which enables each member of an assessment team to check their decisions are accurate and consistent.
- Take place across all BTEC units and will ensure consistency of assessment across all assessors on a programme. It actions this through confirming the structure, format and content of each internally set assignment is fit for purpose.
- Have a sampling strategy, which is sufficient to assure the quality of assessment across all units, assessors and assessment locations. Sampling size will vary according to the number of learners and the experience of assessors.
- Be supported by regular meetings and reliable records of all activities, for which templates are available on the [Edexcel website](#).
- Have a cross-centre internal verification group to share best practice.

Small BTEC centres may rely upon the services of a third party to internally verify learner work. Where this approach is used, the centre remains responsible for the programme quality and assessment outcomes. The centre must also ensure that there is a consistent offering of this service.

Please note that the number of people carrying out internal verification of assessment will depend on the size of the team. Although one person has overall responsibility, at least two people must be able to verify assessment. No person may verify their own assessment decisions.

Internal verification checklist

The IV should ensure that:

- All assessors are fully briefed on the BTEC assessment processes.
- There is an annual agreed verification schedule covering all assessors, all units and all assessment locations.
- Internal verification activity is carried out to the agreed schedule.
- Assessors must not internally verify their own work.
- Assignments are presented for internal verification before use and that any recommendations are actioned.
- Assessment decisions are internally verified. The extent of the IV sample must be sufficient to ensure the security of the standard. For NSS purposes half of the learner sample submitted must have been internally verified.
- Cross-team/site internal verification and standardisation is organised where more than one assessment team is involved.
- All evidence re-submitted after further work by learners is assessed using the relevant grading criteria.
- IV and assessment records are stored in a secure place.
- Appropriate feedback is given direct to all assessors.
- All IV records are signed and dated particularly when signing off completed actions.

Signpost 15 - Preparing for External Verification

BTEC monitors the standard of each BTEC group of level 1-3 programmes in a centre by externally verifying samples of learner work against the national standard for a qualification. The national standard must be met before certification can be permitted. The programme team should ensure that the correct NSS sample is prepared for each programme area. A programme area title (e.g. Business) groups together similar programmes that one EV samples across the titles effectively.

Correct samples for NSS units agreed with the EV should be internally assessed and at least 50% internally verified.

All sampling activity should be completed by 30 April 2010 and 31 May 2010 for re-sampling, so the scheduling of NSS samples needs to allow for any re-sampling that may be required by the EV prior to this date.

NSS checklist for centres

Quality nominee should:

- Pass all communications relating to NSS to the relevant BTEC programme managers.

Programme managers should:

- Ensure that the IV and all assessors are fully conversant with assessment and verification processes and are clear of NSS deadlines.

NSS PAT requirements:

- First Diploma/Certificates: If a centre offers the Firsts over two years then they may be seen in each year of operation. If the programme is offered over three years then only years two and three may be seen.
- National Awards, Certificates and Diplomas and short courses may have up to five units sampled across the span of the qualification.

For NSS, the centre should provide:

- A quiet room where the EV can work, if NSS is taking place via a visit.
- Copies of any documents and work required for postal sampling packaged and despatched by secure delivery to the EV by the agreed date. Centres should always retain the original work.
- Up-to-date centre contact email addresses for the EV.

Heads of Centre should:

- Ensure that reports from EVs are distributed to relevant teams and actioned.

Signpost 16 - National Standards Sampling (NSS) 2009-2010

Sampling of a PAT in 2009-2010

The sample will come from across all levels within a PAT with a maximum of five units being seen in total.

The BTEC National Awards, Certificates and Diplomas may have up to five units sampled from across the qualifications range.

Where only one First Certificate or Diploma is offered then only one unit will be sampled. However, if a centre offers the Firsts over two years then they may be seen in each year of operation. If the programme is offered over three years then only years two and three may be seen.

Where levels 1,2 and 3 and short courses straddle the levels across the PAT then units from these may also be sampled but will not exceed the maximum sample size of five units.

Manual intervention may happen if there are 'special' circumstances e.g. Multi-site centre, Consortia or short specialist programmes.

NSS of Selected Units from the identified PAT

NSS sample of one assignment brief and four associated learners' work should be presented for each selected unit.

Please ensure that internal verification has taken place on the assignment brief and 50% of each sample i.e. 2 from 4 associated learners work per selected unit sampled.

NSS on selected units for Short Course Awards is carried out once during the first year the centre is running the programme during the accredited period of the qualification.

NSS on selected units for Short Course Certificates and Diplomas is carried out once during each year the qualification is running. This covers all 'roll-on roll-off' programmes.

Signpost 17 - Timeline for NSS

1 st November 2009	Is the closing date for centres to register learners for programmes that started in September and October 2009.
By December 2009	QNs are informed of their External Verifiers (EVs) for programmes where they have registered learners. EVs should contact QNs to negotiate selected units for National Standard Sampling (NSS), and arrange for assignment briefs to be sent to them prior to sampling learner work.
January 2010 - 31 st May 2010	NSS takes place for all First Diplomas, National Awards, Certificates and Diplomas; and BTEC Short Courses including any re-sampling required.
End March 2010	QNs must check that NSS arrangements are in place for every programme to ensure that sampling has been or is taking place.
30 th April 2010	First sample of NSS must be completed and actions set where necessary.
By 31 st May 2010	QNs should check that all programmes have been sampled and that all remedial action is being undertaken promptly. By 31st May 2010, the NSS process for sampled units should be completed. This includes any re-sampling activities.
By 5 th July 2010	When programmes have achieved a release to NSS on all units and assessment is complete, results should be submitted through Edexcel Online with grades for all units to reach Edexcel by 5th July.

Signpost 18 - After NSS

National Standards Sampling (NSS) follow-up checklist

'Release' for NSS:

- The centre now has Direct Claims Status for every programme within the PAT.
- If 'release' is given to the NSS on selected unit(s) no further sampling is required.
- Advisory comments made by EV should be noted and actioned to support best practice.
- Certification can be claimed for eligible learners.

'Block' for NSS

- A 'block' indicates that the centre has not correctly assessed all learners to national standards and that some adjustment to assessment is required.
- A 'block' prevents any certificate from being issued to registered learners on ALL programmes within the PAT.
- The EV will contact the programme team to request the resample by an agreed date.
- The programme team should complete the required remedial action and despatch the resample to the EV by the agreed date.
- Where an EV has concerns at the 'assignment brief' stage, or 'initial sample' stage, (s)he will inform the Regional Quality Manager, who will discuss this with the programme leader.
- If following a resample the NSS remains 'blocked', the allocated RQM will liaise with the centre to put in place an action plan.
- If the programme staff disagree with the judgements of the EV, the head of centre should refer the matter to the BTEC Quality Standards Team at qualitystandards@edexcel.com. These matters are then usually referred to the centre's Regional Quality Manager.

Signpost 19 - Submitting Results

Claiming certificates online

There are two methods of online claiming.

EDI transmission - Learners results and certificate claims may be transmitted electronically by EDI, in which case form SRF should not be sent.

Edexcel Online - Centres may claim certification through Edexcel Online, in which case form SRF should not be sent.

For both methods the centre should refer to the Edexcel Information Manual.

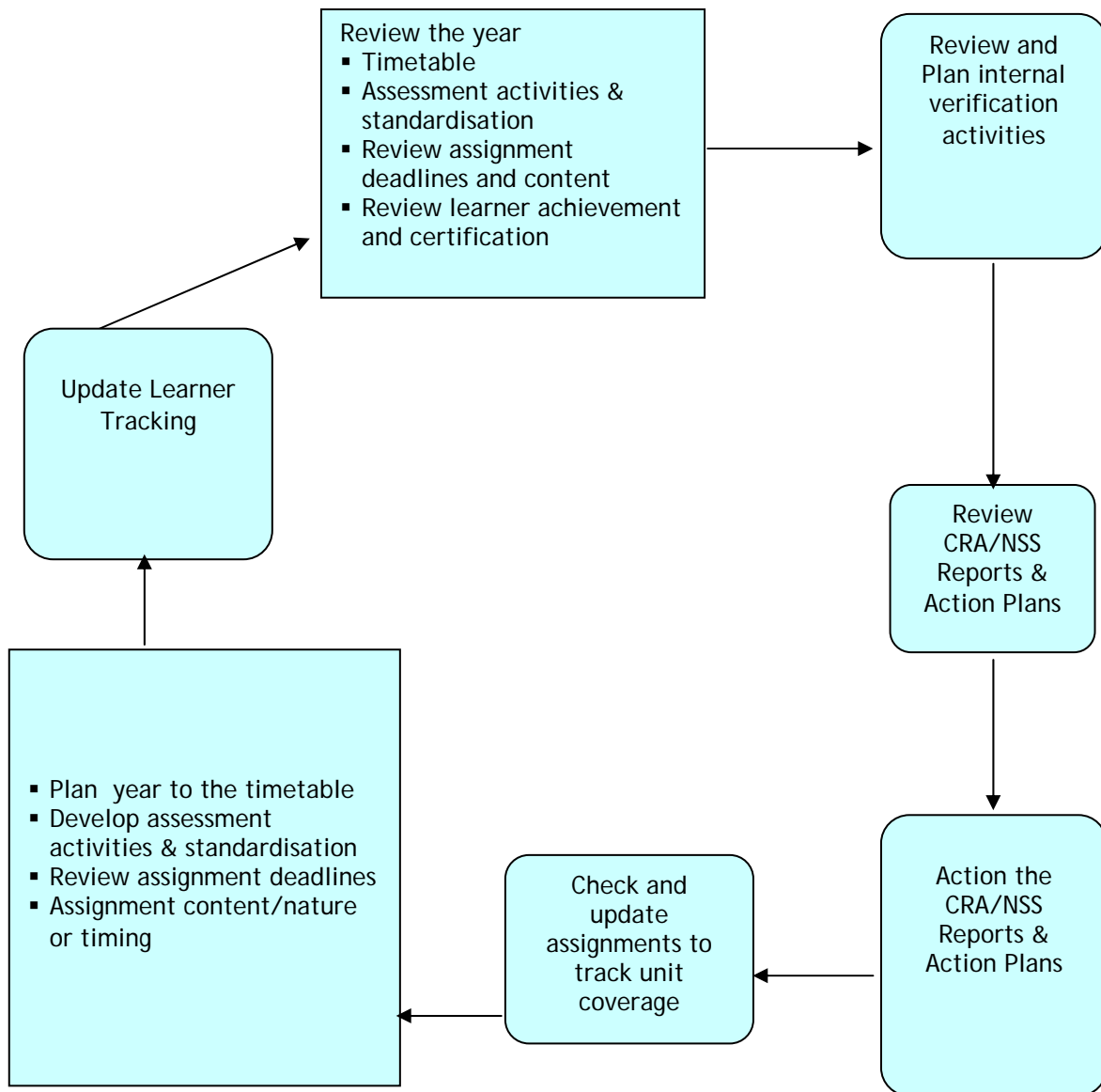
The final submission date for these are 5th July 2010 to guarantee certification in August 2010.

Submitting final SRF (if applied for)

When a 'release' is given to NSS on the internally assessed units, then the learner's SRF can be completed and submitted for certification.

The final submission date for SRFs is 5th July 2010 to guarantee certification in August 2010.

Signpost 20 - Programme Review and Planning



For more information on Edexcel and BTEC qualifications
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