



The Interreg V-A Latvia – Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2014-2020 aims to contribute to the sustainable and cohesive socio-economic development of the Programme regions by helping to make them competitive and attractive for living, working and visiting.

Viešoji įstaiga Panevėžio profesinio rengimo
centras/
Public institution Panevėžys vocational
education and training centre



BTEC Centre Manual

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Public institution Panevėžys vocational education and training centre, 2020

Content

1.	Introduction	3	
2.	General Information	4	
3.	Positions and duties	5	
3.1.	Positions at the Centre's management level.....	5	
3.2.	Positions at the program level	7	
3.3.	Policy on prevention of conflicts of interest.....	9	
4.	Learner Registration and certification procedures.....	10	
4.1.	Registration.....	10	
4.2.	Enrollment	11	
4.3.	Transfer.....	11	
4.4.	Changes	11	
4.5.	Support for Learners	11	
4.6.	Ensuring Equal Opportunities	12	
4.7.	The Centre's policy supports the application of measures for learners with special needs	13	
4.8.	Certification	14	
4.9.	The process of applying for and verifying learners ' certification:.....	15	
4.10.	Document storage	15	
5.	Evaluation	15	
5.1.	Evaluation plan	16	
5.2.	Evaluation Documents.....	17	
5.3.	Absence	17	
5.4.	Inspection work	17	
5.5.	Evaluation	18	
5.6.	Formative evaluation	19	
5.7.	Summative evaluation	19	
5.8.	Late submission of inspection work	19	
5.9.	Resubmission.....	19	
5.10.	Repeating themes.....	20	
5.11.	Subject Certification	20	
6.	Internal valuation policies and procedures	21	
6.1.	Purpose of internal valuation	21	
6.2.	Internal valuation Planning.....	22	
6.3.	Internal evaluation of the audit work tasks.....	22	
6.4.	Internal review of assessment decisions	23	
7.	Submission and examination of appeals.....	26	
8.	Plagiarism, academic violations and abusive behaviour	27	
8.1.	Inadequate behaviour of learners.....	28	
8.2.	Breaches of assessor/personnel	30	
8.3.	Irregularities in the administration process	31	
9.	Complaint Handling procedures	33	
9.1.	Learners ' Complaint handling procedure.....	34	
10.	Unforeseen kicks and adverse effects prevention procedures	35	
11.	Educational Safety and health policy	38	
12.	Recruitment procedure	38	

1. Introduction

Welcome to the manual of Viešoji įstaiga Panevėžio profesinio rengimo centras/ Public institution Panevėžys vocational education and training centre (further – PPRC).

About Public institution Panevėžys vocational education and training centre. PPRC is a well – known and recognized provider of initial and continuous vocational education and training in North and East part of Lithuania.

The shareholders of PPRC are ministry of Education, Sports and Science of Lithuania and Panevėžys chamber of commerce, crafts and industry that allows following and meeting the newest needs of the labour market requirements for the skilled workers.

PPRC offers wide spectrum of specialities that covers the main business sectors such as construction, agriculture, mechanics and mechatronics, IT and services. Here people could acquire the following specialities: decorator, wood processing machine operator, car mechanics, car electromechanics, welders, plumbers, electricians, hairdressers, masseurs, cosmetics, make –up artist, agricultural workers, computer software adjusters, computer network adjusters and etc. Education is provided not only in various business sectors but also in different qualification levels. PPRC offers basic education, secondary education, social skills programme for pupils with special needs as well as a high number of programmes for adults in form of continuous education.

The majority of pupils and adults coming to learn at PPRC are from Panevėžys city and region municipalities and the areas within 100 km radius. According to the long – term statistics over 60 percent of PPRC graduates are employed in companies located in Panevėžys region.

In 2013 PPRC was provided with quality certificate which states that PPRC meets the requirements of ISO 9001:2015. PPRC actively participates in various projects and gained experience uses for improving teaching quality. PPRC has close cooperation with other VET schools in Lithuania and other countries as well as with labour market representatives.

All staff of PPRC constantly raise qualifications and renew knowledge in various seminars in Lithuania or abroad because they try to present the newest technical and technological knowledge, to present the contemporary technique or non-traditional teaching techniques to their students in order to provide skilled labour for to the market. It is worth mentioning that vocational education and training is divided to 70 percent of practical training at school or at work place and only 30 percent is intended for theoretical part.

About the project. PPRC together with two partners – Ventspils Vocational College and Regional Innovation Management Center implemented the project “Deployment of high standards of knowledge, practical skills and understanding required for better employment in the regions” (Deploy-Skills), No. LLI-415 funded by Interreg V-A Latvia–Lithuania Cross Border Cooperation Programme 2014–2020.

The project aimed to help employed adults adapt to the rapidly changing technological environment and improve their social skills. The project encouraged students to gain skills which will help them to develop their career and increase employment possibilities. The acquired and recognized abilities and skills of the learners ensure their smooth integration into the labour market. During the implementation of the project, PPRC introduced internationally recognized standards and global practice will be introduced, which would allow the educational institution to offer students internationally recognized programs and after successful acquisition of which internationally recognized BTEC certificate could be received.

- The project was implemented from June 2018 to May 2021.
- Total project size is 221 490 EUR. Out of them co-funding of European Regional Development Fund is 188 267 EUR.

About BTEC and Centre manual. BTEC - Business & Technology Education Board in the UK, which grants BTEC qualifications. BTEC currently offers to acquire around 2000 qualifications in 16 sectors and is available from the starting level to professional qualifications at level 7 (equivalent

to postgraduate studies). The programmes can be studied in internationally accredited BTEC centres, which PPRC has also become.

BTEC qualifications are based on practical studies, which means that learners acquire knowledge and skills in a specific subject, then apply these skills to real-life scenarios. The programmes are based on real-world labour requirements and employers' needs to help programme learners successfully enter the labour market and build their careers.

A Centre Manual has been developed for PPRC as a BTEC centre, which summarises the most important regulatory documents for the activities of the Centre.

The manual is prepared with the aim of providing support to staff involved in the implementation of BTEC training programmes and the acquisition of qualifications selected for the assessment of educational achievements, as well as to inform the public about the quality standards of the PPRC.

This manual is subject to revisions and changes and it is reviewed each academic year to reflect any changes to the BTEC courses being offered.

2. General information

Welcome to PPRC BTEC Guide. This document has been developed, taking into account that PPRC offers students to learn **THE BTEC “Work Skills”** programme and obtain a Level 3 certificate.

Pearson's Level 3 certificate on “Work Skills” is for those who want to get a job after completing training/studies. The programme shall provide students with the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to prepare for employment. Qualifications also provide career development opportunities for those who already work, enabling students to see clearly the link between theoretical knowledge and the world of work, enabling them to apply their studies, skills and knowledge in the context of work and case analysis.

Program size - 180 hours for which 6 topics are learned:

- Career development
- Strategies to improve job interview skills
- Personal skills for leadership
- Presentations for Work
- Skills for a Portfolio career
- Critical thinking

The programme shall include a balance between the development of practical skills and the acquisition of theoretical knowledge. Teachers and internal verifiers should ensure that an appropriate link is established between theory and practice and that the knowledge base is used in practice. This will require the development of appropriate and up-to-date learning materials to allow learners to apply learned practical activities, as well as the maximum use of educational experience.

All topics to acquire a qualification are assessed internally within the institution. These qualification topics shall be assessed by combining internal and external assessments. The evaluation shall be the process of measuring the work of the learners in order to obtain reliable results.

The purpose of this manual is to provide support to staff involved in the planning, presentation and evaluation of this course. Since the achievements of learners are assessed internally in the BTEC programme, it is important to adhere to uniform rules in order to ensure that all personal involved in the implementation of the programme comply with the procedures laid down in the implementation of the programme, assessment and accounting of learners' achievements, as well as the proper and thorough completion and storage of the required documentation.

The staff should familiarise themselves with the content of the manual at the beginning of the programme in order to ensure that the programme is implemented in accordance with the quality requirements of the BTEC centre.

At the beginning of a new school year, it is recommended that the contents of the Manual be reviewed and modified.

All members of staff teaching the BTEC programmes should have access to the latest and up to date electronic version of this Manual. If the Manual is updated, the notice should be sent to all involved staff members and the latest version then should be applied to everyone.

The manual guide harmonises the approval of the BTEC courses using the Edexcel online system. The electronic version of the acknowledgement certificate shall be stored at the Examinations Officer.

Only the Examinations Officer and the Quality Nominee have access to Edexcel.

At the beginning of each school year, acquaintance meeting should be organised for all learners. During this meeting students meet with the representatives of the PPRC, who presents them with PPRC, explains everything they need to know about the rules and give answers to their questions. Learners may also find the necessary information in this manual.

All learners shall be informed of the rules of internal procedures of the BTEC Centre and the consequences of non-compliance thereof. These rules are also available in all classrooms. Any infringement or case of unlawful conduct shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedures laid down for academic misconduct and malpractice (see section 8).

Section 7 of this manual contains information on the appeal process. The documents of appeal shall be kept with the assessor concerned.

After four weeks of the beginning of the course, students must be registered in the selected programme. Examinations officer shall then coordinate with the Quality Expert the BTEC programmes what will be implemented. The Quality Expert shall provide this information to the responsible of the BTEC centre for approval and shall electronically send a list of the learners of each group the managers of the BTEC programmes, who shall ensure that all necessary information has been provided, as well as the corresponding programme number. Any changes shall be coordinated with the Examinations Officer and the Quality Expert.

All registration documents are processed by (date) _ _ _ _ _

All BTEC courses have an implementation plan for the Programme indicating which topics will be presented and at which time. This plan reflects when topics will be planned, presented, performed evaluation of student achievements and internal coordination of inspection works and evaluations have to be done.

In order to promote comprehensive awareness of the BTEC programmes, all information about the BTEC courses and evaluation methods shall be made available to staff in electronic form and in the form of a copy in the personal section. The staff shall be familiar with these requirements and shall comply with them.

All the procedures developed by PPRC are up to date and are regularly reviewed.

Further development of qualifications in BTEC programmes shall be provided to learners.

The number of training hours specified by Edexcel must be taken into account when including BTEC in the training plan.

3. Positions and responsibilities

3.1. Positions at centre management level

Head of the Centre – Kazimieras Tautvaišas

Quality nominee – Gita Grigienė

Examinations officer – Justina Čivilytė

Head of the Centre

This person ensures the operation of the centre in accordance with the requirements and conditions of the BTEC:

- Provide the necessary means and materials of training.
- Perform careful selection and recording of learners.
- Ensure the conduct of training and examination processes in accordance with all Pearson quality assessment requirements.
- Make sure that all applications for certificates are properly drawn up and stored in a safe place.
- Provide the necessary staff, with appropriate qualifications, to carry out the monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance of the implementation of the programme.
- Make sure that, in line with the needs of the programme, the Centre has all the necessary equipment, infrastructure and means of training. Regular inspections shall be performed in order to gain confidence that equipment is on the agenda, students and staff shall have full access to equipment, facilities and means of training.
- Make sure that staff have access to the most up-to-date information on the Centre's and Pearson's procedures through e-mail lists and staff or management meetings.
- Delegates duties to the quality expert.
- Communicates with the Quality Nominee who will act as a contact with Pearson
- Maintain an informative link with the Quality Expert to ensure that all processes related to the implementation of the Programme are carried out as effectively as possible
- Provides the necessary support to the Quality Expert to ensure the implementation of the recommendations, in line with the Pearson Quality Assessment Reports.

Other responsibilities:

- Review complaints of learners that cannot be resolved by the training programme implementation team.
- Examine the signs of unlawful conduct among both trainees and employees.
- Communicate with the Pearson administration in the event of serious problems or irregularities related to the integrity and security of the common BTEC programmes.

Quality Nominee

This person is the main contact for information related to quality assurance of BTEC quality requirements. The Quality Nominee shall receive regular information from Pearson about all aspects of BTEC's, which he must share with the relevant staff in the centre.

Responsibilities:

- Updates Quality Nominee details on Edexcel Online.
- Keeps an informative contact with Pearson.
- Communicate with the Centre's management to ensure effective implementation of processes.
- The initial contact with Pearson Standard Verifiers who will makes sure that they are put in touch with the relevant Lead Internal Verifier to conduct sampling.
- Puts actions in place to respond to the Standards Verifiers' reports.
- Communicate with the Centre's staff and the Pearson staff to ensure that:
- All programmes are approved and registrations are accurate and up-to-date.
- Pearson approval conditions and policy requirements are being implemented consistently and effectively.

- All staff are aware of all support and guidance available and understand requirements.
- Assessment and internal verification is effective on all BTEC programmes.
- The programme manager has been assigned to each programme.

Examinations officier

This person takes responsibility for the correct administration of learners with Pearson. The examinations officier is the administrator of the Edexcel Online system, which provides direct access for learner administration.

Responsibilities:

- Contact the programme managers to maintain information on which programmes are running and when they start and finish.
- Register the learners, within 60 days of the introduction into the programme (higher costs are provided for late registration).
- Ensures that the given name and surname at registration is correct (the name and surname given at registration will be printed on the certificate).
- Register learners onto the correct programs checking that these are the specific titles and versions that learners are following.
- Check registrations carefully to ensure that all data is correct and follow correct procedures if amendments are required.
- Give Edexcel Online access to the Quality Nominee.
- Give Edexcel Online basic access to all other BTEC staffs necessary and make sure only authorized members of staff have access to Edexcel Online.

3.2. Jobs at programme level

Programme Leader–Rita Kriaupienė

Internal Verifiers –Gražina Aperavičienė, Eglė Petrauskė, Vilija Karietienė, Eugenija Susnienė, Vaida Kučinskienė

Assessors - Gražina Aperavičienė, Eglė Petrauskė, Vilija Karietienė, Eugenija Susnienė, Vaida Kučinskienė

Program Leader

The Programme Leader takes overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of the BTEC programme in accordance with the requirements of BTEC qualification.

Responsibilities:

- Contact the Quality Expert to inform and obtain information on changes and quality assurance requirements.
- Communicate effectively with the Examinations Officier in order to ensure accuracy of the registration and certification of learners for the programme.
- Contact with the programme implementation staff to confirm assessment and internal verification schedules.
- Liaise with the relevant Pearson appointed staff undertaking quality assurance.
- Monitor the progress of the implementation of the programme, carry out of the necessary documentation and procedures and their documentation.

- Support the students in an appropriate and useful manner and scope according to their request or need.
- Provides the resources needed to implement the programme.
- Ensure that programme staff has necessary and appropriate qualifications and competence to deliver the programme.
- Review the reports on the implementation of the programme, the results of the checks and take appropriate measures to implement recommendations and improve the quality of the implementation of the programme.

Internal verifiers (IV)

Internal verification is a quality assurance system to monitor assessment of the achievements of learners and the decisions taken. The internal verifier is the central to the quality of BTEC programs. His or her job is to ensure that the work of an internally evaluated educatee consistently complies with the national standards, as well as lead to the professional development of staff and the improvement of the quality of the implementation of the programme. An internal verifier (IV) team has to be created for each application, which ensures the reasonability and accuracy of decision-making. The team shall consist of staff working in the relevant training programme. The qualifications of the staff must be adequate for the programme to be implemented and the qualifications to be granted. This is necessary to ensure the assessment of the skills of learners in accordance with the criteria specified in the programme.

Internal verifiers shall initiate regular meetings with the Programme Manager and the staff involved in the implementation of the Programme to share best practices and discuss issues.

Responsibilities:

- Agree an assessment and verification plan for each programme.
- Check the quality of the assessment instruments to ensure they are fit for the purpose to be achieved.
- Ensure an effective system of recording learner achievement is in place.
- Keep accurate and up-to-date records of internal verification processes.
- Advise on the appropriateness of the assessment evidence with regard to level, sufficiency, authenticity, validity and consistency.
- Support the students in an appropriate and useful manner and scope according to their request or need.
- Examine the assessment tasks and assessment decisions, ensuring their consistency, fairness and reliability, and ensure that corrective action is taken where necessary.
- Take part in the formal stages of any appeal.

Assessors

The assessors are responsible for the assessment of the learners.

Responsibilities:

- Read and understand the content of the programme, results to be achieved, assessment criteria and implementation requirements of the programme and each unit.
- Agree with internal verifiers and the Programme Manager on an assessment and verification plan for each programme ensuring that it includes the required units.
- Teach learners the necessary knowledge and skills required to achieve the qualification.
- Design assessment activities which guide learners to produce evidence that meets the targeted learning aims and assessment criteria, using the associated assessment guidance to provide sufficient coverage of unit content.

- Include all the assessment criteria specified in the unit.
- Provide learners with a formative feedback on work in progress, identifying areas for the improvement.
- Ensure opportunities for plagiarism are minimized and that learner's work is authentic.
- Provide summative assessment of the completed work submitted by learners, checking authenticity and sufficiency of evidence produced against the relevant learning aims, assessment criteria and unit content.
- Accurately record all summative assessment decisions.
- Follow up any advice from the Internal Verifier.
- Support the learners in an appropriate and useful manner and scope.

3.3. Conflicts of Interest

All the staff of PPRC follows the laws of the Republic of Lithuania on the reconciling of private and public interest as well as the orders of the director of PPRC in order to identify, manage and reduce conflicts of interest. All staff and others have an obligation to be aware of the possibility of a conflict of interest.

These documents are designed to ensure the integrity of the activities of PPRC as A BTEC centre and to protect employees by providing guidance on potential conflicts of interest that may arise due to the role of the Authority in the implementation of BTEC programmes.

According the law it is defined:

- what conflict of interest means.
- potential conflict of interest cases.
- established obligations for the prevention of potential conflict of interest situations.

These documents apply to all employees and other persons associated with any activity related to the assignment of qualifications, testing and assessments, and aspects related to resources and services.

Conflict of interest: a situation in which the staff of the BTEC centre must take a decision or take part in a decision in the performance of their duties or take other activities related to their duties which affect or may affect the interests of the staff or its relatives.

Conflicts of interest can arise in a variety of situations relating to awarding organization activity, for example:

- When an individual has a position of authority in one organization that conflicts with his or her interests in another organization.
- When an individual has interests that conflict with his or her professional position.
- Where someone works for or carries out work on Pearson's behalf, but may have personal interests – paid or unpaid – in another business which either uses Pearson products or services, or produces similar products.
- Where someone works for or carries out work on Pearson's behalf, who has friends or relatives taking Pearson assessment or examinations.

Prevention of potential conflict of interest situations

Management responsibilities of the educational institution:

- Review the processes annually to ensure that any conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest is managed and resolved.
- Make sure that the person's commitments to the programme to be implemented are clearly defined.
- Make sure that anyone with access to a confidential rating material for qualification understands the importance of content confidentiality.

- Make sure all employees announce their interest in the results of examinations by friends or family members.

Responsibilities of the Programme Manager:

- Inform the staff involved in the implementation of the programme, at the beginning of the preparatory phase, of the policy of conflict of interest and the area of their responsibility on an annual basis.
- Document any potential or real conflict of interest.
- Prevent potential conflict of interests from reporting to the management of the educational institution if this is not possible to avoid.

Staff responsibilities:

- The staff of PPRC should be familiar with the policy of preventing conflicts of interest, and the necessary training should be carried out in the event of conflict of interest.
- Documentation for preventing conflicts of interest is needed to be examined each year.
- Staff should, in the event of a conflict of interest concern, contact the Programme Manager or the management of the BTEC Centre.
- The employee is not allowed to perform any activities that might be considered to be competing or conflicting with the activities of PPRC.
- Staff and other persons must inform the management of the BTEC centre of all students who are registered in the programme and who are family members, other relatives or friends before commencing the implementation of the programme.

4. Procedures for the Registration and Certification of Learners

AIM:

- To ensure accurate and safe registration of the learners and ensure they have fulfilled all respective requirement in order to claim valid certificate.
- To ensure that this process is transparent from the beginning of training until the issue of certificate.
- To ensure equality and diversity among the students and support those who would otherwise be disadvantaged.
- To ensure all record and assessment decisions are stored securely for three years.

In order to ensure the above, the Centre will ensure the following:

4.1. Registration

1. Learners must be registered accurate and timely in the chosen programme.
2. The identification of the student must be verified at the time of registration.
3. All lists of students must be sent to the Examinations Officer, indicating:
 - Full title of the qualification/program to be studied.
 - Name of student (s) to be registered.
 - Date of birth of student (s) to be registered.
4. The Examination Officer must register the learners via the Edexcel system within one month of being admitted.
5. To check the accuracy of the data of the learners:

- The examination officer shall approve the list of the group and send it to the responsible staff including teachers.
 - Teachers shall check the accuracy of the recording data of the learners, sign the list of the group and deliver it back to the Examination Officer for storing.
 - The lists of learners are reviewed periodically to ensure that it is accurate and up-to-date.
6. Each learners shall ascertain the status of his or her registration.
 7. The meetings of the staff implementing the programme shall contain information regarding long-term absences of the learners, such learners shall be given additional attention and the necessary support shall be provided.
 8. The Examination Officer responsible for informing Pearson, if changes have been made to the register of the learners, in connection with the withdrawal of the learner, the transfer or for other reasons.
 9. The data of the withdrawn learners should be removed from the Edexcel Online Registry as soon as possible.
 10. Students who have been withdrawn from the educational programme have the right to be admitted back to the group again.

4.2. Withdrawals

1. Students who have stopped learning in the program, namely not completing training, should be excluded from the Edexcel Online registration system at the earliest opportunity.
2. Students who have been withdrawn have the right to be admitted back in the programme.

4.3. Transfers

1. The transfer of students from one programme to another at the same centre is allowed only to approved programmes which are currently open for registrations.
The Centre must ensure that the student is able to complete the program on to which transfer is made. The transfer process shall also include measures for the validation of the knowledge and assessment acquired under the previous programme.
2. The learner has the right to be switched to another BTEC centre and continue the training in the selected programme, including a change of registration. In order to be granted a certificate for the acquisition of the programme, the Centre must specify all the topics learned by the learner. Prior to transfer it is essential that a comparison of units previous undertaken is made against the requirement of the new programme. The learner must be informed of the additional work that will be necessary to do to fully comply with the requirements of the receiving centre. The initial BTEC centre must ensure that all information on completed units are notified to Pearson and that all the relevant assessment records are passed to the receiving centre. and the resulting assessments are communicated to Pearson and transferred to the receiving centre.

4.4. Changes

Any changes and corrections of mistakes of registered learners details must be corrected as soon as possible and before claiming certificates.

4.5. Support for learners

1. In line with the fundamental values of PPRC, the basic principles of ethical, legality, equality, security, timeliness, fairness, transparency and simplicity will be respected when implementing the policy to support learners.

2. Purpose

In order to ensure that support for learners is provided in accordance with the principles set out above, our aim is to ensure that:

- Interested parties shall be provided with relevant information and guidance on the content, evaluation and requirements of each programme before applying for the programme, so that they can effectively choose study programmes.
- Information on the available range of support services and how to use these services shall be provided to students.
- The level and amount of support provided would be in line with the needs of the individual, the type of programme selected and the resources/funding available.
- The needs of individual learners are identified at the beginning of their study programme and, through an individual training plan, provide adequate resources and/or strategies to respond effectively to these needs.
- Individual support of the Program Teacher is available (according to the type of visit).
- Consultation on social and financial matters is available.
- Reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the needs of learners are met at each stage of the education programme.

3. Monitoring

The management of the BTEC Centre shall receive reports from the Programme Manager regarding the necessary support for the learners and it should be provided as fast as possible.

4.6. Ensuring equal opportunities

Definition of equal opportunities

Equal opportunities are defined as: ensuring equal rights, privileges and status regardless of sex, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, origin, opportunities, disability or social status.

Objective:

Ensure that standards relating to equal opportunities are consistent, transparent and in line with the requirements of Pearson and PPRC.

Ensure that there are no artificial barriers to any BTEC programme in PPRC and that BTEC programmes at all stages of planning, implementation and evaluation of the work of learners include:

- available to anyone who can reach the required standard.
- no barriers limiting progress in learning achievements.
- without open or hidden discriminatory treatment in relation to age, colour, belief, religion, ethnic origin, race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, special origin, social status, abilities or disability.
- supporting the specific requirements of individuals, including those of students who may need support for the commencement of training and in the evaluation process.
- without any restrictions not specified by law.

Ensuring equal opportunities for learners:

- The BTEC Centre should always strive to ensure equal opportunities for all stakeholders to be admitted to and acquired in the selected programme.
- Admission to a group will be ensured on the basis of applications, without exceeding the permitted number of students in the group.
- Use multilateral methods in the evaluation process to ensure that all learners can fully reflect their knowledge and experience and be fairly evaluated.
- The educational achievements of all learners shall be evaluated in accordance with the specified evaluation criteria.
- The Centre shall always take appropriate measures to avoid adverse situations for learners with special needs.

- The Centre shall analyse and monitor data and processes relating to the achievements of learners in order to diagnose and prevent conditions which may lead to random bias and inequity.

Responsibilities:

- Quality expert: responsible for policy exhibition, updating.
- Quality expert and Programme Manager: responsible for compliance with policy rules.

Responsibilities of the quality expert:

Ensure that all education programme leaders and internal verifiers are familiar with the enrolment rules in the relevant programmes and ensure that the enrolment of learners takes place in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

Responsibility of the Programme Manager:

- Treat all learners with equal respect regardless of sex, age, race, religion, sexual orientation, opportunities, disability or social origin.
- Provide equal opportunities for all learners to acquire BTEC training programmes
- Prevent any form of prejudice and/or discrimination in PPRC.

4.7. The Centre's policy in the application of support measures to students with special needs

1. This policy shall determine the procedures that students and trainers should follow when making justified adjustments in accordance with the special needs of the educatee.

2. Justified adjustments

Justified adjustments shall help to reduce the effects of disability or learning difficulties which create adverse conditions for the educatee in the assessment situation.

Adjustments and support measures must not affect the reliability of the evaluation results, but may include:

- changes to the normal valuation procedure.
- adaptation of proof materials.
- provision of assistance at the time of the evaluation.
- rearrangement of the physical environment during assessment.
- change or adaptation of the assessment method.
- use of assistive technologies.

3. The need for reasoned adjustments should be assessed and confirmed before the evaluation process begins for the Internal Evaluator/Program Manager.

Work performed through adjustments should be assessed in the same way as other learners' work.

4. The adjustments must never affect the credibility of the assessment, the result of the evaluation or give the educatee(s) concerned an advantage of unfair valuation.

5. Examples of justified adjustments defined in the above categories are listed below.

- The possibility to use additional time to perform tasks.
- Use of another assessment site.
- Use of colour coatings, visual aids, video surveillance devices.
- Use of assistive software.
- Assessment material in large format or Braille.
- The use of readers.
- Practical assistants/translators.
- Assessment material in colour paper or audio format.
- Language modified evaluation material.

6. Application of justified adjustments

PPRC is responsible for applying the adjustments. Prior to the assessment, the Programme Manager shall approve justified adjustments and the purpose thereof shall be to enable an educatee with special needs to prove what has been achieved. In order to qualify for reasonable adjustments, the student does not have to be disabled; however, any student with disabilities will not have the right to make reasonable adjustments.

7. PPRC supports equal opportunities for all students. A reasonable adjustment is intended to allow everyone to obtain an assessment, but can only be granted if the adaptation:

- does not affect the validity or reliability of the assessment.
- do not give the educatee (s) concerned an unfair advantage over other learners.
- the final outcome of the assessment decision shall not be affected.

8. PPRC has committed to fairly and uniformly evaluating all students.

9. Unexpected and special cases

Special cases differ from justified adjustments, as they relate to adverse conditions occurring to the educatee just before or during the assessment. The reasons why special attention should be paid could include:

- Temporary disease.
- Injuries.
- Adverse conditions at the time of the assessment.

10. An educatee may apply for an extension of a special case if:

- Their performance in the assessment is affected by circumstances that cannot be affected by the educatee, such as a recent personal illness, accident, loss of relatives, serious disturbances during the assessment.
- The alternative assessment measures agreed prior to the evaluation have proved inappropriate or insufficient
- Any part of the assessment is overdue due to circumstances that cannot be affected by the student.

11. All applications for a special case may be submitted only on a case-by-case basis, so individual applications must be submitted to each student.

12. An educatee may apply for the application of a special case at or after the assessment period, but may not apply for a special case application in the event of persistent disability or learning difficulties. The extent of the adjustment will depend on the conditions during the assessment and will reflect the difficulties encountered by the student.

4.8. Certification

1. Full qualification certification or credit certification is claimed via the Edexcel Online system or physically in writing using student reporting forms (SRF). Claims can be made at any time of the year, but paper-based claims for August certification should be received by the 5th of July.

2. In order to ensure timely receipt of certificates, the Programme Manager must submit the results of the programme to the Examinations Officer by the 30th of June. The deadline for recording results in the Edexcel system is July 5 and the failure to submit these results on time may result in late certification for students.

3. The Pearson administration should be required to apply for August certification by the 5th July. Failure to comply with time limits shall result in delayed certification for learners.

4. When certificates are received by the Examinations Officer, they are checked against reported results and any anomalies will result in the certificate not being issued.

5. The Examinations Officer, the Quality Nominee and the management of the Centre must ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records.

6. Before requesting certification, the Programme Manager must make sure that:

- The educatee has acquired all the topics of the programme;
- The internal verifier, in cooperation with the assessors, has confirmed all the assessments;
- All necessary internal inspection procedures have been carried out;

- All amendments/actions identified in the standard verification report have been made, e.g. the report requires the Centre to verify other assessments and to improve their performance, etc.

4.9. The process of applying for and verifying the certification of learners:

1. Before claiming certification for any student, the following must be completed:
 - The learner must have completed all necessary components of the course.
 - All grades must be checked by the Internal Verifier in consultation with the relevant assessors to ensure accuracy. Any outstanding Internal Verification procedures must have been carried out.
 - Any amendments/ actions as identified with the standards verification report, have been carried out, e.g. the report requires the centre to check other assessments, learners to improve work etc.
2. Certificates received from Pearson shall be checked before being issued to the educatees. The Examinations Officer must verify them prior to issue them to the Programme Leader, who must check their compliance with the evaluation protocols. Any inconsistencies shall be reported to the Quality Nominee and the Examinations Officer, who in turn informs the Pearson administration.

4.10. Storage of records

The BTEC Centre shall ensure that all documents are stored safely and shall inform the Quality Nominee where this is.

A second set of records is to be given to Quality Nominee within two months of the final certification and safely stored in PPRC archives following the laws of the Republic of Lithuania.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Examinations Officer:** responsible for timely, accurate and valid registration, transfer, withdrawal and certificate claims for learners.
- **Programme Leader:** responsible for ensuring learners details held by Pearson are accurate and that audit trail of learner assessment and achievement is accessible.
- **Quality Nominee:** responsible for coordinating and monitoring the learner details held with Pearson.
- **Head of the Centre:** supervise the registration, transfer from one programme to another, withdrawal and certificate claims for learners to ensure that awarding body deadlines are met.

5. Assessment

AIM:

- To ensure that the assessment methodology is valid, reliable and does not disadvantage or advantage any group of learners or individuals.
- To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and free from bias and to national standards.
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ABOVE, THE CENTRE WILL:

1. Use assessment procedures that minimize the opportunity for malpractice (see Section 8: Plagiarism, academic misconduct and malpractice).
2. Maintain accurate and detailed records of assessment decisions.
3. Establishing and following internal verification procedures, which includes internal verification of assignments and assessment decisions (see Section 6 „Internal verification“ for more information).

The summative Assessment feedback form and Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions form will always be used for these purposes (see Annexes).

4. Provide samples for standards verification/external examination as required (see Section 6 for more details: “Internal verification”).
5. Assessors will undertake all necessary measures recommended by the Internal Verifiers or External Examiners (see Section 6 “Internal Check” for more information).
6. Ensure that the BTEC assessment methodology and the role of the assessor are understood by all BTEC staff. This will be ensured by distribution of this manual, meetings and seminars, if necessary.
7. The center will verify and authenticate student identification during the assessment process.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- **Programme Leader:** shall be responsible for managing the programme delivery and assessment of the learners, to ensure coverage of all units and grading criteria. The programme leader is also responsible for authorizing resubmissions.
- **Assessor:** responsible for carrying out assessment to criteria and requirements of the programme responsible for carrying out assessment to national standards and verifying student identification during the assessment process. The assessor provides feedback to students; assures the authenticity of the students' work; records and tracks achievement, and undertakes any remedial action required by Internal Verifiers or External Examiners.
- **Internal Verifier:** responsible for carrying out assessment to national standards and verifying student identification during the assessment process. The assessor provides feedback to students; assures the authenticity of the students' work; records and tracks achievement, and undertakes any remedial action required by Internal Verifiers or External Examiners.
- **Assessment Board:** a panel that reviews and confirms all summative assessment decisions, and has the authority to authorize resubmissions and repeating of units. They review cases of cheating and plagiarism and make recommendations on extenuating circumstances. The Board holds meetings at the end of each semester or more often, if necessary. These meetings are minuted and the minutes are to be made available to the External Examiner upon request.

5.1. Assessment plan

1. At the start of the programme the program team will create a clear and accurate assessment plan in the form of a filled-in standardized spreadsheet (see Annex).
2. The assessment plan will be so composed as to ensure that students are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose, to enable them to produce appropriate evidence for assessment.
3. When producing this plan, the assessment team will consider:
 - The time required for the training and standardization of the assessment team.
 - The time required for the teaching each subject and carrying out of assessment.
 - The expected completion dates for all assignments.
 - Who is acting as Internal Verifier for each assignment and the date by which the assignment needs to be verified.
 - Possible dates for resubmission.
4. Annual assessment plans must be signed off on by the Program Leader.
5. Internal Verifier(s) monitor(s) that assessment plans are in place to ensure full coverage of the qualification.
6. All assessment plans, work submitted by students and assessment decisions will always be recorded, safely stored and monitored throughout the program.
7. The evaluation plans should include:
 - the list of assessors and the units they are assessing.
 - a list of internal verifiers and a timetable if internal verification.
 - confirmation of the students registered on the programme.
 - dates of issue and submission of tasks;

- dates of approval of assessment;
- dates when reassessment can be done.

5.2. Assessment records

1. The Programme Leader will keep both internal and external assessment records for at least 3 years after certification. The main records are:
 - Verification of Assignment Briefs.
 - Students authentication declarations.
 - Assessor decisions on assignments with feedback given to students.
 - Verification of assessment decisions.
 - A form for matching the tasks of the inspection work;
 - the assessors' decisions on the results of the learners and the comments provided;
 - Any substantial additional document.
2. The Programme Leader shall keep all the work of the learners for at least 12 weeks after the certification has taken place.
3. The Centre shall ensure the protection of the students' assessment records. The premises where that documentation is stored shall not be available to the unauthorised. All valuation documents and other important documents are stored in a locked room. Nobody is authorized or permitted to carry any documents outside the room except with written permission from the Head of the Centre.
4. All documents and up-to-date student details will be securely stored in compliance with Personal Data Protection Regulations.
5. All relevant assessment records must be entered into Edexcel in accordance with its rules.
6. All documentation must be secure against hazards like theft and fire, etc. Data will only be accessible by relevant staff.

5.3. Absence from Class

1. Attendance is mandatory. If a student misses 20% or more due to illness, they have to present a slip from their family doctor and communicate with the teacher of the given unit as to how to make up for the missed lesson. The teacher may assign extra work either in class or outside the classroom.
2. If there are other valid reasons for the absence of the learner, they must submit Extenuating Circumstances Form. Cases of extensive absence will be dealt with individually.

5.4. Assignments

1. For internally assessed units the format of assessment is an assignment taken after the content of the unit, or part of the unit if several assignments are used, has or have been fully delivered.
2. The test work must have practical professional focus and meet the criteria for evaluating the subject. It is desirable to use a variety of assessment methods. For a full list of assessment methods, see Annex.
3. Assignment brief is a document issued to students at the start of the assessment process. There is a separate one for each unit. For the assignment brief form, which must always be used, see Annex.
4. Assignment brief must contain:
 - Information of the tasks set.
 - Information of the methods of the assessment.
 - Clear statement of what the student is expected to produce as evidence, and guidance on how the evidence will be assessed.
 - Clear deadlines for submission of work.
5. All assignments must be relevant to the subject and to enable students to produce appropriate evidence for assessment. "Relevant to the subject" means that:
 - The tasks must be designed in such a way that the achievements of the learner can be assessed according to the criteria.
 - The brief is written in clear and accessible language.
 - The tasks are in line with the professional context of the level of qualification.

- The deadlines for implementation are appropriate and realistic.
 - All learners have equal opportunities to perform their tasks.
6. All assignment briefs must be internally verified before they are issued to students. Only after the Internal Verifier has approved them as appropriate it may be issued.
7. If the Internal Verifier finds that any corrections or additions have to be made to the assignment brief, the Assessor shall take all necessary steps without delay and shall return the brief to the Internal Verifier. The Internal Verifier approves the corrections with his signature.

5.5. Assessment and Grading

1. When the assessment team has completed the assessment process for an assignment, a decision on the results shall be taken. The decision shall be officially registered on the respective form (see Annex) and shall be reported to students.
2. The information given to the student:
 - Must show the formal decision and how it has been reached, indicating how and where criteria have been met.
 - Should provide feedback on how to improve further evidence.
3. The assessor is required to:
 - assess student evidence using only the published assessment and grading criteria.
 - ensure that assessment decisions are objective, valid and reliable.
4. The Assessor must assess only student work that is authentic, i.e. the student's own independent work. Students must authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment through signing a declaration stating that it is their own work. Assessors must take care not to provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback that may compromise authenticity.
5. The declaration of the learner must state that:
 - The evidence submitted for the assignment is the student's own.
 - The student understands that false declaration is a form of malpractice.
6. There is a unit grading grid for each unit. This is a document which contains statements of the assessment criteria used to determine the standard of learner evidence in the context of the specific assignments set in that particular unit. Merit and Distinction grading criteria refer to a qualitative improvement in the learner's evidence, not a quantitative one.
7. Grades of achievement for The BTEC/Edexcel units for performance are agreed in the Assessment Board.

Settled (Pass)	<p>granted if all learning results have been achieved according to the evaluation criteria</p> <p>Depending on the type of task, the educatee may be asked to develop a number of alternative solutions for the specific topic. An educatee may be asked to create a presentation, perform an appropriate research activity, explain the facts and prepare his or her conclusions.</p> <p>To receive a positive assessment to the educatee if all the requirements of the testing work have been fulfilled and the appraiser has ascertained that the educatee has acquired the necessary basic knowledge and skills on the subject and is able to continue to acquire the programme</p>
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5.6. Formative Assessment

1. Whenever students are undertaking independent study and research, the teaching staff should provide a formative assessment. This takes place prior to summative assessment and does not confirm achievement of grades.
2. Formative assessment involves both the student and the Assessor in a two-way conversation about the student's progress.
3. The main function of formative assessment is to provide feedback to enable the student to make improvements to consolidate a Pass, or attain a higher grade.
4. This feedback should be prompt so it has meaning and context for the student and time must be given following the feedback for adjustments to be completed. The nature of formative assessment should be to motivate the student to improve their work and achieve a higher grade.
5. If student work has consistently poor spelling, grammar or language it should not be accepted for marking, but should be returned to the student to be corrected. The student must be given a deadline by which to correct the work.
6. Mistakes in spelling and grammar should not influence assessment decisions unless the mistakes are so problematic that they undermine the evidence of the student's understanding, or specific assessment criteria require good communication, spelling and grammar and/or correct use of technical language.

5.7. Summative assessment

1. Summative assessment is the final consideration by an Assessor of a student's assignment, agreeing which assessment criteria the student has met and which grade descriptors have been achieved in the assignment and recording those decisions.
2. It is, however, subject to confirmation by the Assessment Board, and thus is provisional and can be overridden by the Assessment Board.
3. Assessors should annotate on the learner work where the evidence supports their grading decisions against the unit grading criteria.
4. Students are not offered opportunities to revisit assignments at this stage of the assessment process unless approved by the program Leader.

5.8. Late completion of Assignments

1. If a student fails to submit evidence prior to the formally announced deadline, they may be granted an extension.
2. Students are to be given authorized extensions only for legitimate reasons and under extenuating circumstances, such as illness at the time of submission. For a complete list of such circumstances and details on the procedure see annex.
3. If an extension is granted, the new deadline must be recorded and adhered to.
4. The grade of evidence that has been granted an extension should not be capped at "Pass" level. Extension requests should be made prior to the assessment deadline and should be formally approved by the Program Leader.
5. The duration of extensions should be consistent across all students and should not be after summative feedback has been issued to the other students on the program. All extensions granted by the program Leader must be recorded and made available at the Assessment Board and to the External Examiner.

5.9. Resubmit

1. Resubmission of evidence is authorized by the Program Leader.
2. A student may request or be offered a resubmission, in case of failure to meet all the criteria specified in the assignment.
3. A student should not be granted a resubmission if they submitted their work late, and have not requested an extension or were not granted one. If the Program Leader decides to approve a resubmission of such work anyway, the following conditions apply:

- a resubmission of such work can only be authorized if the work has not met the Pass criteria
 - the highest grade such work can achieve is Pass.
4. Resubmissions should only be authorized if all of the following submission conditions are met:
- The student has met the initial deadlines set in the assignment, has met an agreed deadline extension, or has submitted work late that has been accepted.
 - The Assessor judges that the student has fully attempted to achieve all targeted learning outcomes in their original submission.
 - The Assessor judges that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance.
 - The Assessor has authenticated the evidence submitted for assessment.
5. If a student has not met the conditions listed above, the program Leader or Assessment Board must not authorize a resubmission. In these instances, the student will be required to repeat the unit.
6. A list of all resubmissions authorized by the program Leader must be submitted to the Assessment Board and made available to the External Examiner (EE) for review and discussion to ensure that the Assessment Board and EE have oversight of all authorized resubmissions.
7. A new assignment brief must be issued to students for whom a resubmission has been authorized. Any assignment briefs used for resubmissions must be internally verified before being issued to students.
8. If the Program Leader does authorize a resubmission, the following conditions apply:
- The resubmission must be recorded in the relevant assessment documentation.
 - The student is required to resubmit work within 15 working days of the student being notified that a resubmission has been authorized.
 - The resubmission must be undertaken by the student with no further guidance.

5.10. Repeat Units

1. If a student has met all of the submission conditions, but still not achieved the targeted Pass criteria following resubmission, the Assessment Board may authorize a repeat unit opportunity to meet the required Pass criteria.
2. Alternatively, the Assessment Board, having reviewed and discussed a student's assessment profile, can offer one final resubmission of Pass criteria if it is agreed that it is necessary, appropriate and fair to do so. In that case a new assignment is issued to the student and if, after this final resubmission opportunity, the student has still not met the Pass criteria in the unit, they would be required to repeat the unit.
3. When repeating the unit:
 - The student must study the unit again.
 - The overall grade for a successfully completed repeat unit is capped at a Pass for that unit.
 - A unit can only be repeated once.
 - The standard rules regarding assessment apply to students who are repeating units.
 - The External Examiner (EE) is likely to want to include assessments for students that have repeated a unit as part of the sample they will review.
 - Any evidence previously produced by the student for the unit being repeated that did meet the Pass criteria remains valid and may be used for assignments within the repeat unit. Students who are repeating a unit only need to generate evidence for any Pass criteria that they did not achieve in their previous submissions.

5.11. Unit certification

1. Students who don't get the qualification they were registered for may claim a Certificate of Unit Achievement or Fallback Certificate of Unit Credits.
2. This document is a cumulative record of success to date, but doesn't state the title of the program for which the student was originally entered.

6. Internal verification policy and procedures

6.1. Purpose of internal verification

AIM:

- That assessment is accurate, consistent, current, timely, valid, authentic and to BTEC standards.
- That the assessment instruments are fit for purpose.
- To assure the assessment of all BTEC programs delivered by this center.
- To be part of an audit trail of students' achievement records.
- To provide feedback to inform center quality improvement.
- To ensure that Internal Verification is valid, reliable and covers all Assessors and program activity.
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ABOVE, THE CENTRE SHALL UNDERTAKE:

- The staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures.
- There is a recognized team of Internal Verifiers, who meet regularly to ensure standardization of procedures.
- Internal Verification is promoted as a developmental process among the staff.
- Standardized Internal Verification documentation is provided and used and all center assessment instruments are verified and fit for purpose (all respective forms are attached to this Manual and can be found on the school's website).
- An annual Internal Verification schedule is in place (more under 6.1: Planning Internal Verification).
- Secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained.
- All Assessors and Internal Verifiers attend regular briefings on BTEC processes.
- All internal verification information will be shared with the members of staff involved in delivering the subject in question.
- The outcome of Internal Verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

Definitions/Terminology

Internal inspection: a center devised quality assurance process which assures the assessment against the BTEC unit grading criteria and those assignments are fit for purpose.

Standards Verification/External Examination: an external verification process used to check center assignments and assessment against national standards, and internal verification processes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Internal Verifiers (IVs): conduct quality checks on assessment processes and practice to ensure that they meet national standards and that all students have been judged fairly and consistently. An Internal Verifier can be anyone involved in the delivery and assessment of the program that is able to give an expert “second opinion”. An Internal Verifier cannot internally verify their own assignments or assessment decisions. They provide feedback to Assessors, including action to be taken if assessment decisions are judged to be incorrect. Internal Verifiers check assignment briefs prior to issue to students and sample assessment decisions. They ensure that the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team, and provide records of assessment and samples of student work.

Program Leader: has overall responsibility for the effective delivery and assessment of BTECs in their subject. The program Leader may also act as an Assessor and/or Internal Verifier. They direct Assessors to appropriate training, support and standardization. They ensure that records of assessment and samples of student work are being retained for sampling by the Standards Verifier, plan to set aside examples of work that has been verified to different levels and grades, where applicable, and liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place. They sign a declaration to confirm that sampled work is authentic and valid and ensure any resubmissions and retakes are administered fairly and consistently. They agree with the appointed External Examiners on the date of the EE's visit. It is the Program Leader's responsibility to keep records of all IV processes, documents and decisions.

Assessor: an Assessor is anyone responsible for the assessment of students who acts under the guidance of the program Leader. Assessors devise assignment briefs, deliver the program of study and assess the evidence produced by students against the assessment criteria in the program specification. They ensure that the assessment plan, assignments and assessment decisions are internally verified and appropriate action is taken by the team, and provide records of assessment and samples of student work. Assessors undertake any remedial action required by Internal Verifiers or External Examiners.

Quality Nominee: ensures that center internal verification and standardization processes operate, acts as the center coordinator and main point of contact for BTEC programs. The Quality Nominee is the initial point of contact for all Standards Verifiers who liaises with appropriate practitioners and Internal Verifiers to ensure that Standards Verifiers are able to carry out their role. He/she also ensures Pearson quality assurance reports are monitored and any remedial action is carried out.

Standards Verifier: a person allocated by Pearson who is a subject expert and who conducts sampling of assessment instruments and assessed learner work in order to provide judgements and feedback. The Standards Verifiers visit the center twice a year and work with the staff to support them to identify good practice and areas for further development. They give the staff guidance on how to improve the delivery of the program. After three years of running a program and receiving reports with no outstanding issues or required actions the number of visits can be reduced to one per year. This is subject to approval by center Management in London.

6.2. Planning Internal Verification

1. At the start of each program an Internal Verification Schedule must be agreed, to ensure that:
 - all assignment briefs are internally verified before distribution to students
 - a sample of assessment decisions is internally verified, covering every unit, every Assessor and a range of student achievement (e.g. Ungraded, Pass, Merit, Distinction).
2. Individual points of the IV Schedule are marked in the Assessment Plan Form (Annex).

6.3. Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs

1. For internal verification of assignment briefs the respective form must always be used (see Annex).
2. All assignment briefs must be internally verified every year, prior to issue to students. Internal verification of the assignments should be carried out by a staff member who is familiar with BTEC assessment at the appropriate level and has subject knowledge within the program area. Internal verification must always be reported and recorded.
5. If further actions are identified by the Internal Verifier, the Assessor is required to complete all actions and return it to the Internal Verifier for review and sign-off. Once the assignment has been signed off as being fit for purpose by the Internal Verifier, it may be issued to the students.
6. The purpose of internal verification is to confirm that the brief is fit for purpose, by ensuring:

- the assignment brief has accurate unit and program details.
 - the tasks and evidence will allow the student to address the targeted criteria.
 - the brief is written in clear and accessible language.
 - students' roles and tasks are vocationally relevant and appropriate to the level of the qualification.
 - timescales and deadlines are clear and appropriate.
 - equal opportunities are incorporated.
 - the brief shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit(s) covered in the assignment.
 - the brief clearly states what evidence the student needs to provide.
7. In order to provide the Assessor with proposals and instructions, the Internal Verifier must complete the feedback section of the form. The form should also contain comments on good practice examples.

6.4. Internal inspection of valuation decisions

1. During the course of a program, sampling from Assessors should cover the following as a minimum: every Assessor, every unit, work from every assignment.
2. For internal verification of assessment decisions, the respective form must always be used (see Annex).
3. There is not a requirement that all learners must have been internally verified during the lifetime of a program.
4. If following a review of the sample there are any assessment concerns, the sample can be re-selected to include, for example, a higher number of students who have achieved the grade in question.
5. It is not necessary to present the results of the internal evaluation of the programme to all students.
6. 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 programs: when a unit or program 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.
7. The IV reviews the Assessor's judgments against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification. They should check:
 - the learner work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately.
 - the assessment criteria.
 - coverage of the unit content in conjunction with the assessment guidance to see if the Assessor has taken this into account. It is not a requirement of the unit specification that all of the content is assessed. However, the indicative content will need to be covered in a program of learning in order for learners to be able to meet the standard determined in the assessment and grading criteria.
 - the feedback from Assessor to learner is accurate and linked to the assessment criteria.

8. For internal verification of assessment decisions to take place, learner work must have been formally assessed. Internal verification must take place before learners receive confirmation of their achievement and feedback. If any inaccuracies are identified by the Internal Verifier, these must be corrected by the Assessor before results are made known to learners. When issues are identified by the Internal Verifier, if appropriate these should be applied across the group.

9. If a request for a resubmission is made and providing there have been no issues with the Assessor's decisions at the first submission stage, then the resubmission does not need to be internally verified.

10. Standards Verification:

- Once a Standards Verifier is appointed, they will contact the center's Quality Nominee to inform him/her of the allocation. Together, they arrange a sample and date of sampling. The sample must include all grades awarded. The Standards Verifier will complete their report within 10 work days of conducting a sample.

11. A Standards Verifier verifies that the center is:

- assessing learners to national standards as set out within the BTEC qualification specifications.
- maintaining effective mechanisms for the internal verification of BTEC programs.
- demonstrating effective recording of assessment and internal verification.
- applying center-wide processes and procedures effectively and consistently in the given program area.

12. The evidence for sampling is as follows:

Assignment briefs	All assignment briefs used to generate learner evidence for the unit
Sample size	Up to 9 students – All students will be sampled Up to 100 students – At least 9 students More than 100 students – At least 18 students The sample must contain examples of the range of grades awarded (Pass, Merit, Distinction and Not achieved) The sample will also need to encompass (over a period of time) all Assessors Please note: There is no maximum size of the sample. The Standards Verifier may ask for more samples if initial sampling suggests that further investigation is required Additional visits to increase the sample size are not permitted without consent from Pearson.
Learner evidence and assessment records	The Standards Verifier will need to see: a list of learners' names which will be compared to the names registered on Edexcel Online assessment decisions for the learner work and related feedback signed and dated declaration of authenticity by the learner.
Internal verification	Internal verification documents for the assignment briefs Any internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions for learners sampled.

13. On the day of the visit, the Standards Verifier should be provided with the previous Standards Verifier report and any other minutes from appropriate meetings that have been held since the last visit.

14. Outcomes of the sample:

First sample report status	Outcome
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Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A sufficient sample has been provided and the Standards Verifier judges that the center is assessing to national standards and documenting assessment correctly. ▪ The Standards Verifier confirms that all student evidence is valid, authentic and sufficient. ▪ The Standards Verifier report releases certification, program by program. ▪ The center will receive separate reports for different levels of programs with different assessment methodologies. ▪ The Standards Verifier may agree that assessment standards are being maintained but identify Essential Actions or Recommendations in sections 1 – 6 of the report. The staff should read the report carefully for Essential Actions or Recommendations. ▪ Certificates can be claimed on Edexcel Online for the current year and certificates will be printed.
Block for one or more programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The external examination report is able to release or block certification separately for each program within a sector. Therefore, if one or more programs are subject to a certification block, this does not automatically affect certification of the other programs. ▪ A block means that the Standards Verifier does not agree that the center is assessing to national standards and/or not documenting assessment and internal verification correctly on one or more of the programs in the sector. ▪ A block will also result from any evidence of student plagiarism found in the sample. ▪ The Standards Verifier judges that one or more assessment decisions are incorrect, or the approach to assessment and verification does not meet requirements. ▪ Essential actions will be identified in section 7 of the report. ▪ The Standards Verifier will give initial feedback on the day of the visit, so the staff should be prepared for the outcomes of the report. ▪ Certificates should not be claimed. ▪ Certificates will not be printed.
Not yet fully sampled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Standards Verifier has not yet sampled all of the units that make up the qualification. ▪ The students are in the first cohort and this first cohort will not yet have completed the course. ▪ Certificates are not yet required and will not be claimed.
Limited certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Standards Verifier is prepared to release the certificates for a small number of learners. The standard of these learners' work is judged as appropriate for certificates to be issued. ▪ The program remains blocked for certification of other learners.

14. External Examination: An External Examiner is appointed by Pearson and visits the center once a year to assess its standards and procedures. He/she will require access to:

- all assignment briefs used to generate student evidence for each unit. The External Examiner will want to see the relationship between any exams and related assignments.
- a list of students registered on the program.

- all student work for units that have been assessed (which the EE will sample from).
 - assessment records for the student work.
 - internal verification documents for the assignment briefs.
 - internal verification documentation relating to the assessment decisions.
 - staff documentation.
 - CVs of all staff members with a list of the units that they have delivered and assessed.
 - During the visit, the EE will ask students for their opinions on teaching, assessment and support, and the staff for their views on management of the program(s). The minimum sample of student work will always include no fewer than three units.
 - The sample size will depend on the number of students and units delivered, number of Assessors and the size of the program team, levels of units in the programs.
 - If there are fewer than 8 students in a program, they will all be sampled. If there are over 8 but fewer than 100 students, a minimum of 9 students will be sampled. If there are over 100 students in a program, a minimum of 18 of them must be sampled.
 - All sampling must be completed by 30th June if certificates are required for mid-August.
 - The center will then get two reports from the EE. Report A will confirm that:
 - *progress was made against any actions from the previous report*
 - *there are effective management procedures in place*
 - *assessment instruments are appropriate for the level of qualification and their design and nature permit the aims and learning objectives of each program to be met*
 - *assessment records are accurate, up-to-date and stored securely*
 - *your process for maintaining and auditing assessment records is secure and effective and that student registration and certification information is accurate and monitored effectively.*
 - Report B will communicate feedback on the sampled student work. Essential actions will be identified where the assessment does not meet national standards for any of the students sampled. Essential actions in Report B will block certification for current students on the program. The report will focus on:
 - *Fairness and consistency of grading/validity and standardization of assessments across assessors.*
 - *Evidence of internal verification.*
 - *Quality of feedback to students.*
15. Any evidence of plagiarism in student work will result in an Essential Action and a block to certification.
16. If the first sample results in a certification block or if further sampling is required in order for certification to be released, a second sample must be submitted. This is usually conducted remotely.

7. Submission and Review of Appeals

AIM:

- To enable the students to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decisions.
- To attempt to reach agreement between the student and the Assessor at the earliest opportunity.
- To standardize and record any appeals to ensure openness and fairness.
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to Pearson and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator once the center's Appeals procedures have been exhausted.
- To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ABOVE, THE CENTRE SHALL UNDERTAKE:

- Inform students at induction of the Appeals Policy and procedure.
- Record, track and validate all appeals.
- Forward the appeal to Pearson when a student considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted.
- Keep records of appeals to for a minimum of 18 months after the appeal proceedings
- Have a staged appeals procedure, if requested.
- Take appropriate action to protect the interests of other students and the integrity of the qualification when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results.
- Monitor appeals to ensure quality improvement.

Definitions:

- **Appeal:** a request from a learner to revisit an assessment decision which s/he considers to disadvantage him/her.
- **Appeals procedure:** a standardized, time-limited, sequenced and documented process for the center and student to follow when an appeal is made.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Student: responsible for initiating the appeals procedure, in the form of a formal request or an Appeal Form (Annex), respectively, within a defined time frame, when s/he has reason to question an assessment decision. It is the student’s responsibility to provide the Internal Verifier or the Board with sufficient information for a decision on acceptance or rejection of grounds for the appeal. Where evidence is not available on submission of the Appeal Form the student must state which evidence they intend to provide and by which date this will be available.

Assessor: responsible for providing clear achievement feedback to students. If assessment decisions are questioned, the Assessor is responsible for processing the learner’s appeal within the agreed time and keeping dated records of the whole process for a minimum of 18 months following the appeal.

Internal Verifier: responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.

Head of the center: responsible for submitting an appeal in writing to Pearson if the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the center’s internal appeals procedures.

Assessment Board: monitor the appeals to inform development and quality improvement.

8. Plagiarism, academic offenses and malpractice

AIM:

- To identify and minimize the risk of misconduct or malpractice by staff or students
- To respond to any incident of alleged malpractice promptly and objectively
- To standardize and record any investigation of malpractice to ensure openness and fairness
- To impose appropriate penalties and / or sanctions on students or staff where incidents (or attempted incidents) of malpractice are proven
- To protect the integrity of this center and BTEC qualifications.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ABOVE, THE CENTRE SHALL UNDERTAKE:

- Seek to avoid potential malpractice by using Orientation Day and the Student Handbook to inform students of the center’s policy on academic misconduct and the penalties for attempted and actual incidents
- Show students the appropriate formats to record cited texts and other materials or information sources in a published document also available on the center’s website and in the Student

Handbook. This material includes detailed instructions on the use of footnotes and bibliographies to acknowledge sources and the use of quotation marks when sources are quoted directly.

- Check that students do not take prohibited material into an examination room
- Have procedures for assessing work in a way that reduces or identifies malpractice such as plagiarism, collusion or cheating, like altering assessment assignments/tasks/tools on a regular basis or using oral questions to check the students' understanding of the work. (more on strategies for the prevention of student malpractice see below)
- Ask students to declare that their work is their own (for more information, see below or 5: Assessment)
- Ask students to provide adequate evidence that they have interpreted and synthesized appropriate information and acknowledged any sources used
- Conduct an investigation in a form commensurate with the nature of the malpractice allegation. Such an investigation will be supported by the Head of center and all staff linked to the allegation.
- Make the individual in question fully aware at the earliest opportunity of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
- Give the individual the opportunity to respond to the allegations made.
- Document all stages of any investigation.
- Apply penalties / sanctions described below when malpractice is proven.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Center: seeks proactive ways to promote a positive culture that encourages students to take individual responsibility for their learning and respect the work of others.

Assessor: responsible for checking the validity of students' work and designing assessment opportunities which limit the opportunity for malpractice. Assessors must also take care not to provide direct input, instructions or specific feedback that may compromise authenticity.

Internal Verifier: responsible for malpractice checks when internally verifying work

Head of the center: responsible for any investigation into allegations of malpractice and required to inform Pearson of any acts of malpractice

8.1. Student misconduct

1. An Assessor must assess only student work that is authentic, i.e. the student's own independent work. Students must authenticate the evidence that they provide for assessment through signing a declaration stating that it is their own work.
2. The student declaration must state that:
 - Evidence submitted for the assignment is the student's own.
 - The student understands that false declaration is a form of malpractice.
3. Each Assessor must promote positive and honest study practices. The students are also informed of the nature of academic misconduct and respective sanctions by the Student Handbook.
4. Each Assessor must keep a close watch on the students and their work in order to identify plagiarism as early as possible. The areas to monitor are:
 - Content of the work.
 - Varying quality of the content.
 - Writing style differences.
 - The degree of complexity of the sentence structure, relative to the language of the learner.
5. Attention should be paid to the situations where:
 - Work is not focused on the subject, but is well – argued.
 - Parts of work are not logically related.
 - Data, references, statistics copied from outdated sources.

- Specific terminology, jargon, complex vocabulary.
 - Vocabulary, spelling and punctuation
 - Style and tone
 - Presentation (Consistency of size and font, margins, headers, referencing style etc. throughout the text).
 - Lack of referencing in a long, well-written section (could suggest the text was copied from a general knowledge source.
 - Quotations that run on beyond the acknowledged part.
6. Each case of academic misconduct will be considered on its own merits, and on the basis of:
- the gravity of the case.
 - the circumstances of the case.
 - the level at which the offence took place.
 - whether the offence was a repeat offence.
7. To ensure that students are treated fairly and equitably, academic misconduct is divided into the following three types:
- **Academic negligence:** This is the least serious offence and covers first-time minor offences. It includes plagiarism that is small in scale, not related to the work of other students, and which is considered to have resulted from ignorance or carelessness.
 - **Academic malpractice:** This covers extensive paraphrasing of material with no acknowledgement of the source, systematic failure to reference, submitting work that has already been submitted for another assignment, and subsequent cases of academic negligence.
 - **Academic cheating:** This is the most serious offence and covers plagiarism in final year projects, collusion with other students, theft, commissioning / purchasing work, falsification of results/data, and all examination irregularities.
8. The individual types of misconduct will be dealt with as follows:
- Academic negligence: Cases of academic negligence are dealt with by the Assessor who decides on the appropriate penalty and informs the student of the consequences of repeated misconduct. If the student is required to resubmit work, they must do so within 10 days of receiving the Assessor's decision. The following penalties may be applied (the list is not exhaustive):
 - Warning.
 - Awarding the student's work a lower grade.
 - Assigning a “Fail” grade, requiring the student to resubmit the work in question and determining that the grade for re-assessed work will be a maximum of a “Pass” grade.
 - Academic misconduct and cheating: Any suspected case of academic misconduct or cheating must be reported immediately by the Assessor to the Head of the Assessment Board for investigation. The Head formally contacts the student in question and allows them to react to the allegations. It is the Head's responsibility to keep records of the process and all related documents to allow future inspection by Pearson, and after conducting a thorough investigation they decide on the penalty. The following penalties may be applied (the list is not exhaustive):
 - Awarding the student a lower grade for the whole unit.
 - Determining that the student has failed the level and is required to withdraw from the program of study.
 - Determining that the student has failed the level and is required to repeat the Unit, in which case they must pay full tuition for the Unit in question and an administrative fee of 300 Euro.
 - Expulsion.
 - A record of admitted or found offences will remain on the student’s file for as long as the file is kept by the center.

- If a student is found guilty of academic misconduct after the end of a course, any award that they have received may be withdrawn. This can be done after the student has graduated.

8.2. Assessor/ Staff Malpractice

Definition: Any deliberate action by an Assessor which has the potential to undermine the integrity of BTEC qualifications. This list is not exhaustive and other instances of malpractice may be considered by this center at its discretion:

- Improper assistance to candidates.
- Inventing or changing marks for internally assessed work (coursework or portfolio evidence) where there is insufficient evidence of the candidates' achievement to justify the marks given or assessment decisions made.
- Failure to keep candidate coursework / portfolios of evidence secure.
- Fraudulent certificate claims, that is claiming for a certificate prior to the student completing all the requirements of assessment.
- Inappropriate retention of certificates.
- Assisting students in the production of work for assessment, where the support has the potential to influence the outcomes of assessment, for example where the assistance involves center staff producing work for the student.
- Producing falsified witness statements, for example for evidence the student has not generated.
- Allowing evidence, which is known by the staff member not to be the student's own, to be included in a student's assignment / task / portfolio / coursework.
- Facilitating and allowing impersonation.
- Misusing the conditions for special student requirements, for example where students are permitted support, such as an amanuensis; this is permissible up to the point where the support has the potential to influence the outcome of the assessment.
- Falsifying records / certificates, for example by alteration, substitution, or by fraud.

Prevention of staff malpractice:

1. The staff are informed and reminded of the BTEC requirements in regards to malpractice regularly at the mandatory information meeting at the beginning of the school year and at Induction Seminar.
2. The center uses a robust Internal Verification system and keeps records of all assessment decisions, appeals and procedures (for more information, see 6: Internal Verification and Quality Assurance).
3. The Head of center is required to inform Pearson Investigations team of any alleged or suspected malpractice by center staff, before any investigation is undertaken. The Head of center needs to contact the Investigations team by submitting a JCQ Form M2(a) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff or anonymous informants), their Investigations team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the Head of center to assist.
4. Any case of suspected Assessor misconduct must then be reported to an Internal Verifier. Should the suspicion of malpractice pertain to an IV, it must be reported to the Quality Nominee. The IV or the Quality Nominee must then contact the individual in question (preferably in writing) in order to make the individual fully aware of the nature of the alleged malpractice and of the possible consequences should malpractice be proven.
5. Any case of suspected staff misconduct must immediately be reported to the Head of Center in addition to contacting the person designated in the previous paragraph.
6. The IV or the Quality Nominee must then conduct an impartial investigation of the allegations, taking into account a statement of the person under investigation and obtaining further evidence if required.
7. Each case will be considered on its own merits, and on the basis of:
 - the gravity of the case.
 - the circumstances of the case.
 - the level at which the offence took place.
 - whether the offence was a repeat offence.
8. The gravity of the offense will determine the severity of the penalty. The possible penalties include:
 - A written warning.
 - Requiring the member of staff, as a condition of future involvement in examinations and/or assessments, to undertake specific training or mentoring within a particular period of time with a review process at the end of the training.
 - Imposing special conditions on the future involvement in the center's examinations and/or assessments by the member of staff, whether this involves internal assessment, supervision or something else.
 - Restriction of authority and responsibilities.
 - Temporary suspension from function.
 - Immediate termination of contract with the center.
9. The consequences of any staff misconduct which might compromise the integrity of BTEC qualifications must be remedied at the earliest opportunity.

8.3. Maladministration

Definition:

A failure to adhere to the regulations regarding the conduct of controlled assessments, coursework and examinations or malpractice in the conduct of the examinations/assessments and/or the handling of examination question papers, candidate scripts, mark sheets, cumulative assessment records, results and certificate claim forms, etc.

Examples:

- inability to adequately supervise and ensure the timely conduct of examinations and examinations of learners.
- the release of unauthorised materials into the examination room before or during the performance of the inspection work.
- failure to provide the necessary equipment for the organisation of a quality learning process.

- inability to ensure propagating of materials and tasks if necessary.
- not informing the learners that all mobile phones or other unauthorised files at their disposal must be handed over to the supervisor before the beginning of the test.
- other shortcomings.

1. The process of dealing with any cases of maladministration is the same as that for staff malpractice.

Contacting Pearson

2. The Head of center must report any incident of:

- malpractice or attempted malpractice by center staff;
- maladministration by center staff; and
- malpractice or attempted malpractice by students in relation to externally assessed units.

3. Incidents should be reported to Pearson using the following email addresses:

- student malpractice: candidatemalpractice@pearson.com
- center / center staff malpractice: pqsmalpractice@pearson.com
- maladministration: pqsmalpractice@pearson.com

4. The report submitted to Pearson must include:

- a clear account, as detailed as necessary, of the circumstances;
- details of the investigations carried out by the center;
- written statements from any teachers, assessors or other members of staff concerned, which must be signed and dated;
- written statements from the candidates concerned, which must be signed and dated;
- any other evidence relevant to the allegation.

5. Suspected student malpractice relating to internally assessed units

6. Cases of suspected student malpractice relating to internally assessed units shall be managed in accordance with this policy (see above). If malpractice has occurred after certificates have been issued, the Head of center must immediately contact Pearson Investigations team by emailing pqsmalpractice@pearson.com.

7. Suspected center staff malpractice.

Heads of center are required to inform Pearson Investigations team of any alleged or suspected malpractice by center staff, before any investigation is undertaken. Heads of center need to contact Pearson Investigations team by submitting a JCQ Form M2(a) with supporting documentation to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com. Where Pearson receives allegations of malpractice from other sources (for example Pearson staff or anonymous informants), the Pearson Investigations team will conduct the investigation directly or may ask the Head of center to assist.

- Pearson may withhold results or certificates while an investigation into suspected cases of malpractice is in progress. Depending on the outcome of the investigation results / certificates may be released, withheld or modified.
- Where malpractice / maladministration is proven, Pearson will consider whether the integrity of the assessments might be at risk if the center / staff member / student in question were to be involved in future Pearson assessments and so they may take action to protect the integrity of the qualifications. For vocational qualifications this action may include:
 - refusing to accept assessment / examination entries from a center in cases where malpractice is proven;
 - withdrawing program / center approval where malpractice has been identified;
 - refusing to issue certificates;
 - withdrawing / invalidating certificates;
 - debarring a center staff member from involvement in the delivery of Pearson qualifications for a number of years/life; or
 - debarring a student from taking Pearson qualifications for a number of years.

Appeals

1. Pearson has developed procedures setting out rights and procedures for examining appeals.
2. Management of the Centre, may appeal the specified sanctions directed against the Centre, its employee or educatee.
3. Representatives of staff of the Centre who are in a contractual relationship with the Centre and who are personally sanctioned by any of the sanctions may appeal to them
4. Students may personally appeal the specified sanctions
5. Information on the appeals process will be sent to the centre once an appeal has been received

9. Procedures for dealing with complaints

AIM:

- Determine the procedures by which PPRC receives, reviews and provides answers to complaints of students, observing the requirements of Pearson.
- Ensure the possibility for learners to clarify matters in a formal and documented manner in relation to the assessment of educational achievements of learners.
- Ensure, where necessary, the right of learners to lodge a complaint with the Pearson administration.

IN ORDER TO ENSURE THE ABOVE, THE CENTRE SHALL UNDERTAKE:

- Inform all learners of the procedures for submitting complaints at an informative meeting organised at the beginning of training.
- to follow complaints procedures.
- to record, track and respond to all complaints, in accordance with the complaint procedure;
- take appropriate measures to resolve the problems of learners.
- establishing a register of complaints and carrying out internal control measures to ensure the quality of the training process.
- to forward the complaint to the Pearson administration if it cannot be resolved within 28 days of its receipt.
- keep complaints submissions for at least 18 months after they have been resolved.

Definitions

- **Complaint:** An expression of concern or dissatisfaction from a student which needs to be investigated and addressed by the center via a formal complaints channel.
- **Complaints procedure:** a standard, time-limited, sequenced and documented process for the center and student to follow when a complaint is made.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student: responsible for invoking the complaints procedure, via the appropriate channel, when s/he has a complaint.

Center: to address the student's concerns in accordance with its published complaints procedure within the set timescales for acknowledgement and resolution of the complaint and at least one point of escalation for the student if they are not happy with the first review of their complaint. The center should update the student if it is not able to meet the timescales published in its complaints procedure, and set a new expectation on the time frame for a response.

Program Leader: besides investigating and resolving the student's concerns in Stage 2 of the complaints procedure (see below), the program Leader is responsible for documenting all dated correspondence pertaining to the complaint and keeping it for a minimum of 18 months. The program Leader also monitors the Assessor's decisions to ensure quality improvement.

Quality Nominee: besides investigating and resolving the student's concerns in Stage 3 of the complaints procedure (see below), the Quality Nominee monitors the program Leader's decisions to ensure quality improvement.

Head of center: besides investigating and resolving the student's concerns in Stage 4 of the complaints procedure (see below), the Head can monitor the Quality Nominee's decisions to ensure quality improvement.

9.1. Procedures for dealing with complaints of learners

The procedure which allows a center to address its students' concerns or complaints. It gives the centre the opportunity to investigate and respond to a student's concerns before Pearson becomes involved (with the exception of malpractice cases).

- **Stage 1** - Informal: student lets the Assessor know about their concerns and the Assessor attempts to satisfactorily resolve any issues. The outcome is documented by the Assessor and if unresolved, the issue moves to Stage 2.
- **Stage 2** - Formal review: student files their complaint by filling in the Complaints Form (Annex) with parts C and D left blank and submitting it to the program Leader, either by email or in person. Within 7 days of submission the program Leader investigates and addresses the student's concerns, and notifies the student of their findings and the outcome in writing. If the student remains dissatisfied, the matter moves on to Stage 3.
- **Stage 3** - Formal review at a point of escalation: if the student is unhappy with the program Leader's response, they have 3 days to escalate their complaint by sending an email to the Students Administration Office, who in turn forward it to the Quality Nominee. The email must contain a detailed and full account of the individual steps taken so far and outcome of each previous step, as well as the Complaints Form with both part B and C filled in and copies of written responses from the Assessor and the program Leader. The Quality Nominee investigates the matter and informs the student of their findings and decision in writing within 7 working days. If the student remains dissatisfied, the matter moves on to Stage 4.
- **Stage 4** - Formal review at final point of escalation: within 3 days of receiving the Quality Nominee's reply the student may escalate their complaint by sending an email to the Head of center. The email must contain a detailed and full account of the individual steps taken so far and outcome of each previous step, as well as the Complaints Form with parts B, C and D filled in and copies of written responses from the Assessor, the program Leader and the Quality Nominee. The Head of center investigates the matter and informs the student of their findings and decision in writing within 7 working days. If the student remains dissatisfied, the matter moves on to Stage 5.
- **Stage 5** - Escalation to Pearson for information on next steps. The student can contact Pearson using their online form or by posting a hard copy to the address found on the website as well. They are likely to receive a response within 10 working days.

* At any point during the investigation of a complaint, the center can make contact with Pearson for information, support or advice. Once the center's complaints procedure is exhausted however, there are only certain matters Pearson can assist with. They cannot assist with matters which are between the center and the student, like fee disputes or complaints about the delivery of a qualification. The center should also forward Pearson a copy of all complaints received related to Pearson qualifications, which are not resolved within 28 days of receipt, and co-operate with Pearson in respect of any action Pearson needs to take to resolve such matters.

10. Contingency and Adverse Effects Policy

This arrangement is designed to ensure a consistent and effective response in the event of a serious disturbance in the programmes and evaluation process, which affects a significant number of learners. The arrangements will be implemented if there is a serious disruption to the educational process, such as widespread diseases, travel disorders, bad weather or power outages. All activities carried out should be informed of the official bodies dealing with the specific issues, such as the police, the Environment Agency or the Health Protection Agency.

The policy will protect the interests of learners while maintaining the integrity of the evaluation system and maintaining the standards of qualification.

AIM:

- To inform staff how to prevent, handle and report ‘adverse events’ and to ensure that any adverse effects that do occur are managed and reported in an appropriate and timely manner and that all lessons are learned to ensure that a similar such event does not happen again.
- To inform risk management and contingency planning.
- To provide information to improve systems and processes.
- To enable prompt remedial action to be taken and prevent recurrence.
- To provide an opportunity to share learning from adverse events within the team.
- To assist decision-making, planning and future resource allocation.
- To provide information and reassurance to Pearson that the center is committed to managing potential risks.

Definitions

An act, omission, event, incident or circumstance has an ‘adverse effect’ if it gives rise to prejudice to Learners or potential Learners, or adversely effects:

- the ability of the center to undertake the development, delivery or award of qualifications.
- the standards of qualifications which the center makes available or proposes to make available, or public confidence in qualifications.
- if there has been a failure in the delivery of an assessment which threatens Assessors’ ability to differentiate accurately and consistently between the levels of attainment demonstrated by Learners.
- the center being able to meet a published date for the issue of results or the award of a qualification.
- the center issuing incorrect results or certificates.
- the center identifying an incident of malpractice or maladministration, which could either invalidate the award of a qualification which it makes available or could affect Awarding Organizations.
- the center having (for any reason, whether inside or outside its control) incurred an increase in costs which it anticipates will result in an increase in its fees and therefore stop a Learner completing and obtaining certification.
- the center being named as a party in any criminal or civil proceedings or being subjected to a regulatory investigation or sanction by any Awarding Organization, regulatory or government body.
- A recognized center misleading Learners through statements, advertisements or promotions resulting in Learners being disadvantaged and not achieving a recognized qualification.

1. Communication:

- In case of local disturbances, the Centre Administration shall be contacted by teachers and learners.
 - In the event of major disturbances, detailed information on specific unforeseen events that will affect the evaluation process will be proactively communicated to the relevant stakeholders.
 - Communication between the organisations involved and communication with stakeholders, such as the BTEC centre, learners, parents and the public.
2. Main risks and related activities
- Continued absence of teaching staff at the main stages of the implementation of the educational programme.
Activities of the Centre: PPRC organises alternative teaching staff for the implementation of the programme as soon as possible.
 - Lack and absence of an inadequately trained and qualified assessor or the Internal Verifier.
Activities of the Centre: PPRC will follow all evaluators' planning, recruitment, training, at least 2 weeks before the beginning of the course. If necessary, alternative staff will be attracted.
 - Lack of adequate spaces.

Activities of the Centre: Contact partner organisations to use their premises.

- Interference with IT systems
- Operation of the Centre:

- Save a secure backup copy for all types of assessment documents and feedback
- Provision of support for the printing of educational materials for training provision.
- Contact the certifying authority to inform them of system failures and to receive assistance from them for emergency management.
- Learning process disorders: closing the centre for a longer period.

Activities of the Centre:

- Contact learners about the probability and solutions of learning disorders.
- Establish a link between teachers and learners so that the educatee can converse with the instructor and obtain course materials and submit tasks online.
- Provide an alternative training place in a collaborative partner institution
- Assessment evidence is not available for assessment (Large scale damage or destruction)
Activities of the Centre:
 - In order to reduce this risk, evidence outside a safe place remains absolutely minimal.
 - It is the duty of the head of the Centre to notify the relevant qualification organisation (s) and subsequently the educatees thereof without delay.
- Withdrawal of qualification

PPRC has committed to defending the interests of the educatees and to taking all possible measures to ensure this if the qualification is revoked for any reason. If a situation arises that there are any students who have not completed the programme acquisition prior to the end date for justified reasons, PPRC will take all reasonable measures to allow students to obtain qualifications.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Head of center

- promote a culture where it is acceptable and safe for all staff to report all adverse events, including near misses and where adverse events can be openly discussed.
- ensure that there is a system in place to communicate 'lessons learned" across the center (i.e. briefings and minutes of meetings).
- ensure that an investigation appropriate to the level of risk has been undertaken.
- Notify Pearson as appropriate.

All staff

- notify the Head of center immediately of any adverse event which they believe requires notification.
- promote a culture where it is acceptable and safe for staff to report all adverse events, including near misses, and where adverse events can be openly discussed.
- investigate and take action, when requested or required to do so, on all adverse events referred to them.
- take action and put in place all reasonable steps to prevent reoccurrence of any adverse event.
- ensure that lessons are learned and communicated following an adverse event.

Prevention of adverse events procedure

All **existing and potential risk situations** must first be reported to the programme Leader, then to the head of the centre.

In order to ensure full identification of the adverse event scene, a description of the situation/event should be carried out indicating:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- When did it happen?
- Why did it happen?

Investigations team

In case of any significant potential or actual adverse events (one which may impact a number of students and/or third parties and has the potential for reputational damage and recourse by Pearson) the Head of center will put together an investigations team. If the adverse event involves suspected malpractice then investigation will be conducted inline with the Malpractice Policy.

The aim of this team will be:

- to confirm facts, assess additional circumstances and their scale.
- to confirm or identify the cause.
- to obtain additional evidence.
- to identify any patterns or trends.
- to identify any changes to policy or procedure that need to be made by the centre.

There are certain principles that will be observed for conducting investigations:

- Confidentiality.
- Rights of individuals to be accompanied.
- Retention and storage of evidence and records.
- Following an adverse event, the results of the lessons learnt will be disseminated to staff via their managers.

Cases to be notified to Pearson administration

- Where the Centre has known information on planned events which will have a significant impact on its future functioning.
- significant changes in the management structure or the change in the legal status of the institution are expected.
- planned reorganisation of the institution or pooling of institutions.
- possible insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, etc.

In other cases, the Head of the Centre may decide, alone, whether it is necessary to inform the Pearson administration of the incident, by assessing:

The scale of the event (how many students have been affected by the event?)

- N ° effect (how serious has the impact been?)
- negative resonance of the event, etc.

If Pearson withdraws the approval status of the Centre, the Centre protects the interests of the learners by advising them another suitable Pearson centre and by reimbursing their remaining tuition fees.

11. Health and safety policy of learners

This policy is designed to ensure the safety and health protection of learners in the educational establishment and the events organised by it.

The educational institution has developed all the necessary regulatory enactments regarding the safety of learners:

- Internal rules of procedure,
- the conditions of the behaviour of the learners in the educational institution, the territory thereof and the events organised by the educational institution,
- an evacuation plan and information on the calling of operational services in the educational establishment;
- Provisions regarding safety in study rooms and premises containing equipment and substances which may endanger the safety and health of learners;
- Rules regarding fire safety;
- Rules regarding electrical safety;
- Rules on the provision of first aid;
- Rules on action in extreme situations.

12. Recruitment Procedures

AIM:

Ensure that all teachers and staff of PPRC are able to meet and maintain high standards for the implementation of the programme.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Head of the Centre

- is responsible for hiring only such teachers and members of staff that live up to the standards of BTEC qualifications and programme implementation standards of the BTEC Centre.
- ensure the replacement of staff in cases where the person is unable to carry out his or her duties in accordance with the quality requirements of the BTEC centre and the standards for the implementation of the programmes.

Qualities and Qualifications required for the teachers of the centre

- Work experience in the specific field
- Higher education and professional competence in the relevant field,
- Vocational training in the relevant field or at least 5 years of successful work experience
- Excellent Latvian knowledge to ensure a high level of presentation of the subject
- Statement that the person is not in criminal register.
- Health records.

All the policies and information in this Handbook will be reviewed by the Quality Nominee annually – the next date is _____.