Internal Verification Policy

Sept 2021

Version 1

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at Expanse Learning, (Hereafter referred to as the college), students and prospective students.

2. Aim

This policy aims to ensure internal verification of internally assessed units in the following way:
- o Has an accredited Lead Internal Verifier in each programme area.
- o Have assessment assignments and assessment methodologies that are fit for purpose.
- o Ensures assessment is accurate, consistent, current, timely, valid, authentic and relevant to Pearson standards.
- o Internal verification is valid, reliable and covers all assessors and programme activity.
- o The internal verification procedure is open, fair, and free from bias.
- o There is accurate and detailed recording of internal verification decisions.
- o Judge student evidence against the assignment criteria.
- o Utilise consistent assessment and grading across the programme.
- o Ensures the assessment of all Pearson programmes delivered by a centre.
- o Be part of an audit trail of student achievement records.
- o Provide feedback to inform centre quality improvement.

3. Purpose

In order to do this, the Centre will ensure that:
- o When required by the qualification, a Lead Internal Verifier is appropriately appointed for each subject area, is registered with Pearson and has undergone the necessary standardisation processes.
- o Each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective Internal Verification systems in their subject area.
- o Staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures.
- o Effective internal verification roles are defined, maintained and supported.
- o Internal verification is promoted as a developmental process between staff.
- o Standardised internal verification documentation is provided and used.
- o All centre assessment instruments are verified as fit for purpose.
- o An annual internal verification schedule, linked to assessment plans, is in place.
- o An appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and Assessors is Internally Verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards.
- o Internal verification is a necessary part of the Pearson programme and is intended to be a supportive process.
- o Secure records of all internal verification activity are maintained.
- o The outcome of internal verification is used to enhance future assessment practice.

This policy covers all Pearson qualifications from Entry level to level 7. This includes PEARSONs accredited on the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF), including specialist qualifications, from 2010 and Pearson for all students.

Internal verification can be undertaken in a number of ways, but it should be recognised and supported consistently across the Centre, for example:
- o A recognised team of Internal Verifiers, who meet regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures.
- o Internal verification processes are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all members of the delivery team.
- o Pearson Internal Verification Forms are standardised across the Centre.
- o Internal verification schedules are drawn up to ensure timely implementation of the process.
- o All Assessors are involved in the internal verification role.
- o Standardisation meetings are seen as pivotal staff development.
- o The time required to carry out internal verification is acknowledged.
- o The Internal Verification process to be monitored by the Lead Internal Verifier, PEARSON programme leads and the Quality Nominee.

The Internal Verification policy will promote rigorous commitment to quality improvement.

4. Policy Statements

Standardisation:
- o When a unit or assignment is delivered and assessed by more than one person, standardisation should be implemented before any formal assessment and internal verification has taken place.

- The standardisation process is to agree the standard by discussing and mutually assessing a sample of the student's work to reach a consensus. This should be done with reference to the assessment criteria and assessment guidance provided by Pearson in the qualification specification.
- Once agreement has been reached, the Assessors can then individually assess the work of their appointed students, after which internal verification will take place.
- Standardisation can also be used as a staff development tool. Standardisation material for each PEARSON subject area is published by Pearson. Each Internal Verifier can access the information via Pearson OCSA.

Internal Verification:
- A quality assurance process which assures the assessment against the Pearson unit grading criteria and those assignments are fit for purpose.

Standards Verification
- This is an external verification process used to check centre assignments and assessment against Pearson standards, and internal verification processes.

Retaining Documents
- Internal verification documentation, along with the assessment tracking documents should be stored for a minimum of three years after certification.
- Student's work must be retained for 12 weeks after certification.

Internal Verification of Assignment Briefs and resources needed:
- The unit specification.
- The assignment briefs
- Internal verification of the assignment brief form.

The internal verifier should check that the assignment brief:
- Has accurate unit and programme details.
- Has clear deadlines for assessment.
- Shows all relevant assessment criteria for the unit(s) covered in the assignment.
- Indicates relevant assessment criteria targeted against each task.
- Clearly states what evidence the student needs to provide.
- Is likely to generate evidence which is appropriate and sufficient.
- Is set at the appropriate level.
- Has a time period of appropriate duration.
- Uses suitable vocational language.
- Has a clear presentation format.
- Re-use of assignment briefs from previous academic years should be checked to ensure dates and deadlines have been updated and that the assignment is
- appropriate to the new groups of students.
- Assignment briefs should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are fit for purpose and to make improvements based on experience of delivering and assessing them.
- All Pearson authorised assignment briefs (AAB) should be internally verified to check that dates and deadlines are appropriate, by use of the Pearson Internal Verification Form.

Giving Feedback to the Assessor
Internal verifiers should use the feedback section on the form to provide advice and guidance to the Assessor. If an action is identified by the Internal Verifier, the Assessor should complete this and return it to the Internal Verifier for authorisation prior to the assignment being used to students. Internal verifiers should provide feedback that makes any actions clear, using SMART principles – Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic, Time-based. Good practice should be commented on.

Timing
Assignment briefs are expected to be internally verified, with any issues addressed, before being distributed to students.

Assignments from other sources
There may be occasions where assignments may be used which have come either from published material or from other centres. These assignments still need to be internally verified to ensure that they match the specification that is being

used for registering students, on that the assignments are appropriate for the students and that there are resources to deliver them. The unit content is used to devise and plan the programme of learning needed for the learning outcomes to be successfully achieved.

Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions and resources needed:
- The unit specification.
- The assignment brief.
- Assessed the student's work and accompanying assessment record.
- Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions Form.

The Internal Verification sample

During the course of the Pearson programme, sampling from assessors should cover the following as a minimum:
- Every assessor.
- Every unit.
- Work from every assignment.
- Every assessment site (for multi-site centres).

There is not a requirement that all students must have been internally verified during the lifetime of the programme. If following a review of the sample, there are any assessment concerns, the sample can be re-selected. For example, if the group has been awarded high grades, the number of students to be sampled for this grade can be increased. 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 Pearson programmes: when a unit or programme is first introduced, the sample should be increased.
- The size of the group of students.
- Known issues with internal verification: these may have been identified previously.

The Internal Verification plan

All Pearson programmes must have an internal verification plan at the start of the course/unit to identify an appropriate sample size. This will be based on risk factors such as:
- SV feedback about the unit or assessor in previous years.
- Assessor experience.
- Whether the unit has been delivered before.
- Any significant changes to the delivery of the unit.

Lead Internal Verifiers should be aware of any issues relating to sample selection, such as:
- Grades awarded by assessors.
- Student feedback.
- Staff issues such as absence or role changes.
- Feedback obtained at Quality Management Review or other Pearson training events.
- Other stakeholder feedback such as Ofsted, parents, colleagues at other centres.

The Internal Verification of Assessment Decisions Process

The Internal Verifier reviews the Assessors' judgment against the learning aim, unit content, assessment criteria and assessment guidance as published in the qualification specification.

Internal verifiers should check:
- The student's work against the assessment criteria and judge whether it has been assessed accurately.
- The assessment criteria. This represents the national standard and all PEARSON students are measured against it.
- Coverage of the unit content in conjunction with the assessment guidance to ensure 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 programme of learning in order for students to be able to meet the standard determined in the assessment and grading criteria
- The feedback from assessor to student is accurate and linked to the assessment criteria.

Timing:
- o For internal verification of assessment decisions to take place, the student's work must have been formally assessed.
- o Internal verification must take place before students receive confirmation of their achievement and feedback.
- o If any inaccuracies are identified by the internal verifier, these can be corrected by the Assessor before results are made known to the students.
- o When issues are identified by the internal verifier, if appropriate these should be applied across the group.

Internally verifying resubmissions:
- o 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.
- o Completing best practice internal verification at the first submission stage should avoid issues around resubmission.

5. Responsibilities:

Student:
- o Should be informed of all aspects of assessment, progress monitoring and student induction.
- o Will agree to complete and submit work that is their own and confirms authenticity of own work.
- o Receives assessment decisions from their Assessor.
- o Students will agree to meet deadlines set by their assessors.
- o Are made aware of Pearson standards, assessment deadlines, and the need for authenticating work and student submissions and appeals.

Programme Team:
- o Is responsible for managing the Pearson programme delivery and assessment of the students to ensure coverage of all units and grading criteria and identifies staff development requirements.
- o Creates the assessment plan and agrees to deliver the programme to the plan ensuring timescales are met.
- o Plans assessment activities and timescales.
- o Agrees entry requirements for the programme.
- o Develops external links with employers and other sources of other relevant vocational input.
- o Selects units relevant to students' needs and the local context.
- o Considers resources to effectively deliver the Pearson programme.
- o Develops Pearson programme handbooks and updates all relevant documentation both electronic and paper based as required.
- o Adheres to the process of internal verification.

Assessor:
- o Is responsible for assessing the student's work according to the assessment plan and against national standards.
- o Provides feedback to students, ensures authenticity of the student's work and records and tracks achievement.
- o Completes standardisation training.
- o Delivers programme content using effective approaches, by designing, adapting and using assessment instruments.
- o Provides assessment decisions and tracks student achievement maintaining accurate assessment records both paper-based and electronic.
- o Plans next steps with the student
- o Oversees any authorised resubmissions
- o Completes any actions identified by the Internal Verifier.
- o Checks the quality of assessment to ensure that it is consistent, valid, fair and reliable.
- o Confirms assessment decisions meet national standards.
- o Carries out internal verification of assessors and their units according to the internal verification plan and provides feedback to assessors including any action required.
- o Arranges standardisation meetings across teams.
- o Ensures own assessment decisions are sampled if assessing on a Pearson programme.

Lead Internal Verifier:
- o Is responsible for overseeing quality standards in Pearson programmes.

- o Ensures compliance of quality is adhered to. As good practice the Lead Internal Verifier will internally verify assessors' marking.
- o Registers and accesses the standardisation materials and works through the standardisation material with the programme team.
- o Approves and signs the Pearson programme assessment plan.
- o Checks the quality of assessment to ensure that it is consistent, valid, fair and reliable and ensures corrective action is taken when required.
- o Confirms whether assessment decisions meet national standards.
- o Provides feedback to the Programme Team, SLT and Pearson including any training requirements.
- o Authorising valid resubmissions provided they follow the required criteria.
- o Ensures effective systems are in place to record the student's work and achievement both paper based and electronic records.
- o Monitors the Pearson programme file and updates accordingly.
- o Takes part in the formal stages of any appeal.
- o Arranges standardisation meetings across the subject team and liaises with the Quality Nominee and Standards Verifiers.
- o Ensures own assessment decisions are sampled if assessing on a programme. Standards Verifier
- o Maintains effective mechanisms for the internal verification of Pearson programmes.
- o Demonstrates effective recording of assessment and internal verification.
- o Appointed by Pearson, Standards Verifiers contact the Pearson Lead Internal Verifiers to arrange standards verification of each Pearson programme students' work from a sampling schedule.
- o Completes sampling in line with Pearson 's standards verification published requirements checking consistency of the interpretation of national standards by the Assessor.
- o Compares the assessment decisions of centre Pearson assessors for Pearson programmes to review the consistency and accuracy of their assessment.
- o Confirms that the submitted student's work meets the assessment criteria awarded and confirms work as authenticated by the Assessor.
- o Checks timely and effective internal verification has been carried out on assignments assessment and feedback to students.
- o Gives feedback to the Lead Internal Verifier on standards verification decisions and completes an online report identifying whether national standards have been met, including any remedial actions such as re-sampling.

Quality Nominee
- o Is responsible for the effective management of Pearson programmes and actively encourages and promotes good practice.
- o Acts as the main point of contact for Pearson.
- o Initial point of contact for all Standards Verifiers.
- o Liaises with Pearson practitioners and Internal Verifiers to ensure Standards Verifiers are able to carry out their role.
- o Ensures that appointed Lead Internal Verifiers complete the OSCA induction and download the standardisation materials for dissemination to the Pearson programme teams.
- o Registers on Edexcel online and updates Pearson with any programme and staff changes.
- o Liaises with the Centre Quality Management Reviewer and completes the annual Quality Management Review.
- o Ensures the accuracy of approved programmes and monitors approvals and review dates.
- o Ensures registrations are on approved Pearson programmes.
- o Ensures internal verification of Pearson programmes is planned at the start of the year and that internal verification takes place throughout the year.
- o Ensures programme teams are briefed on quality assurance processes, including:
- o Registration of Lead Internal Verifiers.
- o Quality Management Review.
- o Standards Verification process.

6. Assignments

Assignment design should have a practical vocational focus and reference unit assessment. Grading criteria should have a variety of assessment methods. A schedule of assignments and assessment schedule is to be planned and monitored during the delivery of each Pearson programme. All assignments briefs should be internally verified to check the dates and deadlines are appropriate.

7. Procedures

Assessment Plan

This is prepared with the Programme Team at the beginning of each academic year. The plan will cover all assessment and grading criteria. The Lead Internal Verifier will approve and sign the assessment plan. The assessment plan should include as a minimum
requirement:

- o Names of all assessors and Internal Verifiers.
- o Scheduling for assignment hand out and submissions.
- o Deadlines for assessments.
- o Scheduling for internal verification and the opportunity for resubmission.

Assessment and Tracking Assessment

A secure audit trail is maintained, comprising of assessment decisions, internal verification documentation for assignments and the student's work, and unit achievement for the qualification programme. This is both paper based and recorded on Databridge. All assessment evidence is clearly measured against national standards. Student progress can be accurately tracked, and the assessment process can be reliably verified. There is clear evidence of the safety of certification. Tracking student progress and recording what students have achieved and what needs to be completed on a unit to unit basis, provides full coverage of the units and grading opportunities. This in turn helps to enable internal verification and provides sampling information for the Standards Verifiers. Up to date and securely stored assessment records help to minimise the risk of assessment malpractice or issues related to staff absence.

Annotation of the Student's Work

It is good practice to annotate the student's work during feedback. Annotations alone do not constitute confirmation of achievement of an assessment; they are just indicators of where the evidence can be found. Therefore, helping to signpost to the Assessor, Internal Verifier and the Standards Verifier where the required evidence for the assessment can be found.

Feedback to Students

During teaching and learning of an assignment, the Assessor is using their professional judgement about the nature, quantity and level of feedback to the student. Following assessment, assessors record their assessment decisions on the assessment record for each individual assessment criteria. This record forms part of the feedback to support progression.

The Assessor can give feedback to the student on which criteria they have achieved and not achieved. However, the Assessor should avoid giving direct, specific instructions on how the student can improve their evidence to achieve a higher grade.

Submission of Evidence

Only one submission is allowed for each assignment. The Assessor is expected to formally record the assessment result and confirm the achievement of specific assessment criteria. Evidence submitted should target the assessment criteria. There should be a signed and dated declaration of student authentication to confirm the work submitted is the students' own work. The Assessor will record and confirm the assessment result and complete confirmation that the work submitted is the student's own work. Students should be sufficiently prepared to undertake the assessment and should be encouraged to submit their final complete work on their first submission in line with one submission is allowed for each assignment.

Resubmission of Evidence

The Assessor oversees any authorised resubmissions. The Lead Internal Verifier only can authorise resubmissions and ensures they are fairly and consistently implemented for all students. The following conditions must be met for a resubmission to be accepted:

- o The student has met the initial deadlines set for the assignment or has met any agreed extension deadline.
- o The Assessor will judge that the student will be able to provide improved evidence without further guidance.
- o The Assessor will authenticate the evidence submitted to be that of the students' own work and includes a signed and dated student declaration of authenticity.

If a student has not met the above conditions the Lead Internal Verifier will not authorise the resubmission. The resubmission will be recorded on the assessment record and a deadline of 14 working days will be given

from the date the student received the initial assessment result.

Standards Verification

Standards Verification applies to all Pearson programmes with internally assessed units. It is the external verification process used to check the Centre assignments and assessment against national standards and internal verification processes. The process of Standards Verification is to conduct sampling of assignment briefs and assessed the student's work in order to provide judgements and feedback. The Centre will agree to actions needed, including submission of a second sample, to complete issues arising from the Standards Verification process which could have the potential of blocking student certification.

Evidence of all resubmitted work must be included for sampling.

Appeals and Malpractice
- o   There are clear procedures for students to enable them to appeal an assessment decision and related processes to instigate an appeal. Students and staff should be made aware of the conditions which constitute an appeal and what is considered assessment malpractice.
- o   Malpractice issues include: plagiarism, collusion, fabrication of results, falsifying grades, fraudulent certification claims, referencing skills, promoting a zero-tolerance approach etc.
- o   Any appeal will be recorded and documented with retention for 18 months following the resolution of the appeal. The Head of Centre will facilitate the students' ultimate right to appeal to Pearson, once the Centre's appeal procedure has been exhausted.

Certificate Claims

Certification claims will be accurate and based on audited records. Claims will only be made with the written authorisation of the appropriate Manager / Director of the Pearson qualification. Confirmed claims will be made by the Centre's Examinations Officer prior to the deadline

Retention of the Student's Work

Original student's work will be kept secure for up to 12 weeks after the students have been certificated. Following student certification, assessment records including feedback sheets and associated internal verification documentation, will be kept for a minimum of three years. This will require the storing of all assessment records, securely and safely relating to both internal and external assessments. This may be in the form of paper based evidence Policy and Procedure or electronic evidence. It is essential that records are stored securely for a Pearson audit, if required, and in the event of student appeals or certification issues.

8.   Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months but can be revised as needed

Impact of non-compliance:

Staff:	Disciplinary action, support plan, Disciplinary, Dismissal
Student:	Not applicable
Legislation/organisational:	Reputational damage, litigation, statutory and non-regulated compliance. prosecution
Compliance lead:	Pastoral & Safeguarding
Policy Reference:	ELGR-POL-ORG-011
Version:	1
Agreed policy location:	DatabridgeMIS and Company Website
Does the policy require Governor approval?	No

Approval

Prepared by	Approved by	Counter Signatory
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01/09/2021	01/09/2021	01/09/2020
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Version Control

Version	Date	Revision	Review Date
1	01/09/2021	Policy Reviewed	31/08/2022
2			
3			
4			
5			