

INTERNAL VERIFICATION POLICY
(for Pearson/BTEC Awards)

Scope

1. This Internal Verification Policy applies to all Pearson/Edexcel/BTEC awards offered by Arden University.

Purpose

2. Internal Verification (IV) is a key quality assurance and enhancement process, the purpose of which is to review and evaluate assessment activity to ensure that assessments are produced correctly and in line with the module (unit) specifications, and that assessment decisions made by the assessor (first marker) are accurate, fair and consistent. The overall aim is to ensure that the standards set by the awarding body are being maintained.

Principles

3. Detailed guidelines on Internal Verification are published by Pearson at [http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-brand/BTEC Centre Guide to Internal Verification.pdf](http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/btec-brand/BTEC_Centre_Guide_to_Internal_Verification.pdf)
4. Broadly, the IV process undertakes:
 - The checking of all assessments produced by module tutors, prior to their distribution to students; and
 - The regular, scheduled review of assessment decisions for all modules based on samples of student work submitted at each assessment period in order to ensure that the appropriate academic standards are being maintained.
5. Evidence of IV activity and related documentation are retained for inspection by Pearson's External Verifiers during their regular External Verification visits.

Internal Verifiers

6. Internal Verifiers are appointed by the Pro Vice Chancellor and will have appropriate subject knowledge and expertise and typically have significant prior experience of working on Pearson/BTEC awards.
7. Newly appointed Internal Verifiers will be inducted into Arden University's processes and systems and are expected to participate in staff development activities arranged by Arden University.

Processes

8. All assessment and IV activities are scheduled in advance within the Quality Assurance Schedule (QAS), which is set out and agreed annually by Academic Board. Overall

responsibility for the management of IV activities rests with the relevant Programme/Pathway Leader or his/her nominated Lead Internal Verifier.

Process for IV of assessments prior to their distribution to students

9. All assessments for all modules produced by module tutors must undergo IV before being released to students.
10. The purpose of IV of assessment design is to ensure, *inter alia*, that:
 - Assessments are appropriate to the learning outcomes and assessment/grading criteria to be assessed.
 - Assessment activities enable the student to demonstrate they have met those outcomes and criteria.
 - Assessment briefs set out in clear terms what the student is expected to do to meet the outcomes and the pass, merit and distinction grades (as applicable) and that the language used is clear and appropriate.
 - Assessment briefs include the assessment/grading criteria, appropriately contextualised.
 - Assessments are appropriate for the HE level of the course and it is feasible to complete the required activities within the given time constraints.
 - Assessments promote equality and recognise diversity.
 - Assessments encourage good academic practice in relation to citation, referencing and bibliography, and the development of higher level skills.
 - All details contained in the assessment brief are accurate and free from error.
11. To enable them to complete the IV process, Internal Verifiers will be provided with the assessment to be internally verified and a copy of the relevant programme specification. Internal Verifiers are required to complete the “*Internal Verification of Assessment Activities – Evaluation of Assessment Design*” proforma, or the online version of the form situated within Arden University marking system ‘iSystem’, a copy of which can be found at Annex 1 to this policy.
12. It is the responsibility of the Programme Team /Pathway Leader to ensure that any actions identified are acted upon, resolved and documented during the IV process and that any identified areas of good practice are disseminated.
13. It is the responsibility of the Quality Co-ordinator to check that the above IV activities have been completed on time and that all findings highlighted by the Internal Verifier have been resolved before assessments are agreed for release to students, and that any issues are escalated to the Programme Team /Pathway Leader for timely resolution.

Process for IV of assessments decisions

14. Samples of assessment decisions made by markers for student work across all modules must be undertaken, and all grades agreed through this process, before grades can be presented to and recorded by an Examining Board. Any grades issued to students prior to the completion of the verification process are clearly marked as provisional and subject to change.

15. Wherever possible, all IV of assessment decisions for an assessment period in a module will be completed before provisional grades for that module are issued to students. In exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to do so, then the grades and feedback issued to students will clearly state that they are provisional and subject to Internal/External Verification and recording by and Examining Board.
16. To ensure that students receive timely grades and feedback, sampling of assessment decisions is undertaken at each assessment cycle (normally quarterly) immediately after completion of marking for that cycle.
17. The Student Support staff responsible for the management and co-ordination of the assessment marking cycle are responsible for selecting random samples of students' assessment submissions for IV. Samples are selected in line with the principles set out in "Arden University *Sampling Basis for Internal Moderation*" document, with the exception that samples are selected from the pass, merit, distinction and not-yet-passed grades, rather than the percentage grade boundaries set out therein.
18. Samples must be representative of all groups of students and delivery modes (if applicable). Where a module is running for the first time or a marker is undertaking marking duties for the first time on the programme, the sample selected will be greater.
19. The purpose of IV of assessment decisions is to check, *inter alia*, that:
 - The work of the student has been assessed appropriately and accurately.
 - There is evidence of constructive feedback that clearly states how the learner has met the grading criteria and provides information to the student on how he/she can improve.
 - There has been correct application of the assessment criteria awarded and the grading decision reached matches the grading criteria set out in the assessment brief.
 - All of the required assessment marking documentation has been fully and accurately completed (e.g. assessment feedback forms).
20. The Internal Verifier will complete the electronic Internal Verifier Report embedded within the system (for marking undertaken via iSystem) or the "*Internal Verifier Report on Assessment Decisions*" proforma (for all other marking – see Annex 2) for each sample internally verified, leaving detailed feedback in each of the sections of the form. A copy of the completed proforma will normally be provided to the marker. Where required, a dialogue between Internal Verifier and the marker will ensue during which any actions or suggestions for future improvement will be agreed upon. The IV process is complete once any agreed actions that require immediate attention are complete, documented on the IV form and have been signed off by the Internal Verifier. Where necessary, matters will be escalated to the Programme Team /Pathway Leader who will be responsible for facilitating a timely resolution. At the end of the IV cycle the Pathway Leader will be responsible for 'signing off' the complete batch of IV for the specific assessment period with a view to ensuring that the IV process undertaken is robust.
21. To enable Internal Verifiers to complete the IV activities, they will be required to access:

- The relevant Pearson module specification which includes details of the content, learning outcomes and assessment criteria for the module;
- The relevant assessment brief issued to students;
- The assessment feedback and grade forms completed by the marker for each student in the sample;
- Grading descriptors, both generic and those which have been contextualised to the module/assessment.

Annex 1

**ARDEN UNIVERSITY INTERNAL VERIFICATION PROCEDURES
Pearson
Internal Verification of Assessment Activities**

EVALUATION OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Programme Title | | Submission Date |
| Module Title | | |

The purpose of this form is to record judgements made by the Internal Verifier about the suitability of the assessment brief.

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Title of Assessment | Type of Assessment Activity |
| | (E.g., report, presentation, case study, etc) |
| Module/Unit | Assessor |

| | Yes | No | Comments made by Internal Verifier |
|---|-----|----|------------------------------------|
| 1. Does the assessment clearly identify the learning outcomes and assessment/grading criteria that are to be assessed? | | | |
| 2. Has the correct assessment method been used? (see assessment schedule) | | | |
| 3. Does the activity enable the learner to demonstrate they have met the learning outcomes and assessment/grading criteria? | | | |
| 4. Does the assessment clearly state what the learner has to do to meet each of the learning outcomes and the pass, merit and distinction grades? | | | |
| 5. Does the assessment give opportunity for the learner to take responsibility for their own learning and give some freedom of choice for areas to be explored within the assignment? | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| 6. Does the assessment clearly state what has to be submitted for assessment | | | |
| 7. Are the tasks pitched at the correct HE level for the module? | | | |
| 8. Is the assessment contextualised to the learner's main programme? Is the appropriate language used? | | | |
| 9. Are the number of tasks appropriate? Is it feasible for the assessment to be completed within the time constraints? | | | |
| 10. Is the word count detailed on the assessment brief? Is the proposed length appropriate? | | | |
| 11. Does the assessment provide an opportunity for formative assessment? | | | |
| 12. If a case study/scenario is used, is there enough depth for the higher grades to be awarded? | | | |
| 13. Is the assessment informative and professionally presented in a format consistent with the level of the course? | | | |
| 14. Does the assessment promote equality and recognise diversity? | | | |
| 15. Does the assessment encourage good academic practice in relation to citation, referencing and bibliography? | | | |
| 16. Does the assessment promote the development of higher level skills (e.g. evaluation, analysis, application, review, literature searching, independent thought etc) | | | |

Please keep a copy of “marked up” assessment front sheet and revised version with this form in the IV file.

Actions identified/summary from the Internal Verifier, including sharing good practice

Signature IV.....Date.....

Signature Assessor.....Date.....

ACTIONS COMPLETED - Signature IV

Date

Pathway Leader sign off / comments

Signature PWL.....Date.....

3. Internal Verifier to tick one of the following:

Tick

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>Assessing meets the expected standard in terms of the criteria listed above – <u>No Remedial Action Required</u></p> <p>Comments: (Please comment on the sample, areas of marking good practice and suggestions for improvement)</p> <p>Actions for improvement</p> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p>Assessing standards not acceptable. Reasons must be stated.</p> <p>State reason:</p> <p>Proposed remedial action: <u>Assessments to be remarked</u></p> <p>(Discussions with original (first) marker should be held prior to any re-assessment).</p> <p><u>by original assessor OR by a different assessor</u> (delete as appropriate)</p> <p>Is further Internal Verification required following reassessment? Yes/No (delete as appropriate)</p> |

Internal Verifier signature: **Date**.....