



Pearson

COVID-19 Update - Higher Nationals (International)

March 2020

The COVID-19 global outbreak has provided a set of unforeseen challenges for Pearson-approved centres worldwide delivering Higher Nationals. This update provides centres with guidance and information on:

- **International External Examination**
- **Programme Approvals and Re-approvals**
- **Fee Arrangements**
- **Deferral of the Annual Student Survey**
- **Distance Learning Delivery**
- **Higher Nationals Training Events**

Further updates can also be found at our [website](#).

International External Examination for 2019/20 and Contact with Allocated External Examiner (EE)

In response to the recent Covid-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak Pearson is regularly reviewing information about the number of cases and spread of the infection. We also continue to closely monitor events and updates issued by numerous sources including Public Health England and World Health Organisation (WHO).

Our priority is the safety of our employees, customers and learners. We are committed to ensuring that learning can continue during this period of uncertainty, following guidance from governments and local authorities in the markets in which we operate. We've therefore taken a decision to carry out all quality assurance of vocational programmes remotely for the foreseeable future.

This means that our External Examiners will not be carrying out visits as per the usual BTEC quality assurance process and will be in touch with you shortly to arrange for your Centre's sampling materials to be sent to them remotely. Further guidance in relation to remote BTEC sampling can be found in [Appendix A](#).

Please liaise with your External Examiner directly to agree a suitable date for sampling and should you have any questions, get in touch with our Customer Services Team through the [Customer Support Portal](#), who will be able to support you.

New Programme approval for centres

Programme approvals will continue via a desk-based review process. Photographic evidence may be required to support applications and, where necessary a virtual tour of the facilities may be required.

Programme re-approvals

Most re-approvals will be reviewed remotely. However if a centre has been deemed at risk for any reason (and would normally therefore require a visit), centres will be asked to provide video or photographic evidence. This will then be confirmed by the External Examiner at the sampling stage when visits begin again.

Fee arrangements

Although the QA process will be using the [reduced fees](#) in the prices lists, centre approval prices will not be changed as there will still be a physical visit undertaken as soon as conditions allow, so the trainer can also revisit some of the training and provide additional coaching.

Annual confirmation fees will remain the same.

Deferral of Annual Student Survey

The launch of the Higher National Annual Student Survey, which was originally planned for April 8th 2020, has now been postponed. Further updates will follow by email and will also be provided through [HN Global](#).

Distance Learning Delivery

It is understandable that centres will still want to continue their teaching and learning if possible. Pearson wants to provide as much support as possible to centres to ensure that the quality of learning is not compromised.

In order to monitor and support distance learning we will need all centres delivering Higher Nationals that have transferred, or have plans to transfer their teaching online, to complete this [temporary distance learning form](#). Given the unprecedented situation it will not be necessary to seek prior approval from Pearson to deliver via online distance learning. We advise all centres to read the [Distance Learning Policy](#) and to check **Appendix A: Distance Learning Self-Assessment** (on pages 7-13) to see what the general expectations are for distance learning. Please note that **existing registration cap numbers will apply for each centre**, and applications for increases can be made through hnqa@pearson.com.

Some tips from Pearson on how to move to online delivery can be found [here](#).

HN Training

A range of qualification based training is now available online that is both generic and subject specific. To find out what is available and when these events are being held, click the following link [here](#).

For a quick search, under the **International and UK filter**, select 'International' and under the **Qualification** filter, select BTEC Higher Nationals. This will display training scheduled over the next three months.