



# **Audit Report**

**Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel)**

**7 March 2013**

## Note

Restricted or commercially sensitive information gathered during SQA Accreditation monitoring activities is treated in the strictest confidence. However:

- ◆ The findings of this report, and the associated Action Plan, will be presented to SQA's Accreditation Committee and made available to colleagues from the Welsh Government, the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) and the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), with a view to the contents informing future accreditation and re-accreditation submissions by the awarding body
- ◆ The report will be published on SQA Accreditation's website.

Please note that SQA Accreditation monitoring activity is conducted on a sampling basis. As a consequence, not all aspects of an awarding body's performance in quality assurance, contract compliance, implementation, awarding of certificates and fee arrangements have been considered in this report to the same depth.

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## Executive summary

This was the fourth audit of the Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) since it was approved as an awarding body by SQA Accreditation in 2006.

### 1.1 Scope and approach

The audit was designed to review and evaluate Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) strategies, policies and procedures to ensure compliance with the *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2011)*, Regulatory Directives or Awarding Body Agreement including any conditions noted.

As this was a full audit of Edexcel (Pearson Education Ltd.), all Principles were included within the scope of the audit.

An issue has been recorded where the Lead Accreditation Auditor found evidence that the awarding body has not met the requirements of one of the following:

- ◆ *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2011)*
- ◆ Regulatory Directives
- ◆ Awarding Body Agreement or any conditions(s) noted
- ◆ any conditions of the qualification(s) accreditation at the time of approval

The following timescales apply:

- ◆ SQA Accreditation will issue this report within 30 working days of the audit date.
- ◆ The awarding body must sign and return the audit report and associated Action Plan within 30 working days of the audit report being issued.
- ◆ SQA Accreditation will confirm whether the Action Plan is appropriate to address the issue within a further 20 working days from the date of receipt. This will be subject to the actions proving appropriate to the issues raised.
- ◆ SQA Accreditation will monitor progress towards completion of the actions identified within the Action Plan.

Recommendations are noted to ensure that, where these are agreed during the audit, they are recorded for future reference. As recommendations are recorded for awarding body consideration only, it is not necessary to agree either actions or timescales to resolve these in the awarding body Action Plan.

## 1.2 Awarding body audit report timeline

Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) Audit Date	7 March 2013
SQA Accreditation Audit Report Date	27 March 2013
Date audit report and Action Plan to be signed and submitted by Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel)	15 May 2013

## 1.3 Background

Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) is a nationally recognised awarding body and offers academic and vocational qualifications to schools, colleges, employers and other training organisations throughout the UK and internationally. Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) was approved by SQA Accreditation as an awarding body in 2006 (originally under the name Edexcel). The awarding body has been accredited to offer a range of qualifications spanning various industries including customer service, hospitality, management, business administration, retail, security and core skills. The audit team was provided with full access to the awarding body's staff and documentation. The organisation is recognised for having achieved ISO9001, BS25999 quality standards and Investors in People status.

## 1.4 Overview

As a result of the audit and post-audit activities, three issues have been recorded and four recommendations noted.

The three issues and four recommendations form the basis of the Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) Action Plan. The Action Plan must be submitted by 15 May 2013.

Area of concern	No. of issues	No. of recommendations	Issue risk rating
Principle No. 2	1	2	Medium
Principle No.6		1	n/a
Principle No. 18	1		Medium
Principle No. 22	1	1	Medium
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	

## 2 Audit findings

The following sections detail issues raised and recommendations noted against the *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2011)*, Regulatory Directives or Awarding Body Agreement through the course of the awarding body audit.

### 2.1 Issues

#### **Principle 2. The awarding body must publish clear information on their products, services and associated charges and fees.**

The audit team had reviewed the guidance documentation banked on Quickr prior to the audit and identified several issues within key operating manuals. The *Edexcel Information Manual 2012–13*, section 9, is no longer relevant to SVQs. This is a key document used by centres for registration and certification and therefore must include SVQs. It must also be reviewed so the content and scope reflect SVQs and the procedures around their delivery.

The manual must be amended so that it is clear that it also applies to SQA-accredited BTEC provision, their SCQF levels and make appropriate reference to the *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2011)*, not the *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*.

Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) has BTEC qualifications accredited with SQA Accreditation for the security sector. Within the *UK BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook 2012–13*, section 7 only refers to QCF BTEC Standards Verification. Again, the awarding body's guidance was found to be lacking in clarity and scope particularly as this is another key operating document regarding the quality assurance arrangements for centres.

The awarding body has recently reviewed the external quality assurance systems it has in place for Quality Review and Development (QRD) and Standards Verification (SV) meaning that SVQs no longer receive a QRD visit every year but now receive a minimum of two SV visits.

The awarding body's documentation is not clear that the checks made as part of the QRD system have now been incorporated into the SV process. It is clear from the annual centre monitoring activity that this change is not understood by centres and needs to be effectively communicated by Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel). **The areas identified above have been recorded as Issue 1.**

The evidence available indicates that Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) does not meet the requirements of Principle 2. **Issue 1 refers.**

**Principle 18. The awarding body and their centres must deal with complaints on a fair and equitable basis, in line with their published procedures and timescales, and without unreasonable delay. The awarding body, their centres and learners must be made aware of how and when they can complain to SQA Accreditation. Where a complaint is upheld, the awarding body and/or centre must take appropriate, corrective and/or preventative action.**

Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) currently has no published complaints procedure or policy in place. Work is currently underway to formalise this and it is expected that guidance will be completed by April 2013. It was made clear that the awarding body's guidance must ensure candidates and centres are aware that they can complain to SQA Accreditation and that the awarding body should be able to identify complaints that are related to SQA-accredited qualifications. **This has been recorded as Issue 2.**

The evidence available indicates that Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) does not meet the requirements of Principle 18. **Issue 2 refers.**

**Principle 22. The awarding body must ensure that qualification and Unit certificates meet SQA Accreditation's minimum requirements, reflect learner achievement, are only issued on the basis of a valid claim, and are supplied within a reasonable and clearly communicated timescale.**

The audit team requested a number of sample certificates across a range of qualification types prior to the audit. It was noted that Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) are still using the SQA Approved Awarding Body logo which has now been replaced.

SQA Accreditation contacted all awarding bodies in September 2012 to inform them of the changes stating that they must use the new logo as soon as possible or use existing stock by 1 October 2012 at the latest, however, Edexcel is not using the required logo. **This has been recorded as Issue 3.**

The evidence available indicates that Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) does not meet the requirements of Principle 22. **Issue 3 refers.**

## 2.2 Recommendations

### **Principle 2. The awarding body must publish clear information on their products, services and associated charges and fees.**

Edexcel has a number of key operating manuals which its approved centres rely on as reference documents. The audit team was able to review the content of these prior to the audit and noted that although there was a lot of information pertinent to the delivery of SVQs and SQA-accredited BTEC qualifications, it was included with other information regarding other Edexcel qualification types and could be easily missed. As such only parts of the manuals were relevant and centres could find this difficult to extrapolate and identify which parts were relevant to them.

In addition, the audit team also noted that there was a lot of duplication across the operating manuals and the content was not always identical. Edexcel may wish to consider producing simplified guidance or signposting centres to the relevant information for their qualification type(s). **This has been noted as Recommendation 1.**

The audit team noted some duplication of banked information across several principles on Quickr and the titling and referencing convention had not been followed correctly leading to a proliferation of documents across principles. The audit team also identified a lot of information within Edexcel guidance and policies which was out of date, inaccurate and irrelevant; for instance, references to the *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)* and lack of appropriate reference to SVQs and SQA-accredited BTEC qualifications. **This has been noted as Recommendation 2.**

### **Principle 6. The awarding body and their approved centres must have the relevant expertise, quality assurance procedures, technological, financial, human resources and other physical resources, to carry out their regulated functions, during the life of the qualifications and Units they offer.**

The *UK BTEC Quality Assurance Handbook 2012–13* describes the role of the Lead Internal Verifier. It should be noted that centres delivering the SQA-accredited BTEC qualifications for security do not require to have internal verification systems in place. This should be clarified within the handbook so that centres do not use resources internally verifying assessment material where this is not required. The awarding body should also consider an appropriate means of communicating this requirement to centres. **This has been noted as Recommendation 3.**

### **Principle 22. The awarding body must ensure that qualification and Unit certificates meet SQA Accreditation's minimum requirements, reflect learner achievement, are only issued on the basis of a valid claim, and are supplied within a reasonable and clearly communicated timescale.**

The awarding body's certificates contain information on the reverse which does not appropriately reference SQA Accreditation. In addition, some of the content regarding SVQ levels and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework should be reviewed to ensure that it is accurate and meaningful. **This has been noted as Recommendation 4.**



### 3 Outstanding approval and accreditation conditions

A condition will be recorded at the time of approval of the awarding body or at the time of accreditation for an SQA-accredited qualification. A condition is recorded when SQA's Accreditation Co-ordination Group finds evidence that the awarding body does not fully meet the *SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2011)*, Regulatory Directives or the Awarding Body Agreement.

Principle no.	Condition	Date due
No outstanding conditions		

## 4 Risk rating of issues

SQA Accreditation assigns a risk rating to each issue recorded as a result of an awarding body audit activity. The table below illustrates how the rating for an issue is assigned, and identifies the possible impact of the issue on qualifications and/or the learner.

The assignment of a risk rating allows an awarding body to target their resources to areas which have been identified as having a major impact in these areas. The risk rating also allows SQA Accreditation to target its resources to support awarding bodies in improving their performance.

Risk	Impact of issues
Very Low	The issue is likely to cause minimal concern and would not threaten the integrity of the qualification or impact adversely on the learner. Any overall effect is likely to be small scale and/or localised, rather than widespread. The issue identified is unlikely to recur once resolved and no long lasting damage would be anticipated.
Low	The issue is of low impact but of sufficient importance to merit intervention, with a low threat to the systems or procedures associated with the qualification and/or impact on the learner. Disruption may not just be localised but more widespread and would possibly cause residual damage; however, this could be easily corrected without further consequence.
Medium	The issue could potentially damage the credibility of the qualification and/or be detrimental to the learner. There may be some impact to the systems or procedures that support the qualification or the operational effectiveness of the awarding body.
High	The issue could have a high impact on the integrity and reliability of the qualification or the effective operation of the awarding body as a whole if corrective action is not quickly taken. There is a high probability that the qualification and/or learner will be negatively affected.
Very High	The issue will have a serious impact on the integrity and reliability of the qualification or the effective operation of the awarding body if corrective action is not immediately taken. There is a very high probability that the qualification and/or learner will be negatively affected.

In assigning a risk rating, each issue is considered on its own merit, taking account of the context in which it was identified.

## 5 Table of awards

Accredited qualifications currently offered by Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel).

SQA-accredited qualification title	Level	Code	Accreditation date	Re-accreditation date
EDEXCEL BTEC Award in Door Supervision (Scotland) at SCQF Level 6	6	R086 04	01/08/2010	31/12/2013
EDEXCEL BTEC Award in CCTV Operations (Public Space Surveillance) (Scotland) at SCQF level 6	6	R085 04	01/09/2010	31/12/2013
EDEXCEL BTEC Award in Security Guarding (Scotland) at SCQF Level 6	6	R087 04	01/09/2010	31/12/2013
Logistics Operations Management	N/A	G9HE 23	09/09/2009	30/06/2013
Warehousing and Storage	N/A	G9HG 21	09/09/2009	30/06/2013
SVQ 2 in Business and Administration at SCQF Level 5	5	GA7R 22	02/03/2011	29/02/2016
SVQ 3 in Business and Administration at SCQF Level 6	6	GA7T 23	02/03/2011	29/02/2016
SVQ 2 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 5	5	GC2V 22	27/04/2011	31/12/2015
SVQ 3 in Customer Service at SCQF Level 6	6	GC2W 23	27/04/2011	31/12/2015
SVQ 2 in Professional Cookery at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9C 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 Beverage Service at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9D 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Food and Beverage Service at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9E 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Food Service at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9F 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Front of House Reception at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9G 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Hospitality Services at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9H 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015

<b>SQA-accredited qualification title</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Accreditation date</b>	<b>Re-accreditation date</b>
SVQ 2 in Housekeeping at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9J 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Kitchen Services at SCQF Level 5	5	GC9K 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 2 in Food Production and Cooking at SCQF Level 5	5	GD17 22	29/06/2011	31/01/2015
SVQ 3 in Hospitality Supervision and Leadership at SCQF Level 7	7	GC9M 23	29/06/2011	31/08/2014
SVQ 3 in Professional Cookery at SCQF Level 6	6	GC9N 23	29/06/2011	31/08/2014
SVQ 3 in Communication Technology Professionals	N/A	GC9X 23	06/07/2011	31/03/2013
SVQ 2 in Team Leading at SCQF Level 5	5	GD5C 22	21/09/2011	31/05/2016
SVQ 3 in Management at SCQF Level 7	7	GD5A 23	21/09/2011	31/05/2016
SVQ 4 in Management at SCQF Level 9	9	GD5D 24	21/09/2011	31/05/2016
SVQ 5 in Management at SCQF Level 11	11	GD5E 25	21/09/2011	31/05/2016
SVQ 1 in Retail Skills at SCQF Level 4	4	GE2T 21	09/11/2011	30/11/2016
SVQ 2 in Retail Skills at SCQF Level 5	5	GE2V 22	09/11/2011	30/11/2016
SVQ 3 in Retail (Sales Professional) at SCQF Level 6	6	GE2W 23	09/11/2011	30/11/2016
SVQ 3 in Retail (Management) at SCQF Level 6	6	GE2Y 23	09/11/2011	30/11/2016
SVQ 3 in Retail (Visual Merchandising) at SCQF Level 6	6	GE30 23	09/11/2011	30/11/2016
SVQ 2 in Passenger Carrying Vehicle Driving (Bus and Coach) at SCQF Level 5	5	GF43 22	30/05/2012	30/04/2017
EDEXCEL Diploma in Creative and Digital Media	N/A	R162 04	17/08/2011	31/08/2015
EDEXCEL BTEC Award for Upskilling Door Supervisors (Scotland)	N/A	R232 04	11/07/2012	31/12/2013

## 6 List of documents reviewed pre-audit and post-audit

Document title	Date of issue	Version number
Edexcel Information Manual 2012–2013	September 2012	
UK BTEC Quality assurance Handbook 2012–13		
Edexcel NVQS, SVQs and Competence-base Qualifications — Delivery Requirements and Quality Assurance Guidance	September 2012	Issue 2
Centre Guidance for Onscreen Tested Vocational Qualifications Edexcel BTEC Level 2 in Door Supervision (Scotland)	January 2012	Issue 1
BTEC Security Qualifications Centre Management Handbook	September 2012	
Sample Certificates		
Guide to Vocational Centre/Qualification Approval Form		
Edexcel Vocational Qualification Approval Form (VQA)		
Edexcel Online		
Procedure for the Invigilation of Tests		
Governance Structure		
BTEC Apprenticeships Quality assurance Handbook 2012–13		Version 1.2
An Introduction to Customer Services		
Customer Service Charter		
Malpractice Appeals Process Map	March 2012	V3
Pearson Associate Terms and Conditions	September 2012	
Dealing with Malpractice Process Map	April 2011	V1.0

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>Version number</b>
Business Assurance Group Investigations Manual	June 2011	Issue 2
VQ Enquiries and Appeals Process	April 2011	
General and Vocational Qualifications Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments Policies and Procedures 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013		
Report of Suspected Malpractice		
Enquiries and Appeals about Pearson Vocational Qualifications	September 2012	V1.3
BTEC & SVQ New Centre Approval Process		
Equality Policy	August 2012	Issue 5.2
Business Review Proforma — Various Departments		
Qualification Development — Processes and Procedures	April 2012	
Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration, General and Vocational Qualifications 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013		
Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Process	September 2012	V2.0
SCQF Credit Accumulation and Transfer Policy	September 2011	Issue 1.0
Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy for Edexcel Vocational Qualifications	November 2010	Issue 1.0
Pearson Qualification Services Quality Manual	December 2011	Version 8
Pearson Qualification Services: Problem Reporting Procedure	December 2011	Version 3
Pearson Qualification Services: Preventative Action Procedure	February 2012	Version 5
Pearson Qualification Services: Corrective Action Procedure	February 2012	Version 5
Assessment Associate Terms and Conditions	September 2012	

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>Version number</b>
Pearson Assessment Policy	October 2012	Issue 2.0
Job Description Director, Regulation, Standards & Research (PEL's Responsible Officer)		
Conflict of Interest Policy	June 2012	Version 3
Document Retention Policy	October 2012	Issue 3.0
Quarterly Statistics		
Centre Data		
Evidence Mapping Matrix		
SV Reports		
Incident and Escalation Policy	May 2012	Issue 2.0
Document Classification and Control Policy	January 2012	Issue 1.2
Organisational Structure		
Balanced Scorecard		
Guide to Writing Regulatory Policies and Procedures	June 2011	Issue 1.0
Pearson Policy for Collaborative Agreements for the Delivery of Vocational Qualifications by Third Parties	November 2012	Issue 2.0
Data Protection Policy — Data Subject Access Requests — Compliance Checklist and Flowchart	March 2008	Issue 1
Data Protection Policy — Incident Response Plan	April 2008	Issue 1
Data Protection Policy	April 2008	Issue 1
Advertising and Marketing Policy	September 2012	Issue 2.0

<b>Document title</b>	<b>Date of issue</b>	<b>Version number</b>
Data Protection Policy — Candidate Date	April 2008	Issue 1
Qualification and Development Proposal Form		





## 7 Action plan

A separate document in Microsoft Word has been forwarded with this audit report.

Areas of concern	Issue	Risk rating	Proposed action	Target date for completion
Principle 2	<p>The awarding body must review its key guidance documents to ensure that their scope is relevant to SVQs and SQA-accredited BTEC qualifications.</p> <p>In addition, the awarding body must ensure that consistent messages regarding the changes around the removal of Quality Review and Development visits for SVQs and the frequency of Standards Verification visits are clearly communicated to centres.</p>	Medium		

Areas of concern	Issue	Risk rating	Proposed action	Target date for completion
Principle 18	The awarding body must ensure that it has a published complaints procedure and policy in place. They must indicate how candidates and centres can complain to SQA Accreditation within clear timescales.	Medium		
Principle 22	Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel) certificates must use the appropriate logo supplied by SQA Accreditation.	Medium		

**Signatures of agreement of Action Plan**

For and on behalf of Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel):

**Signature**

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**Date**

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For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Signature**

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**Date**

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## 8 Acceptance of audit findings

For and on behalf of Pearson Education Ltd (Edexcel):

**Signature**

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**Designation**

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**Date**

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For and on behalf of SQA Accreditation:

**Signature**

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**Designation**

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**Date**

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