The Hinckley SCHOOL

BTEC Distance Learning

Date of Last Review:	September 2023
Reviewed by:	A Radcliffe / D Wood
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Scope of Policy

This policy applies to the delivery of programmes of learning leading to Pearson qualifications, through means of distance learning and/or assessment for the majority or all of the programme.

The policy outlines the minimum requirements that you need to meet to be able to use distance learning or distance assessment.

It is essential that you understand, and follow, any qualification and unit-specific requirements for delivery or assessment that are set out in the qualification specification.

Education and Skills Funding Agency (2019-2020) states within their apprenticeship funding rules that funding cannot be given to off-the-job training delivered by distance learning. Off the-job training can be funded if it provides a mixed delivery model, for example, distance, online or blended learning as per the limit of the funding band.

Distance learning and assessment may not be the right approach for some learners so it is important that you recruit with integrity. Distance learners will need to have the technical and communication skills to enable them to work independently and communicate effectively.

What is distance learning and assessment?
Distance Learning is a mode of delivering education and instruction, often on an individual basis, to learners who are not physically present in a traditional setting such as a classroom.

Examples of distance learning
• Learners studying independently using a virtual learning environment for example online packages, posted resources, telephone support.

What is not distance learning
• Learners are released from employment to attend classroom-based theory sessions.
• Learners are undertaking practical experience, out of the classroom, that is part of the qualification.
• Remote teaching or learning as part of a blended learning programme where at least 50% is conducted face to face.

Distance Assessment is a method of assessment delivered to learners away from a centre, with little or no face to face contact with tutors, where the assessment is designed to be carried out remotely. Distance Assessment enables learners to be

assessed even if they are in situations/settings where traditional methods of assessment delivery may be difficult or impossible to operate.

<u>Examples of distance assessment</u>

- Use of e-portfolio / E-assessment where this is the sole means of contact between the learner and the assessor.

- Assessments completed in a location remote from the assessor, without direct supervision from a centre. For example, assignments completed using a Virtual Learning Environment or assessments completed as part of correspondence courses.

<u>What is not distance assessment</u>

- Learners are assessed in their workplace, by an assessor, for a work-based learning programme (for example, NVQ Construction).

- Pearson set exams that must be completed under supervision (on demand tests). •

  E-portfolios which are being used in traditional learning settings

<u>Distance learning and assessment are not appropriate where:</u>

- Practical skills and/or interaction with individuals/equipment need to be demonstrated and assessed.

- The assessment methods chosen by the centre to meet the requirements of distance learning are not the most appropriate to assess learners' achievement of the learning outcomes.

- There are group work situations/units where collaboration with others is needed.

- There is a requirement for learners to be overseen in person by centre staff at a specific physical location, under controlled conditions, this includes observations of performance in SVQ/NVQ type competency-based qualifications and Pearson externally set and marked examinations and controlled tasks.

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<u>How to apply to use distance learning or distance assessment</u>

Step 1:

- Complete and submit a Distance Learning Self-Assessment (DLSA) Form when you apply for qualification approval You must have approval for a distance learning or assessment mode of delivery. It is important that you do not start delivering a programme by distance learning or distance assessment without

approval as this could lead to specific sanctions or withdrawal of your centre or programme approval.

- Applying to us means that we can put quality assurance procedures in place to support you and your learners. Visit our qualifications approval page for details on how to apply for approval.
- If you are already approved for qualifications which you now want to deliver by distance learning or assessment you will need to let us know by submitting a completed DLSA Form and send it via the Pearson Support Portal.
- We may ask to see some of the evidence that you have recorded in the DLSA Form.
- We may need to visit your centre to confirm how the approval criteria can be met for this mode of study. You will need to demonstrate how your quality systems will support distance learning or assessment to ensure our approval requirements are met.
- Please see section 5 for other useful documents to support you.

Step 2: Outcome of your application

There are three possible outcomes to your application:

- Your application is successful and we do not need any further information now. You can start delivering distance learning and/or assessment as detailed in your approval letter.
- Your application is incomplete and we will ask you for further information
- Your application is unsuccessful. We will write to you to explain why you have not been successful. If you wish to reapply for approval later, you will need to develop an action plan to address any requirements.

Step 3: Register your learners (after receipt of approval confirmation)

- When you register learners, you need to tell us which learners are being taught or assessed at a distance.
- When you register your learners, you should check the distance learning option under 'mode of delivery'.
- We will continue to support and monitor your use of distance learning or distance assessment through the normal Standards Verification process.

Regulatory references

UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies that

relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.

This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Ofqual/CCEA Regulation/Qualifications Wales General Conditions of Recognition

- Arrangements with third parties
- Arrangements with centres
- Accessibility of qualifications
- Ensuring an assessment is fit for purpose and can be delivered
- Setting the assessment
- Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments

Ofqual/CCEA Regulation/Qualifications Wales General Conditions of Recognition

- Completion of the assessment under the required conditions
- Delivering the assessment

SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2014)

- The awarding body shall ensure that it has the necessary arrangements and resources for the effective delivery; assessment and quality assurance of SQA accredited qualifications.

Helpful links and documents

- Distance Learning Quality Self-Assessment (DLSA) (please see Appendix A of this policy).
- Individual Qualification Specifications (available to download from our website).
- Quality Assurance Handbooks (available to download from our website).
- Additional qualification-specific guidance (particularly in relation to the conduct of assessment and moderation) (available alongside our specifications on our website).
- JCQ Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments: policies and procedures.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency Funding Rules.
- Apprenticeship funding: rules and guidance for employers 2019 - 2020. Other Pearson regulatory policies and guides (available from our webpage):
- Equality and diversity policy.
- A guide to recruiting with integrity and enrolling candidates onto qualifications.
- Centre guidance for dealing with malpractice.
- Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications policy.
- Recognition of prior learning policy and process.
- Collaborative arrangements for the delivery of vocational qualifications policy.
- Pearson's Self-Regulated Framework policy.

- Policy for the removal of centre and programme approval.
- Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustment and special consideration in vocational internal assessed units.

Appendix A

Distance Learning Quality Self Assessment (DLSA)

A1 Quality Assurance (QA) of distance learning, as defined in Distance Learning and Assessment Policy, is a subset of QA at Pearson with special focus and attention on nine quality categories: Centre governance, Technology Support, Centre Support, Learner Support, Course Design, Course Structure, Teaching and Learning, Learner Engagement, Evaluation and Assessment.

A2 The DLSA contains positive quality indicators grouped in the nine categories and these must be fully met. Our experts may ask you to provide the evidence you list to support this assessment. The examples given are for your guidance, and are not an exhaustive list.

A3 The DLSA will help you review your readiness to deliver and assess Pearson programme(s) at a distance. There are three possible outcomes from this approvals process: • Your application is successful and we do not need any further information now. You can start delivering distance learning and/or assessment as detailed in your approval letter.

• Your application is incomplete and we will ask you for further information.

• Your application is unsuccessful. We will write to you to explain why you have not been successful. If you wish to reapply for approval later, you will need to develop an action plan to address any requirements.

A4 Please check that the information on the DLSA Form is correct at the time of submission to us. Falsifying information could lead to sanctions being imposed or withdrawal of approval.

The Self-Assessment Form

Positive Quality Indicators	Evidence may include	Your evidence
1 Centre Governance		
You have an appropriate governance structure to guide and enable effective planning, decision making and continuous improvement relating to distance learning programmes.	Governance structures Course review documents	
The distance learning programmes are fully integrated into your policies, processes and structures.	Assessment policies Internal verification policies Course handbook Prospectus	

You have a process for planning and allocating sufficient resources and a well-defined budget for distance programmes	IT support Teaching staff with expertise.	
2 Technology Support		
A technology strategy and plan including electronic security measures is in place to ensure established standards and regulatory requirements are met.	There is password protection, encryption and security of data	
The technology delivery platform and systems are highly reliable and operate within established, measurable technology operating standards	System downtime tracking	
A contingency plan is in place to ensure continuity of data centres operation, student access and support services in the event of prolonged service disruption.	List of back-up facilities in the event of system failure A contingency plan Archives of individual learner evidence on appropriate media e.g. CD ROM, Flash memory sticks	

Centre staff and learners are well supported and kept informed in developing the required knowledge and skills to effectively use technologies	Training on how to use e-assessment Course handbook Staff induction Training materials Learner induction	
Whether you maintain and manage your own data centres and technology platform or contracts/outsources hosting services all systems are managed in line with established data management practices including power, backup and disaster recovery plans	A full Disaster Recovery process or plan Evidence of agreements with, and monitoring of, supplier(s)	
A process and development standards are in place that ensure permissions are in place for appropriate use of online course materials	Creative commons, copyright or fair use permissions in place	
Usability tests are conducted and applied to ensure courses are meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAGs) and recommendations for improvement are implemented where needed before the course is available for student enrolment	Usability test reports and evaluations	
3 Centre Support		

The centre staff receive: Training, assistance and support before teaching on distance programmes. Ongoing training and professional development related to evolving and improving practice in distance teaching and learning. Training and support materials related to fair use, plagiarism, and legal and ethical concepts relevant to copyright and use of digital and web-based resources	Training materials Technology helplines Staff induction Staff training days Training materials Access to internal policies	
Clear standards are established and monitored for staff engagement and expectations concerning distance teaching	Staff handbook with clear response times to communication and feedback	
Staff have information on the ways in which learner's evidence of achievement will be assessed and the way workplace-based and performance evidence will be assessed and how this will be facilitated.	Assessment Policy	
4 Learner Support		
You should have controls in place to ensure that you are recruiting with integrity and learners can confirm their identity. Delivery by	Process for checking a learner's identity (for example gathering key documents to provide evidence of learner identity	

distance learning means that you may not have evidence of an individual's identity at the point of admission. You should keep documents safe, and that when learners submit work they can identify themselves either by resubmitting the documents or can provide information about that document to demonstrate who they are.	or activities to take part in for authentication purposes)	
Before starting on a course, a learner is assessed to ensure that: They understand about the mode of delivery They have access to the minimum technology skills and equipment required They have the capabilities and understanding to be successful on a distance learning programme. During their study learners have access to: Information and training in how to access required materials through electronic databases, digital material repositories, Learning Management System (LMS) and other sources. Required course materials in digital and/or print format, such as textbooks, course readings and online teaching and learning resources before the course start date. Library professionals and resources Appropriate technical assistance and technical support staff.	Pre-enrolment assessments of learners Interviews for suitability English language testing for HNs Course syllabus Online or on-site technology support available Online course materials Online or print resources available Syllabus clearly outlines learner-tutor contact times A proposed contact schedule for each student for the duration of the programme. (This may be produced annually depending on the length of the programme)	

Effective, scheduled and ongoing academic, personal, pastoral, career advice and counselling.		
Learner support services are focused on meeting the needs of distance learners rather than fitting into existing on campus services.	Online or on-site technology support available Data captured to enable suitable support services to be provided according to individual needs	
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) or Just in Time (JIT) tutorials are provided to help learners find answers to the most common questions related to studying at a distance.	FAQs Online tutorials	
Guidance and tutorials are provided to learners in the effective use of all technologies used for course delivery	Training and guidance materials • Online or on-site tutorials available	
5 Course Design		
A course development process is followed that ensures courses are effectively designed for distance delivery and learners can develop the necessary knowledge and skills to meet measurable learning outcomes at the course and programme level.	Course syllabus Course materials Assessment strategies Student feedback	
A course review process is in place to ensure consistency in course development for learner retention and quality of the learning experience.	Review process	

Clear course development standards and guidelines for distance course development are in place and are followed to ensure appropriate engagement	Course guidelines	

6 Course/Programme Structure		
All courses in the distance programme include a syllabus clearly outlining course objectives, learning outcomes, assessments and assessment methods, books and required readings and supplies, technical and proctoring requirements, and other related course information making all course requirements clear and transparent.	Course handbooks Induction pack Prospectus	
The structure of all courses ensures that all learners, regardless of physical location, have access to library / learning resources that adequately support the learning experience.	Equal Opportunity Policy Access and Special Consideration Policy	
Instructional materials and teaching and learning resources are accessible to all learners (including learners with disabilities), easy to use, and may be accessed by multiple operating systems, devices and applications, including assistive technologies.	IT Policy Equal Opportunity policy Access and Special Consideration Policy	

Opportunities and tools are provided to enable and encourage collaboration where appropriate and standards for appropriate online behaviour are established and clearly communicated within every course	Learner registration forms Course/learner handbook Learner induction	
There is a clear schedule for the delivery of the distance learning package and associated resources and study materials.	Course syllabus/ information booklet Assessment plan	

7 Teaching and Learning		
Learner-to- learners and centre-to- learner interactions and engagement are effectively facilitated	Communication options available such as post, phone, face-to-face, email, online chat	
Feedback on learner progress, assignments, and questions is constructive and provided in a timely manner	Assessment policy	
Centre use effective strategies to create and maintain a presence in the course.	Communication options available such as post, phone, face-to-face, email, online chat, video conference	
8 Learner Engagement		
Learners are provided with appropriate tools and opportunities to interact with peers and centre as an online community.	Online or on-site support available	

Learners are provided with opportunities to: Engage with other learners in collaborative and reflective learning activities or discussions where appropriate. Engage, both on request and on their own initiative, with centre and support staff.	Online or on-site facilities available (eg forums) • Syllabus clearly outlines learner-tutor contact times Online or on-site technology support available	
The online learning environment encourages and enables formal and informal learning interactions	Student feedback Chat forums Feedback on assignments	
9 Evaluation and Assessment		
A variety of data (academic and administrative) are used to evaluate programme effectiveness and guide changes toward continual improvement annually.	Internal course reviews Departmental meetings Student voice feedback Assessment boards where applicable	
Annual course evaluations collect feedback from learners on: The effectiveness of instruction and teaching and contribute to the assessment of staff performance and planning of professional development The quality of course materials and support services	Programme evaluation forms Annual course review	
There is a clear schedule for final summative assessment of learners' work.	Assessment plans Assessment policy Internal verification policy and plans Learner/course handbook	

There are clear instructions on the way in which you will ensure that evidence submitted by each learner is authentic.	Instructions on authenticity of learner work Learner/course handbook	