

Quality Assurance Handbook 2011-12

**Adult Literacy and Numeracy
(Entry Levels 1-3)**

**Functional Skills Maths, English and ICT
(Entry Levels 1-3)**

Preface

This handbook is for Examination Officers, Quality Nominees, Programme Managers, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers in centres. It explains the quality assurance processes for Entry Level Certificates in Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALAN) and Entry Level Functional Skills qualifications (ELFS).

Information relating to registrations, entries and certification for these programmes is available in the *Edexcel Information Manual* which can be accessed via our website www.edexcel.com.

Introduction to this handbook

This handbook applies from 1 December 2011 until 31 August 2012 and describes the administrative arrangements and requirements for quality assurance of Entry Levels 1-3 Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALAN) and Entry Levels 1-3 Functional Skills in English, Maths and ICT (ELFS).

This document provides the key information required for your centre to meet the quality assurance requirements for 2011-2012, providing information on the internal and external verification procedures for centres. The procedures outlined in this handbook apply to both ALAN and ELFS qualifications unless stated otherwise.

Access to this handbook and related information

The Programme Managers, Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Lead Internal Verifiers for the above mentioned qualifications should be made aware of this document which is available on the Edexcel website.

Access to the Edexcel Information Manual and policy documents

The Examinations Officer should have access to the *Edexcel Information Manual* and *Instructions for Conduct of Examinations*, which contain information relating to administrative arrangements for these programmes. All centre staff need to comply with these administrative requirements.

Quality assurance arrangements and administration

Your communication with Edexcel

Effective communication between Edexcel and our centres is important to ensure that time schedules for quality monitoring are maintained. We communicate with your centre by letter, telephone and email. Please ensure that you maintain accurate details of your main contacts on the Edexcel Online system. You should review all of your centre contact details every 6 months to include new members of staff that will be using the centre accounts area of Edexcel Online.

New quality assurance arrangements

The annual standards verification visit that was in place during 2010-2011 has been replaced with postal sampling. As a consequence, your centre is now required to complete a Centre Declaration Form once a year. This form must be submitted after the initial communication for the year between your centre and your allocated Standards Verifier. This form only needs to be re-submitted if anything changes during the academic year.

Your centre will be required to have a Lead Internal Verifier for Entry Level ALAN and Entry Level FS in place for 2011 – 2012. Please refer to the Lead Internal Verifier section in this document for more information on the role of the Lead Internal Verifier. The Lead Internal Verifier for Entry Level ALAN and Entry Level FS can be the same person.

In order for sampling to take place, a Sampling Report Form needs to be completed listing 'passed' learners. Learners are classed as 'passed' if they have been through your internal verification process and been signed off by your Lead Internal Verifier. Your Lead Internal Verifier will be required to sample 10% of the total amount of assessments per component, per level.

Your allocated Standards Verifier will request a number of assessments based on the Sampling Report Form for verification. Please refer to both the Internal Assessment and Verification section and the Standards Verification section of this handbook for further information on sampling.

Key dates and actions 2011-12

Throughout the academic year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update contact details for the Examination Officer on Edexcel Online. Standards Verifiers are allocated to centres following the registration of learners. Standards Verifiers will contact their allocated centres, in the first instance, through the Examinations Officer. The Examinations Officer should put the Standards Verifier in touch with the appropriate Lead Internal Verifier who will be the main contact for standards verification. The centre's plan for standards verification should be agreed at this point and the Standards Verifier will request for a Centre Declaration Form to be completed and returned to them. Examinations Officers should check that arrangements are in place for every programme to ensure that standards verification has taken place by the end of the academic year. <p>Please note: There are no late fees for Entry Level ALAN and Entry Level FS.</p>
5th July 2012	<p>Advised deadline to request standards verification if certification is required by August 2012.</p> <p>Please note: You should allow sufficient time between receiving the results of standards verification and intended certification for possible remedial action resulting from standards verification.</p>

Qualification Structure

The components within the qualifications are available at three entry levels: E1, E2 and E3. Edexcel provides all of these entry level assessments.

Entry Level ALAN

Adult Literacy	3 components	Speaking and Listening; Reading; Writing
Adult Numeracy	3 components	Number; Data Handling; Measure, Shape and Space

Entry Level Functional Skills

English	3 components	Speaking, Listening & Communication; Reading; Writing
ICT	1 component	Test
Mathematics	1 component	Test

Learners must achieve all components to receive certification. **Please note:** these components are not units in their own right and each subject is a single-unit qualification.

Certificates will show the qualification and level achieved as well as notification of performance and components achieved.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

The assessments are designed to be taken when the learner is ready.

- For Entry Level ALAN there is no time limit set for the learner to complete the assessments; however, each assessment must be completed at one sitting and administered under supervised conditions
- For Entry Level Functional Skills there is a notional time limit set for the learner to complete the assessments; however, the allocated time for each assessment may be distributed over one or more sessions at the centre's discretion.

If the learner is within 10% of achieving the pass mark in any component, Assessors should offer formative feedback to the learner to this effect. Centres are encouraged to devise a written feedback form for this purpose. The mark scheme for each assessment will clearly identify which area of the specification is being tested for each question, to aid centres in giving feedback. The pass mark is stated in the mark scheme for each test.

Although learners should not be entered for assessments until they are ready, it is possible that a learner may be unsuccessful. Where the learner fails to reach the pass mark, the learner may retake the whole assessment from a different set 2 weeks after taking the previous assessment.

Completed assessments are marked by the centre and are subject to internal verification. Edexcel will verify marked assessments through postal sampling for those learners who successfully completed the assessments.

At Entry Level ALAN, the **only** assessments are those set by Edexcel for each component. For Entry Level Functional Skills, the controlled assessments can be contextualised as per Edexcel guidance provided with each Entry Level FS assessment paper. There is no need for learners to construct portfolios of evidence or to submit additional coursework.

Learner and centre administration

Edexcel Information Manual

The *Edexcel Information Manual* provides guidance and information regarding approval, registration and certification. In order to ensure that learner achievements can be formally recognised, you need to check the approval status of the programmes you are delivering and ensure that Edexcel registration and certification processes are adhered to.

For approval queries, please contact the Approvals team, approvals@edexcel.com
For registration and certification queries, please contact the Service Operations team, serviceoperations@edexcel.com

Quality assurance arrangements

If your centre runs a qualification from more than one site, the Standards Verifier allocated to your centre will need to include all participating sites within the verification sample. Any changes to sample sizes required will be negotiated between you and your Standards Verifier when the standards verification is being arranged. For further details on standards verification, see the Standards Verification section of this handbook.

Recruitment of learners

You should use integrity when recruiting learners onto your programmes. You should offer some initial assessment to measure the levels of your learners so they are registered on the appropriate programme.

Quality assurance responsibilities for centres

You are required to:

- gain both centre and qualification approval prior to enrolling learners on to the programme
- register all new learners with Edexcel when they join the programme
- ensure all qualifications, components and levels are sampled as per your internal verification model
- ensure all certification claims are correct
- ensure all quality policies and procedures are in place as stated in the *Instruction for the Conduct of Examinations* document.

Roles and responsibilities of your staff

Examinations officer

The Examinations Officer will receive details about the appointment of a Standards Verifier and will be requested to liaise with the appropriate member(s) of staff to ensure that the standards verification sampling process runs smoothly.

Examinations Officers normally deal with the administrative arrangements for registration and certification of learners using the guidance given in the *Edexcel Information Manual* available on www.edexcel.com.

When registering learners on EOL, the Examinations Officer should ensure that Assessors submit a complete list of learners and ensure estimated completion dates are provided.

After registering learners on a programme you are provided with access to the live assessments via a secure area on the Edexcel website. An Edexcel Online username and password are required in order to access the live assessments. If you do not have an Edexcel Online account you need to contact the Edexcel Online Centre Administrator at your centre.

If your centre is experiencing problems accessing live assessments from the Edexcel website, the Question Paper Despatch team will arrange to securely send the requested live assessments to your centre. You can contact the Question Paper Despatch team on QPD@edexcel.com

You must deliver live assessments in line with the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations* document available from www.edexcel.com/elfs and www.edexcel.com/elalan. This document outlines your responsibilities for conducting the live assessments.

The Examinations Officer is also responsible for:

- the secure printing, copying and storing of all assessments
- ensuring that all teaching and assessment staff are familiar with the appropriate guidance documentation and assessment information as well as the 'Instructions for Assessors' for each test paper

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

In order to conduct live assessments centres are required to:

- follow the procedures described in the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations* document which outlines the process of safe storage, copying, distribution and destruction of the test papers
- accept the terms and conditions on the secure assessment website
- ensure that for each assessment session for **Entry Level ALAN**:
 - the assessments are printed from the secure site within a few days of the test taking place
 - the assessments are sealed inside envelopes
 - the sealed envelopes are stored securely
 - the assessments are not opened until the time of the test
- ensure that for each assessment session for **Entry Level FS**:
 - the assessments are printed from the secure site no earlier than 2 weeks before the date of the controlled assessment is taking place
 - the assessments are contextualised as required
 - the assessments are sealed inside envelopes
 - the sealed envelopes are stored securely
 - the assessments are not opened until the time of the test
- ensure that learners who do not pass the assessment the first time and wish to sit it again, resit the **whole** assessment **no earlier** than 14 days from taking the original assessment
- to report any breach of examination security to the Business Assurance Group at Edexcel malpractice@edexcel.com.

Assessor

Assessors will be responsible and accountable for:

- planning when learners are ready to take the live assessments, making the assessments available to learners and marking the assessments
- allocation of invigilators
- implementing assessments following the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations* document
- ensuring that the correct and latest mark schemes are used and applied fairly and consistently
- maintaining accurate and verifiable learner assessment and achievement records.

Internal Verifier

The Internal Verifier is a centre/team based role and it is a good idea to develop these skills across the team. The Internal Verifier cannot internally verify their own assessment decisions. The appropriate minimum size of the internal verification team will depend on the number of learners. The absolute minimum is two, as no person can internally verify their own assessment decisions.

Internal Verifiers are at the heart of quality assurance. The role ensures that assessments across the centre consistently meet national standards, thus Internal Verifiers must be competent in the assessment of the qualification offered.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

Internal Verifiers will be responsible and accountable for:

- regularly sampling assessment decisions made by all Assessors across all components and levels within your centre. We advise that a minimum of 25% of assessments are sampled across all Assessors across all sites
- establishing procedures to develop a common interpretation of the assessment requirements between Assessors
- monitoring and supporting the work of Assessors within your centre
- maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activity and ensuring that these are available for the standard verification aspects of the assessment, in order to monitor and ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of standards
- facilitating appropriate staff development and training for Assessors
- ensuring that the ratio of Assessors to learners is appropriate. We recommend a maximum ratio of one Assessor to 15 learners.

Lead Internal Verifier

A Lead Internal Verifier is the person designated by the centre to act as the point of sign-off for the assessment and internal verification of the qualification.

The Lead Internal Verifier should be:

- someone with the authority to oversee assessment outcomes. Ideally this would be the Programme Leader, as this would normally be a key part of their role
- directly involved in the assessment and delivery of the programme able to coordinate across Assessors and other Internal Verifiers

For standards verification, the Lead Internal Verifier will:

- ensure that records of assessment and tests are being retained for use with standards verification
- liaise with the Standards Verifier to ensure that appropriate sampling takes place, where required. Full evidence of internal verification should be made available at the Standards Verifier's request.

The Lead Internal Verifier must ensure that their centre has a robust system of internal verification to check that all assessments are secure. When the programme delivery is being planned, internal verification should be considered. Internal verification should be carried out in a timely manner throughout the year. Effective internal verification will guide and support Assessors and feedback from the Lead Internal Verifier will aid their skills development.

The Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for:

- liaising with the Standards Verifier
- arranging feedback to the assessment team following sampling
- completing the Centre Declaration Form once a year for each qualification
- regularly sampling assessment decisions made by all Internal Verifiers across all components and levels within your centre. We advise that a minimum of 10% of all assessments are sampled
- ensuring that all centre sub-sites follow the internal verification procedures set by the centre
- facilitating appropriate staff development and training for Internal Verifiers
- ensuring that all teaching and assessment staff and those undertaking internal verification have access to:
 - the full programme specification
 - relevant information from this handbook, centre procedures and other guides and policy documents issued by Edexcel.

In very small centres, it is acceptable to have only one Internal Verifier who is also the Lead Internal Verifier. **Please note:** that the Internal Verifier cannot verify their own work.

Internal assessment and verification

Test marking

Your centre should have an internal verification schedule for each programme. There are three strands to verifying assessment:

- standardising assessment marking
- monitoring assessment delivery
- sampling marked assessments.

Standardising assessment marking

Standardisation must be carried out when there is more than one Assessor delivering and marking the same programme. This should happen before any marking or internal verification takes place.

The standardisation process is designed to make sure that all Assessors mark learners' work consistently and accurately. It establishes a common standard of marking that should be used to maintain the quality of marking across the assessment team. Assessors should reach a consensus after marking and discussing the marks for a sample of assessments. Once agreement has been reached the Assessors can then individually mark the learner work they are responsible for. The internal verification process should then involve sampling these Assessors.

The simplest means of completing a standardisation review is to collate copies of completed assessments and then ask each Assessor to make a judgement on them. Internal verification exercises should be repeated at regular intervals to ensure that messages are reinforced. If action to adjust marks is found necessary, a plan should be in place to ensure that this is completed before standards verification takes place. The Standards Verifier will wish to see this as part of their monitoring role.

The aim should be to put in place procedures that will provide ongoing feedback to Assessors.

Please note that centres are **not** required to complete any Edexcel OSCA training for Entry Level qualifications.

Monitoring assessment delivery

Monitoring is necessary to:

- ensure that marking meets the national standards and that they are adhered to by all Assessors
- identify problems or areas where assessors require advice/development
- ensure that learners are aware of, and satisfied with, the marking process.

Monitoring marking includes the Internal Verifiers sampling Assessors. It also includes reviewing the internal verification records completed for each Assessor and evaluating all aspects of their performance when conducting assessment marking.

The Internal Verifiers should record their judgements and give feedback, rather than just tick boxes. Rigorous Internal Verifiers will give actions on any improvements that can be made to the marking process.

Monitoring the administration includes the correct storage, transit and invigilation of assessments.

Sampling marked assessments

Internal verification is based on sampling of learner performance. It should cover a wide range of achievement.

It is recommended that the Internal Verifier will verify a minimum of 25% of the total amount of assessments per component per level.

Centres are required to put in place an internal verification plan to ensure all Assessors are sampled appropriately.

Internal Verifiers should also take into account:

- the experience of the Assessor
- the size of the group of learners
- issues identified in previous samples
- various centre sub-sites
- if the assessments are new to the Assessor.

Internal verification should take place soon after the assessment is completed, and before the results are handed back to the learners so that any remedial action can be implemented.

It is recommended that the Lead Internal Verifier verifies a minimum of 10% of the total amount of assessments per component per level. If your centre schedules assessments throughout the academic year, the Lead Internal Verifier should sample a minimum of 10% of the assessments taken in each particular session.

Good practice

Internal verification can be undertaken in a number of ways, but the following are examples of good practice:

- across the centre there is a recognised team who meet regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures
- standardisation meetings are seen as pivotal to staff development
- internal verification processes are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all members of the delivery teams
- all Assessors are involved in and understand the internal verification process
- the time required to carry out internal verification is recognised.

Standards verification

Standards verification is the quality assurance method that Edexcel uses to ensure that centres are assessing to the national standards.

The primary focus and role of the Standards Verifier is to ensure that centre staff involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of qualifications:

- maintain the national standards of qualifications awarded by Edexcel
- assess learners' performance in accordance with national standards
- maintain a robust mechanism for internal verification
- have a clear understanding of the verification process.

Key tasks

The key tasks of the Standards Verifier are to:

- verify marking practice and procedures, including assessment delivery, to ensure that national standards are applied consistently
- take action to deal with identified problems
- provide information, advice and support to centres
- maintain accurate records and provide feedback to Edexcel and centres
- promote and improve the quality of qualification assessment.

Standards verification process

Standards Verifiers are allocated only to those centres that have approval for Entry Level ALAN and/or Entry Level Functional Skills programmes and on which there are registered learners.

Centres with queries regarding the allocation of a Standards Verifier or enquiring who their Standards Verifier is should contact the Deployment team vqdeployment@edexcel.com

All centres with registrations are required to complete the **Centre Declaration Form** for each qualification. This form can be found on the Edexcel website www.edexcel.com/elfs and www.edexcel.com/elalan. This needs to be sent to the Standards Verifier at the beginning of each academic year. If the Lead Internal Verifier or any internal process should change during the year, centres are required to inform their Standards Verifier by resubmitting the Centre Declaration Form to reflect the change(s).

Standards verification is carried out by postal sampling. The date for submitting the postal sample should be agreed between the centre and the Standards Verifier. It should take place when a range of components and levels are available to be sampled. While centres must only send the original assessments to the Standards Verifier, it is recommended that centres retain **copies** of the assessments until the originals are returned. This is essential if 100% of assessments needs to be sent for standards verification.

The Standards Verifier will:

- agree a schedule for the standards verification which will include reviewing the Centre Declaration Form once a year, validating assessment judgements through sampling learner assessments and might also include reviewing assessment records and internal verification reports and records
- validate the quality and consistency of Assessor, Internal Verifier and Lead Internal Verifier judgements against national standards by sampling assessment decisions
- inform the Lead Internal Verifier of any areas of weakness and agree an action plan for improvement
- provide positive feedback and encouragement when good practice is identified
- check that the centre's internal quality assurance systems are sufficiently robust to ensure that future claims for certificates will be valid and that problems will be identified and resolved quickly
- review the centre's processes for meeting the conditions in the *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations* document
- recommend release or blocks to certification.

Sampling Report Form

Centres will be required to update the Sampling Report Form at the end of each month in order for the Standards Verifier to select the necessary samples per component and level. The monthly submission only applies if more learners have passed an assessment and the assessment has been through the internal verification process. The Sampling Report Form can be found on the Edexcel website www.edexcel.com/elfs and www.edexcel.com/elalan.

Learners need to have a registration number at this stage or your SV will request for registrations to be made before sampling can take place.

Please note: only one Sampling Report Form per qualification needs to be used for the academic year, but updated each month as described above. Centres must ensure that this Sampling Report Form always contains the latest information. Centres and their SV should liaise with each other to ensure version control of this document.

Review of Centre Declaration Form

The Standards Verifier will review the quality policies, internal verification process etc. by reviewing the Centre Declaration Form. This form needs to be sent to the Standards Verifier at the beginning of each academic year. Centres are only required to submit this form once a year unless there are any changes to their internal processes or if the Lead Internal Verifier changes.

The Standards Verifier will comment on the Centre Declaration Form by completing Section B of the SV Report Form. The Standards Verifier might request to see further internal documents, including:

- test reports – please see explanation on next page
- sampling plans
- sampling records, including feedback to Assessors and/or Internal Verifiers
- records of monitoring assessment practice, including feedback to Assessors and Internal Verifiers.

The Standards Verifier will want to be assured that all Internal Verifiers understand quality policies and that they are knowledgeable about the standards, learners and their own role in quality assurance.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

A test report is a log of anything to do with the test that took place. For example:

- log of which learner took which test from which set
- date and time of test
- name of the person who printed the tests off the secure website
- name of person who was responsible for contextualising Entry Level Functional Skills assessments
- name of person that removed the assessments from the secure storage
- name of invigilator
- number of learners that took the test
- anything that took place during the exam that does not have to be reported as per JCO guidelines, for example supervised toilet break and anything unplanned, such as a fire alarm
- other relevant information

The Standards Verifier will only verify the first sample if they have received and approved the Centre Declaration Form.

The criteria for approving the Centre Declaration Form are, that the centre:

- has a Lead Internal Verifier in post
- has a process to profile the individual learner to ensure that the levels are correctly identified at the start of the programme
- has a programme with a structure and content appropriate to achieving the learning outcomes
- understands and is prepared to conform with the assessment requirements
- has the resources needed to deliver an Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy and/or Entry Level Functional Skills programme
- reviews the procedures necessary to ensure that the programme takes account of learners' changing needs
- has identified progression routes most appropriate to the individual learner.

The Standards Verifier will review the contents of the Centre Declaration Report and complete section B of the Standards Verifier Report Form. This will be forwarded to Edexcel and to the centre within 10 working days of receiving the Centre Declaration Report from the centre.

The Standards Verifier will make a decision on whether or not to allow certification. Within the centre it is the Lead Internal Verifier's responsibility to provide evidence to demonstrate that all criteria are being met.

Sampling assessments

Sampling of learner assessments is the most vital part of the verification process, providing the Standards Verifier with an almost instant 'health check' on the quality of marking and verification. It is critical to enable a decision to be made on access to certification. Selecting a sample for each centre will vary according to the needs of the centre. It is vitally important that sampling is properly planned (rather than undertaken ad hoc) to optimise the information gathered.

Centres are required to make learner assessments available for sampling and it is therefore important to retain assessments as described below. The Standards Verifier will then select their sample based on the number of learners completing the component and level during that academic year.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy Entry Level Functional Skills

Minimum sampling requirements per component and level:

Annual amount of learners taking a particular component and level	Minimum amount of assessments required for standards verification
1-9 learners	100% assessments per component per level
10-90 learners	10 assessments per component per level
91+ learners	15 assessments per component per level

Please note that centres are required to update the Sampling Report Form at the end of each month in order for the SV to select the necessary samples per component and level. This only applies if more learners have passed an assessment and the assessment has been through the Internal Verification process. The Sampling Report Form spreadsheet can be found on the Edexcel website.

If the initial sample sent to your Standards Verifier does not meet the minimum annual requirements for sampling as detailed above, your Standards Verifier will select further samples per component and level at a later stage in the year. This is to ensure that standards are maintained throughout the year. Your Standards Verifier reserves the right to request additional samples or increase the sample amount at any time.

Example

<i>Annual number of learners for literacy level 2</i>	<i>Minimum annual amount to be sampled</i>	<i>Amount of learners ready for standards verification in December and sample amount</i>	<i>Amount of learners ready for standards verification in June and sample amount</i>
200	15	80 learners – sample of 8	120 learners – sample of 7

Please note: the annual amount of assessments to be sampled is calculated on the amount of learners successfully completing a particular component and level during the academic year.

The example above shows a centre which has 200 learners completing Adult Literacy Entry Level 2 during the academic year. The Standards Verifier of this centre will select a total sample of 15 assessments for standards verification.

In December, only 80 learners passed the internal verification process and were ready for standards verification. The Standards Verifier decided to verify only 8 assessments at this time for the particular component and level. A further 120 learners were ready for sampling in June, a further 7 learners would be selected by the Standards Verifier for sampling. This brings the total sampling amount up to 15 for 200 learners.

This shows how a total of 15 assessments can be selected for sampling during an academic year when learners are completing a particular component and level at different times throughout the year.

Centres are advised to discuss their sampling schedule with their Standards Verifier at the beginning of each academic year. It will be beneficial to get an initial sample per component and level seen by the Standards Verifier early on in the academic year, to ensure your internal verification processes are correct and that the mark schemes have been interpreted correctly.

It is the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier to ensure that the sample they internally verify is representative of all Assessors, Internal Verifiers and all centre sub-sites.

The Standards Verifier will use the Centre Declaration Form and the Sampling Report Form provided to ensure that at least 25% of the sample has been through the internal verification process and at least 10% has been sampled by the Lead Internal Verifier.

Arrangements for postal sampling

The postal sampling process with the Standards Verifier will normally include:

- confirming that the Sampling Request Form should be completed by the centre and sent to the Standards Verifier
- confirming when the Standards Verifier will select the sample and receive the selected assessments
- which components and levels are to be verified
- annual amount of learners for each component and level
- evidence of internal verification.

All parcels containing a sample of learner work should be sent using a secure postal service which allows tracking parcels. The tracking number should be retained until the Standards Verifier confirms the receipt of the parcel. The Standards Verifier will complete their report within 10 days of receiving the assessments. Centres are advised to wait 5 days after receiving confirmation of the programme approval on the Standards Verifier Report before making any claims on Edexcel Online.

When the sample will take place

The centre must liaise with their Standards Verifier early in the academic year to discuss the planned standards verification needed for the year. We advise centres to give their Standards Verifier four weeks notice before a verification sample is required to ensure a quick turn around time. Where possible a wide range of components and levels should be represented to minimise the administration in the centre and also that of the Standards Verifier dealing with posted samples.

Following the postal sample

The Standards Verifier will complete the Standards Verifier Report Form within 10 working days of receiving the sample of assessments from the centre.

After standards verification has taken place, if the centre has been given a release to certification, the centre will be able to continue to assess and verify the assessments for their learners for the remainder of the year. However, Edexcel reserves the right to re-sample assessments after the Standards Verifier has allowed access to certification. If the minimum amount of assessments has not, at that point, been verified, centres will be sampled on that component and level at a later date during the academic year. Centres will still be able to make claims even though the minimum sample was not reached at that stage.

If there are serious issues identified by the Standards Verifier, these must be addressed by your centre. Your centre will have a block put on your certification while these issues are being addressed. Further sampling of assessments may need to take place to show that any issues with assessment or internal verification have been addressed. It is therefore important to schedule standards verification with sufficient time between receiving the results of the standards verification and claiming certificates.

Retaining assessments

In order for centres to monitor assessment decisions over time, centres should retain all completed and marked assessments until certificates are received, checked and issued to learners.

The following documents need to be retained for a minimum of three years, for all learners whose assessments have been through standards verification:

- any internal verification feedback to Assessor documents related to the particular sample
- records of internal verification meetings
- Internal Verification Feedback Forms
- Standards Verification Feedback Reports
- assessments submitted to the Standards Verifier.

Support available

Documentation

We communicate with the Examinations Officer for administration and certification information. We do not issue any information directly to Programme Managers. However, a variety of qualification specifications, policy documents, and information books are produced to assist teaching teams.

Websites

Edexcel.com - www.edexcel.com

The Edexcel website pages are regularly updated with all the most current information and documents.

Edexcel Online – www.edexcelonline.com

This web-based system allows centre administrators to register, manage and certificate learners.

Edexcel teams

Customer Services

Edexcel pledges to provide excellent service in all your dealings with us. We have a dedicated customer services team who can be reached on 0844 576 0031 and are able to answer your query or direct it to the appropriate team within Edexcel.

Regional Quality Managers

All centres have a dedicated Regional Quality Manager available to advise on quality assurance, including internal and standards verification. www.edexcel.com/quals/BTEC/support

Standards Verifiers

One of the key responsibilities of the Standards Verifier is to advise and support centres on the delivery and assessment of Entry Level ALAN and Entry Level FS throughout the academic year.

Standards Verifiers will advise on:

- current requirements and procedures relating to the relevant qualification area(s)
- best practice in assessment and internal verification
- administration of tests.

Curriculum Development Managers

Each centre has a Curriculum Development Manager who can provide general qualification advice and guidance across all qualifications. Your Curriculum Development Manager details can be obtained from your regional office.

Appendix 1: Edexcel contact list

Centres should contact the following individuals/teams for the following queries:

Approvals team – approvals@edexcel.com - for gaining approval and approval queries

Business Assurance Group - malpractice@edexcel.com - for reporting cases of suspected malpractice or a breach of test paper security

Service Operations team – serviceoperations@edexcel.com - for registrations and certifications issues, reporting of grades, amendments to names, grades entered incorrectly and reprinting of certificates

Deployment team – vqdeployment@edexcel.com - to find out your allocated Standards Verifier, to have a Standards Verifier allocated to your centre, Standards Verifier details, difficulty contacting Standards Verifiers and report form queries including the logging of reports and release/block of qualifications

Standards Verifier – (contact details can be provided by the Deployment team). The Standards Verifier can assist with assessment issues, provide information, advice and support, sampling size, mark schemes, specification queries, guidance for *Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations*.

Assessment team – fsassessment@edexcel.com - for equivalencies, accreditation, issues with the content of test paper questions and mark scheme and general assessment queries

Quality Standards team – qualitystandards@edexcel.com - for special requirements, quality issues and appeals against qualification and certification blocks

Question Paper Despatch team – QPD@edexcel.com - if centres are experiencing problems printing live assessments from the secure Edexcel website, the QPD team will arrange to send the requested assessments to centres, alternatively you can call customer services on 0844 576 0031.

Regional Quality Managers – All centres have a dedicated Regional Quality Manager available to advise on quality assurance, including internal and standards verification.
www.edexcel.com/quals/BTEC/support

Curriculum Development Managers - Each centre has a Curriculum Development Manager who can provide general qualification advice and guidance across all qualifications.

Your Curriculum Development Manager details can be obtained from your regional office.

Appendix 2: Example Centre Declaration Form

EXAMPLE Centre declaration for Entry Level ALAN and ELFS postal sampling

Please complete this declaration and return to your Standards Verifier with your first postal sample each academic year, after they have contacted you.

Please note that **all** sections of this form must be completed. Separate forms **do not** need to be submitted for each component and level within a qualification, however separate forms **do** need to be used for each qualification. *(ie one for ALAN and one for ELFS)*

Please note that the size of the fields will expand to fit text. The size of each field does not represent the amount of information required.

Centre details

Please fill out your details below:

	Details
Centre Number <i>(include sub sites if appropriate)</i>	xxx
Centre Name	xxx
Centre Address	xxx
Centre contact and job title <i>(e.g. Lead Internal Verifier)</i>	xxx
E-mail address	xxx
Telephone Number	xxx

Qualification to be taken

Please give us details of the qualifications which will be taken at your centre:

	Details
Entry Level ALAN/ELFS	ALAN

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy Entry Level Functional Skills

Compliance with Edexcel policies

Please answer the statements below:

Learner Management	Met (Y/N)
An initial assessment of learners is carried out to establish an appropriate programme & level and evidence of this is kept for 2 years?	Y
Learners are recruited onto programmes with integrity	Y
Learner records are accurate and kept up to date	Y
Records show appropriate time lapse between learner registration, assessments & certification	Y
Centre Resources	Met (Y/N)
The ratio of assessors to learners is appropriate	Y
The requirements described in the 'Instructions for the conduct of examinations' for the delivering of assessments are adhered to.	Y
Test Security and Administration	Met (Y/N)
The procedures described in the 'Instructions for the conduct of examinations' for example: the safe storage, copying, distribution and destruction of the test papers, are adhered to.	Y
The correct number of papers is printed from the secure site and assessment material is not saved on centre's computer systems.	Y
Assessment facilities/venue appropriate to learner ratio	Y
Learners are correctly registered with Edexcel prior to taking a test	Y
There is a process for accurately recording learner attendance during tests	Y
There is a clearly defined, executed and compliant invigilation procedure	Y
There is a log of unusual incidents that have occurred during tests	Y
All completed and marked assessments are retained until certificates are received, checked and issued to learners. All assessments submitted to the Standards Verifier are retained for 3 years.	Y
The terms and conditions for accessing the live assessment materials on the secure Edexcel website are accepted.	Y
For each assessment session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the correct number of assessments are printed from the secure site • the assessments are sealed inside envelopes • the sealed envelopes are stored securely • the assessments are not opened until the time of the test • the assessments are only opened in front of the learners 	Y
That the resit rules for each qualification is followed as per ICE document	Y
Malpractice Policy is implemented during a test if required	Y
Special requirements and arrangements policy is followed	Y

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy Entry Level Functional Skills

Centre forecast

Please give us the estimated dates for submitting samples to your Standards Verifier. Please *insert the component and level in each month that you are planning Standards Verification to take place.* (Handling Data-HD, Measure Shape and Space-MSS, Number-NUM, Reading-R, Writing-W, Speaking and Listening-S&L, ELFS Reading – ELFSR, ELFS Writing – ELFSW, ELFS Speaking, Listening & Communication – ELFSSL&C, ELFS Maths –ELFSM, ELFS ICT – ELFSICT)

Estimated dates for submitting sample to the Standards Verifier												
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Component and Level	HDE1, S&LE3		S&LE3,	MSSE2	NUME1		HDE3	NUME1, NUME2	WE2	RE2		

Estimated annual amount of learners per component and level					
Entry Level ALAN	LIT		E1	E2	E3
		Reading		400	
		Writing		100	
		S&L			50
	NUM		E1	E2	E3
		Data handling			200
		MSS		200	
Entry Level Functional Skills	English		E1	E2	E3
		Reading			
		Writing			
	SL&C				
	Maths				
	ICT				

Learning and development

Please describe your admissions policy and initial assessment process as well as the name of your initial assessment material/tool:

All learners are interviewed and screening takes place using centre devised questions. Initial assessment of all learners takes place during Induction, using the electronic version of Basic and Key Skill Builder (BKSB), to ascertain the general level a learner is working towards and ensure the learner is on an appropriate course. This is followed up by the BKSB diagnostic assessment in the first few weeks of the course to provide a more detailed assessment of a learner's skills and abilities and to identify strengths and weaknesses.

Please describe your delivery model:

All full time learners at the three sites receive weekly sessions in both literacy and numeracy. Part-time provision is also offered. Learners are interviewed to assess suitability and at induction undertake the BKSB initial assessment. This is followed up by the BKSB diagnostic assessment which forms the basis of the ILP. The ILPs are negotiated with learners and targets are monitored and reset every 6 weeks.

All schemes of work and lesson plans are mapped to the Literacy or Numeracy Core Curriculum and incorporate a range of learning activities based on real life situations or vocational options and take into account the needs and interests of the learner. All programmes include practice testing to ensure learners are fully prepared. Learners will generally be ready to start taking the ALAN tests in the Spring term, however there is provision for any learner who is progressing well to take the tests as and when ready.

A high level of support is offered to learners, which is evidenced in learner feedback and through external inspection. The programmes are well structured and group sizes are small, between 10 and 15 learners.

Progression routes are clearly defined and there is good communication between the various sites, enabling good practice to be shared and information disseminated.

The centre has a strong emphasis on quality assurance systems and this is reflected in thorough reviews and evaluation of courses by team members and learners. Regular lesson observations and staff appraisals are also part of this process and ensure high standards of teaching.

Please describe your processes for learners exiting the programme and comment on progression routes for learners:

Induction

During the Induction week learners are made aware of various progression routes via group tutorials and activities organised by the Course tutor.

Tutorials

Regular tutorials are held and recorded by the tutor and include progress made and any necessary changes or support are sought.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

Reviews

Half termly reviews take place via the ILPs and progress is recorded and new targets set. A termly review takes place with the course tutor and progress and possible progression routes are discussed. A formal annual review takes place before exit from the programme to plan the progression route.

Other

Learners have access to advice and guidance throughout the programmes from Student Services and also from Connexions.

Please describe your processes and give details of who is responsible for learner reviews e.g. via ILP, formal reviews or tutorials:

Pre Interview – Student Services and Coordinator

At Interview – Coordinator and or Course Tutor

Exit review – Course Tutor and Coordinator

Course Tutors do weekly reviews via Tutorials

ALAN and Subject Tutors do monthly reviews via ILP

A formal review is done each term by the Course Tutor

A formal review is also done annually by the Coordinator, Course Tutor and Connexions

Internal verification

Please outline your assessment and internal verification process below

Please include:

- your planned internal verification process (appropriate to staff experience)
- any areas of good practice or success stories you may have.
- details of any remedial action plans you have in place including details of implementing actions within a timely manner.

Regular team meetings take place to update all assessors on the assessment requirements, to address any queries or concerns and to share good practice. Standardisation of the latest papers takes place on an annual basis and internal training takes place for any new assessor.

The four IVs are each responsible for designated programmes and assessors and ensure scripts are sampled to cover all components and levels for those assessors, records are made and feedback given to assessors. The IVs meet on a regular basis and identify any concerns or training needs.

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy Entry Level Functional Skills

Staff skills and qualifications

Please complete the table below, providing the names of all Assessors and Internal Verifiers					
	Full name	Number of learners allocated to each Assessor	Which centre	Qualification ALAN / ELFS	Number of years of relevant experience
Lead Internal Verifiers	Xxx		1234A	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal IV Training	4
Internal Verifiers	Xxx		1234A	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal IV Training	4
	Xxx		1234B	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal IV Training	4
Assessors	Xxx	15	1234A	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal assessor standardisation.	2
	Xxx	15	1234B	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal assessor standardisation.	1
	Xxx	15	1234C	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal assessor standardisation.	4
	Xxx	10	1234A	ALAN Core Curriculum Training, Internal assessor standardisation.	2

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy

Entry Level Functional Skills

Staff training

Please complete the table below, providing details of training within your centre	
Relevant training in the last year e.g. SFL assessment process	Internal training on the assessment process took place for three new assessors and an annual standardisation activity took place for all assessors. All staff received training on the Learner Journey and an update on screening, initial and diagnostic assessment and target setting.
Frequency of team meetings	Team meetings take place on a weekly basis and termly review meetings are held.

Centre resources

Please provide full details of resources used at your centre e.g. SFL materials, books, equipment, self study etc.
<p>We currently use a number of websites including www.skillsactive.com and www.skillsworkshop.org together with Edexcel workbooks and the Skills for Life materials.</p> <p>We have developed our own Individual Learning Plan which has received positive reviews from Ofsted inspectors, this is used as a resource for the learners to enable them and their tutor to track and review progress.</p>

Entry Level Adult Literacy and Numeracy Entry Level Functional Skills

Centre Development plan

We invite you to identify below key action points for your centre's continual development.

Date	Action	Completion date
Sept 2011	To install interactive whiteboards in base rooms and increase number of computers and laptops so that ICT is accessible to all learners.	March 2012
Sept 2011	To review and update resources so that there are improved resources and availability to all learners.	Nov 2011
Sept 2011	To embed literacy and numeracy into the vocational options to improve standard and success rate.	Jan 2012
Sept 2011	Establish progression database for part time learners to enable closer tracking of part time learners.	Jun 2012

The following is to be completed by the Lead Internal Verifier:

I confirm that the requirements above have been met by our centre for the Entry Level Adult Literacy and Adult Numeracy/~~Entry Level Functional Skills~~ qualification (*delete as appropriate*) and I understand that if my centre does not follow the Edexcel exams process, our approval status will be put at risk.

Name	Xxxxx
Signature	Xxxxx
Job title	Xxxxxx and (Lead Internal Verifier)
Date	Xxx