PEARSON

ALWAYS LEARNING

Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel Quality Assurance Handbook 2012-13

Functional Skills English

Levels 1 and 2

Speaking, Listening & Communication

edexcel

advancing learning, changing lives

Contents

Introduction

This handbook is effective from 1 September 2012 until 31 August 2013 and addresses the administrative arrangements and requirements for quality assurance for Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication. Unless otherwise stated, the guidelines outlined in this handbook refer to both Onscreen and Paper-based Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2.

Who is this handbook for?

This handbook is for Quality Nominees and Lead Internal Verifiers in centres offering Functional Skills qualification at Level 1 and/or 2. It describes the quality assurance processes for Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication.

All Programme Managers, Lead Internal Verifiers and Internal Verifiers for these qualifications should familiarise themselves with the contents of this handbook.

The centre Quality Nominee and Examinations Officer should also access the UK Information Manual which contains information on the administrative arrangements for this qualification and information relating to entries and certification: www.edexcel.com/infomanual

Key issues 2012-13

Communicating with Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel

Effective communication between Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel and centres is important in order to ensure quality monitoring is carried out in a timely manner. Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel communicate with centres through letter, telephone and email and this requires centres to maintain accurate details of the main contacts on Edexcel Online. These details should be reviewed on a regular basis, especially when new staff start using the centre accounts area of Edexcel Online.

Quality assurance arrangements

For Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication, each centre must identify a Lead Internal Verifier (see page 15) who will be responsible for maintaining the standard of assessment of the unit(s). The Lead Internal Verifier will be recognised by Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel after:

- completing a training session on Online Standardisation for Centre Assessment (OSCA)
- submitting a completed Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form to the Functional Skills Assessment Team.

Details of the Lead Internal Verifier accreditation are to be found in the relevant part of this handbook.

Key dates and actions 2012-13

Submission of marks for Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication

Paper-based model

These deadlines are important for learners entered for cash-in (FSE01 or FSE02) in each series. If the Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication marks are not submitted by the deadline, Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel cannot guarantee that complete results will be issued on Results Day of the series and certificates may be delayed.

Learners should only be entered for Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication when the Lead Internal Verifier is ready to submit marks in the same series. It is advisable that learners are entered for Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication in the same series as the cash-in, i.e. as the last component of the Functional Skills English qualification.

Series	Submission deadline
October 2012	19/10/2012
November 2012	23/11/2012
January 2013	18/01/2013
February 2013	15/02/2013
March 2013	29/03/2013
May 2013	24/05/2013
June 2013	28/06/2013
July 2013	02/08/2013

Onscreen model

There are no deadlines for submitting marks for the Functional Skills English onscreen on-demand model. For the Speaking, Listening & Communication units (ENC01 and ENC02), marks are to be submitted when the learner is ready to receive the certificate. Please, refer to the Administration Support Guide for Onscreen Functional Skills for further details on claiming certificates.

Please note, marks submitted by a centre will only be accepted if the centre has an accredited Lead Internal Verifier for the current academic year. This is a requirement for both the paper-based and the onscreen model of assessment.

Registration of Lead Internal Verifiers — applicable for both models

2012-13	01/09/2012 - 31/08/2013

Training materials available on OSCA — applicable for both models

2012-13	03/09/2012 - 31/08/2013

Introduction to Functional Skills English

Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 qualification

- The Functional Skills English qualification consists of three components of equal weighting
- The qualification is offered at Level 1 and Level 2
- Assessment takes place at each level
- To gain the qualification at either level, learners must pass each component:
  - o Unit 1 - Speaking, Listening & Communication
  - o Unit 2 - Reading
  - o Unit 3 - Writing
- The Speaking, Listening & Communication component is the only internally assessed component of Functional Skills English
- Marks for Speaking, Listening & Communication must be submitted for learners before, or at the same time as, entering them for cash-in (i.e. claiming certificates for the onscreen model)
- For details on mark submission, see the Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE) document available on www.edexcel.com/fs
- Learners must successfully complete all the appropriate activities to pass the Speaking, Listening & Communication unit:
  - o At Level 1, learners should take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects
  - o Learners at Level 1 should **not** be assessed on their presentation skills
  - o At Level 2, learners should make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar; and make effective presentations.

Conduct of Examination

Preparation for assessment

Learners may prepare notes on the set speaking, listening and communication activity to be used during the designated formal assessment. These notes can include bullet and numbered points. Group work and individual study can be used to complete this preparation. Notes must **not** include prepared responses (egg continuous phrases and paragraphs). Over-reliance on notes may lead to a reading activity rather than a speaking, listening and communication one.

A maximum of **five** participants would usually make up the discussion group, although not all those involved need to be assessed. There is no set minimum number of participants required for the activities but as the assessment is based on discussion, learners cannot complete the tasks on their own.

Assessment period

The assessment time at each level should total approximately 30 minutes.

- At Level 1, the assessment time includes the learner contributions to both discussions. Each discussion should take sufficient time to allow each learner to demonstrate their ability for each of the criteria.
- At Level 2, both the length of the presentation and the contribution to a discussion make up the time allocation. The assessment can be distributed over more than one session at the centre's discretion.

Learners must achieve all the set criteria for each activity at each level at least once. For guidance on completing the Assessment Record Sheets, see Appendix 2.
There is no limit to the number of re-take opportunities for Speaking, Listening & Communication.

Controlled conditions

There is no set date or assessment window for Speaking, Listening & Communication. Learners should be assessed when the Assessor thinks it is appropriate. Formal set tasks/activities must be carried out to meet the criteria. Skills must **not** be evidenced through a portfolio of 'opportunistic' style assessments.

The completion of the Speaking, Listening & Communication assessment must be under controlled conditions. During the assessment, the learner must be in the direct sight of the Assessor at all times. Input by the Assessor, for example to clarify the requirements, is acceptable.

Learners must be provided with a suitably quiet, undisturbed location. The learners can be assessed in their normal environment. There is no need to remove posters, displays or materials containing information relevant to what is being assessed. However, displays should not provide any prepared scripts. It is acceptable for the learners to draw on external sources (with the exception of direct help from the Assessor) during the assessment period.

The completed Assessment Record Sheet for each learner should be retained at the end of the controlled assessment for verification purposes and kept securely until standards verification is completed. The completed Assessment Record Sheets should **not** be sent to Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel.

Learners with agreed particular requirements in relation to their mode of learning or assessment can have their usual support, unless this compromises the outcome of the assessment. Those providing assistance should refer to *Access Arrangements and Special Consideration for General and Vocational Qualifications conducted by the Joint Council for Qualifications Awarding Bodies*. This is available on the Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel website: www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/access-GQ.aspx

Your quality assurance responsibilities

Internal quality assurance process

Each centre needs to develop a suitable quality assurance strategy. This strategy must guarantee good quality internal standardisation for all Assessors within the centre (and across all sites where applicable), ensuring the understanding and consistent application of criteria for each level of Speaking, Listening & Communication.

Examples of internal standardisation processes:

- Assessor visiting classroom
- use of training videos (available on OSCA – see below)
- joint marking (standardisation) exercise.

Online Standardisation for Centre Assessment (OSCA)

OSCA is a system to facilitate training of Lead Internal Verifiers for Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication and provides access to assessed learner work.

Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel award accreditation status to Lead Internal Verifiers who have completed the training exercise on OSCA and have submitted the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form to FS Assessment (for details on submitting the declaration, see Appendix 1).

OSCA Training

Training is essential to:

- formalise and add rigour to the internal verification process
- provide direct training for a named Lead Internal Verifier for each level of FS English Speaking, Listening & Communication
- enable a less bureaucratic, more supportive approach to quality assurance within the centre.

OSCA accreditation process

To become an accredited Lead Internal Verifier (Lead IV), the following process needs to be completed. Lead IVs can also visit: www.edexcel.com/osca for further information.

- Centre nominates a Lead IV for each level of Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication. The Lead IV is the individual with overall responsibility for the standard of assessment of the unit at the centre. Only one Lead IV may register for any unit, however, the same Lead IV may register for both Level 1 and Level 2. Please note, accreditation for Level 2 does **not** cover accreditation for Level 1.
- Each Lead IV needs to be registered on Edexcel Online - the centre's Edexcel Online administrator (usually the Exams Officer) will be able to set up the correct account. For further support, call the Edexcel Online customer support team on 0844 576 0024 or contact Ask Edexcel.

- The Lead IV registers for OSCA. By clicking the 'OSCA 2 – GQ' menu option, the Lead IV will be able to access the registration homepage. Either open a new OSCA qualification account or add further units to an existing account.

- Once registered, the Lead IV will have access to the reference material for their chosen level. The reference material presents a recording of learner activities to be used for training purposes. The recordings are available throughout each academic year. Commentaries completed by the Functional Skills Senior Standards Verifier are made available to view and compare with the Lead Internal Verifier's own assessment.

- When the Lead IV has completed the training exercises relating to the appropriate level, the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form needs to be filled in (available in Appendix 1 of this booklet or on the FS English homepage www.edexcel.com/fsenglish as a Word-document) and sent to the FS Assessment Team at Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel, either:

  o **By email to:** fsassessment@pearson.com
  o **By post to:**
  Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel
  FS Assessment Team
  190 High Holborn
  WC1V 7BH

- Once the FS Assessment Team receives the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form, the accreditation status is updated on OSCA and the centre is allowed to make entries for Functional Skills English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication.

- Accreditation is granted to any Lead IV at unit level, provided that they complete the training session and submit the completed Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form. Submitting the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form confirms that the Lead IV has viewed the training material provided and understood the criteria for assessment. The accreditation period is for the remainder of the current academic year. Please note, each Lead IV needs to renew the OSCA registration at the beginning of each academic year. In order to retain their accredited status, they also need to complete a new training session and submit a new Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form each year.

The Lead IV does not have to do all of the internal verification in their subject area. They are responsible for ensuring that all staff involved in their subject are aware of the requirements and are conducting assessment and internal verification properly.

Centres may be visited by a Standards Verifier during the accreditation period as part of Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel quality assurance checks. If a centre is chosen for a Standards Verifier visit, they will receive a letter from Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel at the beginning of the academic year. Their allocated Standards Verifier will contact them to arrange a mutually acceptable date of the visit. All standards verification visits need to be completed by 31 July 2013.

Please note, failure to organise a Standards Verifier visit when requested will result in the withdrawal of accredited status and the withholding of results.
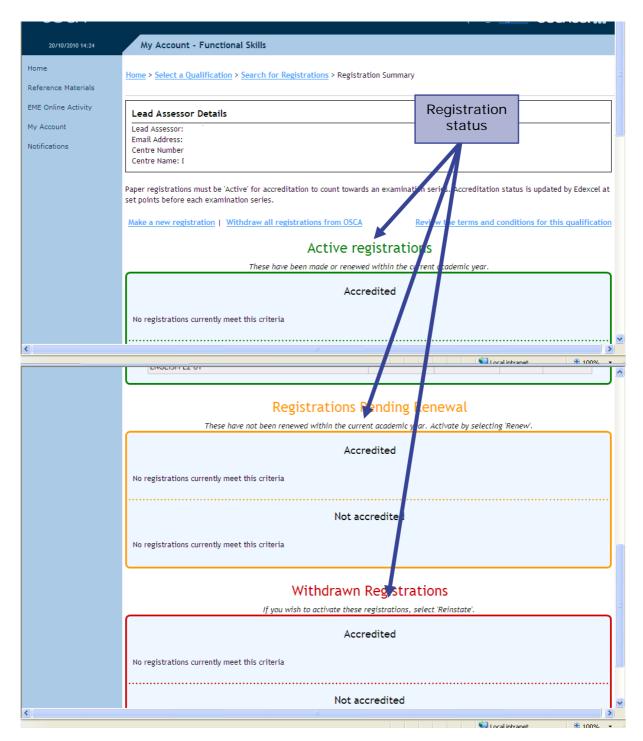
Steps to success for Lead IV

- Register for the right level of Functional Skills English
- Register in your own name
- Read all the instructions carefully

- Read the guidance provided with the recordings thoroughly before attempting the training exercise
- Allow enough time to complete all parts of the training exercise
- Work through the training material carefully - make sure that you are familiar with the unit, particularly the assessment criteria, unit content and assessment guidance; the relevant unit specification can be found on www.edexcel.com/fsenglish
- The Senior Standards Verifier's commentary accompanies all recordings. You are strongly recommended to look at this commentary as it is intended to give general guidance on standards and processes
- The online assessment materials are available for training purposes within your centre.

OSCA step by step guide

1. If a Lead Internal Verifier has not been registered in 2011-12, the Edexcel Online administrator needs to create a new account with the correct access.

2. If you registered as a Lead Internal Verifier in 2011-12 you will find your registration 'pending renewal'. To update your registration status, simply click on 'renew'.

3. Once registration/renewal is complete, you can access the training materials, via 'reference materials' together with the Senior Standards Verifier's commentaries.

4. Read the guidance thoroughly before attempting the training exercise. Watch the training videos, consider the learner performance and complete an Assessment Record Sheet (available on www.edexcel.com/fsenglish) for at least some of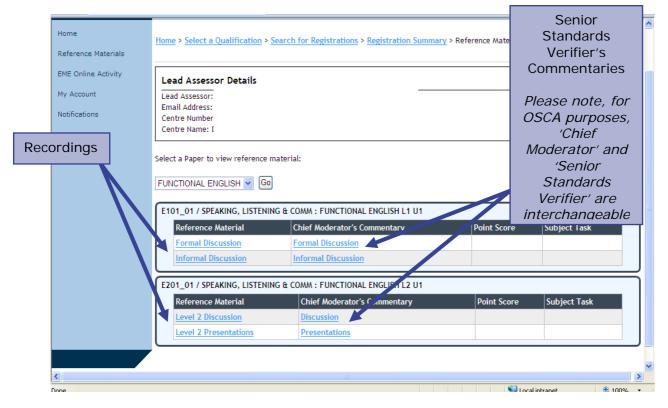 the learners. You can compare your understanding of the criteria with the commentaries made by the Senior Standards Verifier.

5. When you have completed the training exercises relating to your level, fill in the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form (available in Appendix 1 of this booklet as a PDF document or on the FS English homepage www.edexcel.com/fsenglish as a Word-document) and send it to the FS Assessment Team at Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel in one of the following ways:

- **By email to:** fsassessment@pearson.com
- **By post to:**

  Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel
  FS Assessment Team
  190 High Holborn
  WC1V 7BH

Once the FS Assessment Team receives the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form, your accreditation status will be updated on OSCA and your centre is allowed to make entries for Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication.

OSCA process chart

```
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Exams Officer registers a Lead   │
│ Internal Verifier on OSCA        │
└─────────────────────────────────┘
              │
              ▼
┌─────────────────────────────────┐
│ Lead Internal Verifier completes │◄────────────────────────────────┐
│ OSCA training exercise           │◄──────────────────────┐         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘                        │         │
              │                                             │         │
              ▼                                             │         │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐                        │         │
│ Lead Internal Verifier completes │                        │         │
│ the Lead Internal Verifier       │                        │         │
│ Declaration and sends it to FS   │                        │         │
│ Assessment Team                  │                        │         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘                        │         │
              │                                             │         │
              ▼                                             │         │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐                        │         │
│ Lead Internal Verifier accredited │                       │         │
│ for remainder of the academic     │                       │         │
│ year                              │                       │         │
└─────────────────────────────────┘                        │         │
              │                                             │         │
              ▼                                             │         │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐  │
│ Lead Internal Verifier submits   │───►│ Lead Internal Verifier   │  │
│ marks on Edexcel Online/EDI      │    │ renews OSCA registration │  │
└─────────────────────────────────┘    │ at the beginning of each │  │
                                        │ academic year before     │  │
                                        │ submitting marks         │  │
                                        └──────────────────────────┘  │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐  │
│ Centre may receive a visit from a │──►│ Successful visit          │  │
│ Standards Verifier               │    │ Lead Internal Verifier   │  │
└─────────────────────────────────┘    │ retains accreditation for │  │
                                        │ the academic year         │  │
                                        └──────────────────────────┘  │
┌─────────────────────────────────┐    ┌──────────────────────────┐  │
│ Standards Verifier identifies    │───►│ Action plan agreed between│──┘
│ issues with centre assessment/   │    │ Standards Verifier and    │
│ internal verification which are  │    │ centre. Regional Quality  │
│ discussed with the centre        │    │ Manager will support if   │
└─────────────────────────────────┘    │ required                  │
                                        └──────────────────────────┘
```

Internal assessment

Centres must conduct tests in line with the information in the Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (ICE) document available from: www.edexcel.com/fsenglish. This document outlines the centre responsibilities in all aspects of the testing process.

Role of Assessor

Assessors will be responsible and accountable for:

- managing the system of assessment from assessment planning, through to marking and recording assessment decisions
- maintaining accurate and verifiable learner assessment and achievement records.

When assessing Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication, Assessors must do so in line with the instructions for Assessors. Centres should also ensure that Assessors are using the correct set of criteria and applying it fairly and consistently.

All Assessors must be standardised by the Lead Internal Verifier. This applies to all centres regardless of the number of Assessors. If a centre has various sites, Assessors and Internal Verifiers need to be standardised across all sites.

Internal verification

Centres must ensure that they have a robust internal verification strategy established which ensures that all assessments are secure within the required standards.

Useful tips:

- when the programme delivery is being planned, internal verification should also be scheduled
- internal verification should be carried out in a timely manner throughout the year
- effective internal verification will guide and support Assessors; feedback from the Lead Internal Verifier or Internal Verifier will aid their skills development.

In large centres, a team of Internal Verifiers may be established to check the validity and consistency of assessment decisions across Assessors. The Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for the standardisation and monitoring of the team of Internal Verifiers.

In small centres, it is acceptable to have only one Internal Verifier who is registered as the Lead Internal Verifier on OSCA.

Under no circumstance can the role of the Assessor and the Lead Internal Verifier be covered by only one person.

The Lead Internal Verifier role

The Lead Internal Verifier (Lead IV) is a centre/team based role. The Lead IV cannot internally verify their own assessment decisions.

The Lead IV is at the heart of the internal quality assurance process. Their role ensures that assessments across the centre consistently meet national standards. Therefore, the Lead IV must be competent in the assessment of the qualification. The Lead IV will be responsible and accountable for:

- regularly sampling assessment decisions made by all Assessors across all sites, where applicable
- establishing procedures to develop a common interpretation of the assessment requirements between Assessors
- supporting the work of Assessors within the centre to monitor and ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of standards
- maintaining up-to-date records of internal verification and sampling activity and ensuring that these are available for any standards verification
- facilitating appropriate staff development and standardisation for Assessors and Internal Verifiers

Internal verification process

All centres should have an internal verification schedule for each programme. The Lead IV is the person responsible for managing the process. There are two strands to internal verification:

- standardising assessment judgements
- monitoring assessment practice

Standardising assessment judgements

Standardisation must be carried out within the centre for each level of FS English. This should happen before any assessment or internal verification takes place. The function of standardisation is to fix the standard by discussing and mutually assessing a sample of assessments and reaching a consensus. Once agreement has been reached, the Assessors can then individually assess the learner work they are responsible for. The internal verification process should then take place, monitoring these Assessors.

The simplest means of completing standardisation is to use recordings available on OSCA and ask each Assessor to make a judgement on them. Commentaries completed by the Senior Standards Verifier should then be used for reference.

Internal verification exercises should be repeated at regular intervals throughout the year to ensure that messages are reinforced. If action to adjust assessment is found necessary, a plan should be in place to ensure that this is completed before standards verification takes place.

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

Monitoring assessment practice

Monitoring Assessors and Internal Verifiers is necessary to:

- ensure that national standards of assessment are adhered to by everyone
- identify problems or areas where Assessors and Internal Verifiers require advice/development
- ensure that learners are aware of, and satisfied with, the assessment process.

The monitoring process includes the Lead IV observing a number of the assessment decisions made by Assessors. The number of assessments observed by the Lead IV depends on:

- the experience of the Assessor/Internal Verifier
- the size of the group of learners
- if the assessments are new to the Assessor/Internal Verifier

Monitoring also includes reviewing the internal verification records completed with each Assessor and evaluating all aspects of their performance when conducting assessments.

The Lead IV should record their judgement and give feedback to the Assessors, rather than just tick boxes. A rigorous Lead IV should advise on any actions and improvements that could be made to the assessment process.

Scheduling of internal verification

Internal verification should take place during the assessment process, before the results are submitted to Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel so that any remedial action can be implemented.

Developing and supporting Assessors

The Lead IV must ensure that all Assessors have:

- a copy of assessment requirements as specified in the Assessment Record Sheets, available at: www.edexcel.com/fs
- a copy of the Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations (ICE) document, available at: www.edexcel.com/fs
- access to appropriate training and support materials.

Good practice

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

- across the centre, there is a recognised team of Internal Verifiers who meet regularly to ensure standardisation of procedures and standards is robust; minutes from these meetings should be kept for the purpose of standards verification
- there is an internal verification policy which promotes a rigorous commitment to quality improvement
- internal verification processes are agreed and published so that they are clearly understood by all Assessors, Internal Verifiers and the Lead Internal Verifier

- all Assessors are involved in, and understand, the internal verification role
- a Lead IV, who manages the process and provides support, is identified
- standardisation meetings are seen as pivotal to staff development
- the time required to carry out internal verification is recognised.

Submitting marks

Centres with an accredited Lead Internal Verifier

Centres with an accredited Lead Internal Verifier are allowed to submit marks for Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication on Edexcel Online/Electronic Data Input (EDI). Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel accept the submitted centre marks, as they have been successfully verified.

Centres without a Lead Internal Verifier

If the Lead Internal Verifier does not complete OSCA training, centre marks for learners will not be accepted by Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel and the learners will appear on the Results Day as 'absent' on Edexcel Online. This also results in delays to certification. Once the training exercise has been completed and the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration submitted, the block will be released.

Standards Verification

As part of our external quality assurance, centres may be subject to standards verification during the accreditation period. The allocated Standards Verifier will contact the centre to arrange a suitable time for the visit. During the visit, they will provide advice and guidance and a formal report is completed. If the visit reveals inaccuracies in the assessment quality, the Lead IV accreditation will be suspended. This means that marks submitted for learners will not be accepted by Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel and certificates withheld. The Standards Verifier will advise on appropriate actions and the timescale in which the agreed actions are to be taken.

Please note, failure to organise a Standards Verifier visit when requested will result in the withdrawal of accredited status and the withholding of results.

The Standards Verifier role

Standards verification is the quality assurance method that Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel uses to ensure that centres are assessing to the national standards. The role of the Standards Verifier is sometimes paraphrased as 'the guardian of the standards' and the primary focus is to ensure that centre staff involved in the planning, delivery and assessment of qualifications:

- maintain the national standard of qualifications awarded by Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel
- assess learner performance in accordance with national standards
- maintain a robust mechanism for the internal verification

- have a clear commitment to assuring and improving quality

The key tasks of the Standards Verifier are to:

- verify assessment practice and procedures to ensure that national standards are applied consistently
- take action to deal with identified problems
- provide centre staff with information, advice and support
- maintain accurate records and provide feedback to Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel
- promote and improve the quality of Functional Skills qualification assessment

The standards verification process

Standards Verifiers are allocated to selected centres as part of the Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel Quality Assurance Check.

The Standards Verifier should:
- agree a schedule for the verification which will normally include reviewing internal verification reports and records, assessment records, validating assessment judgements through observing learner assessments
- validate the quality and consistency of Assessor judgements against national standards by sampling assessment decisions
- review the internal quality assurance for the qualification – checking Lead Internal Verifier's records, sampling strategy and their feedback to Assessors
- inform the Lead Internal Verifier promptly 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 problems will be identified and resolved quickly
- review the centre's processes for meeting the conditions in the Instructions for the Conduct of Examination (ICE) document

Before the visit

Before each visit, the Standards Verifier should agree a schedule for the visit with the Lead Internal Verifier.

This should include time to cover the:
- levels to be verified
- evidence to be made available on the day (or in advance)
- observation of learner assessment
- review of the assessment strategy requirements and their implementation
- feedback to the Lead Internal Verifier and, where relevant, the centre assessment team

It is important that the main action points are agreed during the visit. Sufficient time should be allowed for this by both the Lead Internal Verifier and the Standards Verifier.

During the visit

The visit should follow the schedule agreed and enable the Standards Verifier to make a decision on whether or not to recommend the retention of Lead Internal Verifier accreditation. The criteria on the Standards Verifier Report provide the basis on which a decision will be made and the Standards Verifier will focus on these. It is the Lead Internal Verifier's responsibility to provide evidence to demonstrate that the criteria are being met.

Assessment Record Sheets should be retained by the centre for the Standards Verifier to review. This applies to all learners with entries for E101 or E201 for the examination series during which the visit takes place and for learners registered for ENC01 and ENC02 of the onscreen model for Functional Skills who are ready to claim their Functional Skills English certificate.

It is also important that feedback on the findings from the review is given to the Lead Internal Verifier, who should be available throughout the day of the visit.

Internal quality assurance

The starting point for the Standards Verifier is to review the quality of internal verification. If this proves to be rigorous and robust, they should have confidence in the assessment process and the decisions made. Centres must provide copies of:

- sampling plans
- sampling records, including feedback to Assessors
- records of monitoring assessment practice, including feedback to Assessors

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

Observing assessment of Speaking, Listening & Communication

Observing assessment of Speaking, Listening & Communication is a vital part of the verification process, providing the Standards Verifier with an instant 'health check' on the quality of assessment and verification. It is the responsibility of the Lead Internal Verifier to ensure that the learners chosen to be observed are representative of the overall standard.

Centres must make learner assessments available for observation. Failing to provide access to learner assessments may result in the cancellation of the visit and withdrawal of the Lead Internal Verifier accreditation.

The number of learners observed should be based on:
- the number of Assessors in the centre
- the number of satellite sites at which Functional Skills are delivered
- assessment decisions which have been verified by the Lead Internal Verifier and those that have not.

Minimum of four learners (if there are fewer than four learners available, then all)/ maximum of ten should be selected by the centre for assessment of an oral activity during the visit. The observed assessments do not need to be 'live'. It is possible to observe 'mock' assessments provided the records of 'live' assessments are available.

Meeting the team

If possible, the Standards Verifier will also meet with the assessment and verification team to discuss and advise on assessment issues and practices.

A crucial part of the Standards Verifier's role is to advise and support you. Their visit should allow time to discuss concerns or to answer queries. Where issues are outside the Standards Verifier's remit or experience, they will obtain the relevant information directly and respond by phone or email, or refer you to the appropriate person/department at Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel.

End of the visit

The findings of the visit will be discussed with the Lead Internal Verifier at the end of the visit. Actions for improvement will be identified through discussion before the Standards Verifier leaves, where possible. It is important that any actions and target dates agreed are clear and realistic. The Lead Internal Verifier should ensure that they understand any required action and that they clarify any issues before the end of the visit.

After the standards verification visit

Centres will receive the Standards Verification Report within 10 working days of the visit.

If there are no significant issues identified during the standards verification visit, the Lead Internal Verifier will retain their accredited status for the remainder of the academic year (i.e. until 31 August 2013). The Lead Internal Verifier needs to complete new training on OSCA each academic year before submitting marks for Speaking, Listening & Communication.

If the Standards Verifier identifies serious issues in the centre, a representative of Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel (a Senior Standards Verifier or a Regional Quality Manager) will contact the centre and provide appropriate support and guidance.

Support

Documentation

Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel communicate with the centre Quality Nominee or, for administration and certification information, the Examinations Officer. Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel do not usually issue information directly to Programme Managers/Lead Internal Verifiers. However, a variety of qualification specifications, policy documents and information books are produced to assist teaching teams. Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel also send out more general communications and newsletters relating to Functional Skill – if you wish to sign up, contact functionalskills@pearson.com.

Online

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

Edexcel Online
Edexcel Online, www.edexcelonline.com, is an invaluable service for administrators, providing support at every stage of the qualification cycle - from approval through to registration and entry, reporting of achievement and results and post-results services.

It also includes access to services for teaching staff, including OSCA, online booking for training events and Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel publications ordering. In addition, your Edexcel Online username and password will give you access to ResultsPlus.

Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel teams

Customer Services
Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel pledge to provide excellent service in all your dealings with us. Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel have a dedicated Customer Services team. All contact details for the appropriate teams can be found under the Contact Us tab on www.edexcel.com.

Regional Quality Managers
Regional Quality Managers are an important part of our quality partnership and are full time managers within our Vocational Assessment team. Each Regional Quality Manager works locally to support you with quality assurance. Their role is to:

- offer help, advice and support for BTECs, NVQs and vocational qualifications
- be the contact for initial support with quality assurance processes
- provide formal support and monitoring for the quality assurance processes, which include quality review & development and standards verification.

To find contact details for your Regional Quality Manager, please look at the **UK Regional Quality Manager map** which can be found at: www.edexcel.com/quals/BTEC/support

Curriculum Development Managers

Curriculum Development Managers are an important part of our Pearson UK FE and Schools teams. They provide a range of professional advisory support across all Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel qualifications.

A key responsibility of Curriculum Development Managers is to build relationships with schools, colleges and Local Authorities to raise achievement and promote our drive for excellence in education. Work Based Learning centres are supported by their Account Manager.

If you would like your Curriculum Development Manager or Account Manager to contact you, please get in touch with your regional office. Regional office details can be found at: www.edexcel.com/Aboutus/contact-us/find-offices

Functional Skills Assessment Team

The Functional Skills Assessment team, dealing with the production of question papers, the assessment of externally assessed units and the administration of internally assessed units, can be contacted on fsassessment@pearson.com

Appendix 1: Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form

Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form

Functional Skills English Level 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication

Please complete the following information.

Centre number(s):	Centre name:
Lead Internal Verifier name:	Lead Internal Verifier contact details:

I confirm that I have registered myself on OSCA as the Lead Internal Verifier for the centre named above.

I also confirm that I have undertaken the training available on OSCA and understand the application of the assessment criteria for Speaking, Listening & Communication component of Functional Skills Level 1 and/or 2.

Registered for (please, put a tick in the correct box):

Level 1   ☐

Level 2   ☐

Date of registration:

Please tick the box to confirm that you accept the above statements.   ☐

Please email the completed Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form to: fsassessment@pearson.com

Appendix 2: Using the Assessment Record Sheet

Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication Level 1

One Assessment Record Sheet should be used for the assessment of a learner across both the activities - the formal discussion and the informal discussion.

For each assessed task, the Assessor will place a tick against the coverage and range, either in the 'just below' or 'achieved' column. Please, refer to the Sample Assessment Record Sheet on the next page for the correct allocation of ticks for each activity.

In the grid, the letters next to the ticks (egg ✓F) stand for the kind of discussion in which the criterion has been achieved, i.e. F – formal discussion, I – informal discussion. One Assessment Record Sheet must be used for each learner and using F/I to distinguish the achievement makes applying the 'majority of the ticks in the Achieved column' requirement as stated on p.5 of the Sample Assessment Materials clear.

At Level 1, each Assessment Record Sheet should show nine ticks against the criteria, as shown on the Sample Assessment Record Sheet.

Each criterion must be met at least once, whether in a formal discussion, an informal discussion or both, and the majority of ticks must be placed in the 'achieved' columns for the learner to be awarded a pass at Level 1.

When completing the 'Centre summative comment' box, the comment should be personalised and refer to the learner's performance in relation to the Level 1 standards. On average, the comment should be approximately 50 words in length. Summative comments should not be too brief, but also not too onerous.

edexcel
advancing learning, changing lives

Functional Skills English Level 1: SAMPLE
Speaking, Listening and Communication Assessment Record Sheet

Please complete the following information (a separate sheet for each learner).

Learner name: **Karol**	Learner number: **xxxxx**	Centre number: **xxxxxx**

Activity: Formal	Date: **XXX**	Activity: Informal	Date: **XXX**
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner support.		Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner support.	
Discussing which project to finance		*Importance of recycling*	

Level 1: Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects. The grid should be applied on a 'best fit' basis. To achieve a Level 1 overall a learner should have met each of the Level 1 standards at least once.

Just Below Level 1	✓	**Achieved Level 1**	✓
Makes some relevant contributions to discussion		Makes relevant and extended contributions to discussions	✓F ✓I
Sometimes allows for and responds to others' input	✓F	Allows for and responds to others' input	✓I
Some use made of preparation to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions		Preparation supports contribution to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions	✓F n/a I
Makes some different kinds of contributions to discussions	✓I	Makes different kinds of contributions to discussions	✓F
Some information/points of view presented clearly, with some use of appropriate language		Presents information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language	✓F ✓I

Please tick the box if the learner has achieved Level 1:	✓
Centre summative comment: *In the informal discussion, Karol introduced his ideas appropriately but there were some hesitations. Although some of his contributions appear to lose focus, he picks up the points of others and makes relevant responses.* *In the formal discussion, Karol responds relevantly throughout with only some hesitations and occasional use of repetition.* Assessor signature: *Ms C Assessor* Date:	

Please attach another page if you wish to make additional comments.

edexcel
advancing learning, changing lives

Functional Skills English Level 1: Speaking, Listening and Communication Assessment Record Sheet

Please complete the following information (a separate sheet for each learner).

Learner name:	Learner number:	Centre number:

Activity: Formal	Date:	Activity: Informal	Date:
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner support.		Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner support.	

Level 1: Take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges that include unfamiliar subjects.

The grid should be applied on a 'best fit' basis. To achieve a Level 1 overall a learner should have met each of the Level 1 standards at least once.

Just below Level 1	✓	Achieved Level 1	✓
Makes some relevant contributions to discussion		Makes relevant and extended contributions to discussions	
Sometimes allows for and responds to others' input		Allows for and responds to others' input	
Some use made of preparation to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions		Preparation supports contribution to the formal discussion of ideas and opinions	
Makes some different kinds of contributions to discussions		Makes different kinds of contributions to discussions	
Some information/points of view presented clearly, with some use of appropriate language		Presents information/points of view clearly and in appropriate language	

Please tick the box if the learner has achieved Level 1:	
Centre summative comment:	
Assessor signature: Date:	

Please attach another page if you wish to make additional comments.

Functional Skills English Speaking, Listening & Communication Level 2

One Assessment Record Sheet should be used for the assessment of a learner across both the activities - the discussion and the presentation.

For each assessed task, the Assessor will place a tick against the coverage and range, either in the 'just below' or 'achieved' column. Please, refer to the Sample Assessment Record Sheet on the next page for the correct allocation of ticks for each activity.

In the grid, the letters next to the ticks (egg ✓D) stand for the kind of activity in which the criterion has been achieved, i.e. D – discussion, P – presentation. One Assessment Record Sheet must be used for each learner and using D/P to distinguish the achievement makes applying the 'majority of the ticks in the Achieved column' requirement as stated on p.13 of the Sample Assessment Materials clear.

At Level 2, each Assessment Record Sheet should show six ticks against the criteria, as shown on the Sample Assessment Record Sheet.

Each criterion must be met at least once, whether in a discussion, a presentation or both, and the majority of ticks must be placed in the 'achieved' columns for the learner to be awarded a pass at Level 2.

When completing the 'Centre summative comment' box, the comment should be personalised and refer to the learner's performance in relation to the Level 2 standards. On average, the comment should be approximately 50 words in length. Summative comments should not be too brief, but also not too onerous.

Functional Skills English Level 1 & 2

edexcel :::
advancing learning, changing lives

Functional Skills English Level 2: SAMPLE
Speaking, Listening and Communication Assessment Record Sheet

Please complete the following information (a separate sheet for each learner)

Learner name: **Nisha**	Learner number: **xxxxx**	Centre number: **xxxxxx**

Level 2: make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar, and make effective presentations

Activity: Discussion	Date:
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner preparation/support.	
Discussion about the issue of identity cards	
Activity: Presentation	**Date:**
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner preparation/support.	
Current trends in web design	

The grids should be applied on a 'best fit' basis. To achieve a Level 2 overall a learner should have met each of the Level 2 standards at least once.

Discussion activity			
Just Below Level 2	✔	**Achieved Level 2**	✔
consider complex information with some understanding and gives relevant, sometimes cogent responses in appropriate language		consider complex information and give relevant, cogent response in appropriate language	✔D ✔P
makes occasionally significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward some of the time		makes significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward	✔D
Presentation activity			
Just Below Level 2	✔	**Achieved Level 2**	✔
presents information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others some of the time		presents information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others	✔P
adapts contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation some of the time	✔P	adapts contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation	✔D

Please tick the box if the learner has achieved Level 2:	✔
Centre summative comment: *Nisha makes relevant, cogent responses throughout the discussion using appropriate language at all times. Her contributions help to move the discussion forward. She is a persuasive speaker in both the discussion and presentation and she is able to adapt according to context responding to her audience appropriately.*	
Assessor signature: *Mr S Verifier* Date:	

Please attach another page if you wish to make additional comments.

edexcel
advancing learning, changing lives

Functional Skills English Level 2: Speaking, Listening and Communication Assessment Record Sheet

Please complete the following information (a separate sheet for each learner)

Learner name:	Learner number:	Centre number:

Level 2: make a range of contributions to discussions in a range of contexts, including those that are unfamiliar, and make effective presentations

Activity: Discussion	Date:
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner preparation/support.	

Activity: Presentation	Date:
Please use the space below to note the context of the activity, how it was organised and any learner preparation/support.	

The grids should be applied on a 'best fit' basis. To achieve a Level 2 overall a learner should have met each of the Level 2 standards at least once.

Discussion activity			
Just below Level 2	✔	**Achieved Level 2**	✔
consider complex information with some understanding and gives relevant, sometimes cogent responses in appropriate language		consider complex information and give relevant, cogent response in appropriate language	
makes occasionally significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward some of the time		makes significant contributions to discussions, taking a range of roles and helping to move discussion forward	
Presentation activity			
Just below Level 2	✔	**Achieved Level 2**	✔
presents information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others some of the time		presents information and ideas clearly and persuasively to others	
adapts contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation some of the time		adapts contributions to suit audience, purpose and situation	

Please tick the box if the learner has achieved Level 2:	
Centre summative comment:	
Assessor signature:	Date:

Please attach another page if you wish to make additional comments.

A PEARSON COMPANY

Appendix 3: Frequently Asked Questions

Q1   How do we know if we need a Lead Internal Verifier?
A1   All centres are required to appoint a Lead Internal Verifier, please refer to Specification booklet, p.17 (this document can be found at www.edexcel.com/fs).

Q2   We gained our accreditation during the first/second OSCA window by completing the standardisation exercise. Our accreditation shows as valid until August 2013, is that still applicable?
A2   Yes, Lead Internal Verifiers who gained their accreditation by completing standardisation exercises in the OSCA accreditation windows between September 2010 and December 2010 will retain their accreditation until 31 August 2013, provided they renew their registration after 1 September 2012.

Q3   We are a small centre with only a few learners, do we need a Lead Internal Verifier?
A3   Yes, all centres need an accredited Lead Internal Verifier (see Q1). A possible solution to your situation is to work with another centre and appoint one Lead Internal Verifier. The Lead Internal Verifier then registers for both centres and takes on the responsibility of verifying assessment and internal verification strategy in both centres. The Lead Internal Verifier only needs to submit one Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form with the centre numbers of all centres they have agreed to verify.

Q4   We are a very large centre with several sites, do we need a Lead Internal Verifier for each site?
A4   There are two possibilities for large centres:
a) Your sites have unique centre numbers and, therefore, appear on our systems as separate centres. In this case you need to register your Lead Internal Verifier under all centre numbers but the Lead Internal Verifier only completes the training once and sends only one Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form listing the centre numbers of all sites the Lead Internal Verifier is responsible for. The FS Assessment team will then manually update the accreditation status for all centre numbers and marks from all sites will be accepted.

Please note, to avoid registering one person under multiple sites, you can also enter learners under only one centre number for which the Lead Internal Verifier submits the Declaration.

b) Your sites have the same centre number followed by a letter to distinguish the sites. In this case, you only need to register the Lead Internal Verifier under the main centre number (without any letter) and the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration will only state this main centre number.

Q5   How does the Lead Internal Verifier become accredited?
A5   Each Lead Internal Verifier has to complete OSCA training described in the Handbook for Quality Assurance.

Q6 Why do I need to complete OSCA training?

A6 It is part of the Quality Assurance Process (please refer to Specification p.17), to adhere to the standards required for achieving the FS English Levels 1 and 2 Speaking, Listening & Communication. Without confirmation that the Lead Internal Verifier has been trained/standardised and the marks from Assessors have been through a verification process, Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel cannot accept the marks submitted by the centre.

Q7 How long is my accreditation valid?

A7 Until 31 August of each year, then the Lead Internal Verifier is required to renew the registration on OSCA, complete the new training and submit the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form.

Q8 What is my OSCA accreditation for?

A8 OSCA accreditation covers the internally assessed unit of the Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 suite - FS English Speaking, Listening & Communication, i.e. E101, E201, ENC01 and ENC02. Once the Lead Internal Verifier gains accreditation, Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel can accept marks submitted for this component and issue complete results.

Q9 Do I need to be accredited for both level 1 and level 2?

A9 Each Lead Internal Verifier can register for one **or** both levels. Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel need a record of an accredited Lead Internal Verifier for the level at which learners are entered, so if you only have learners at Level 1, for example, you only need an accredited Lead Internal Verifier for Level 1. Lead Internal Verifiers responsible for more than one centre/site need to follow instructions in Q4.

Q10 If I have OSCA accreditation, will I still get a visit from a Standards Verifier?

A10 You may. As part of the Quality Assurance Check, Pearson Qualification Services/Edexcel select a sample of centres for SV visits. The visit includes support from the Standards Verifier and confirms the accreditation gained on OSCA.

Q11 When are the windows for me to complete my OSCA training?

A11 There are no accreditation windows for FS English OSCA. The training materials are available all year round. The Lead Internal Verifier can go online at anytime, complete the training, fill in the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration and send it to the FS Assessment Team (email fsassessment@pearson.com or post FS Assessment, 190 High Holborn, London, WC1V 7BH).

Q12 If I leave the centre, am I still accredited?

A12 Yes, the accreditation belongs to the Lead Internal Verifier registered on OSCA rather than the centre. If you move to another centre, you take your accreditation with you.

Q13 If our Lead Internal Verifier leaves the centre, do we need to appoint a new Lead Internal Verifier?

A13 Yes, each centre is required to appoint a Lead Internal Verifier so, as soon as one leaves, the centre needs to appoint a new Lead Internal Verifier. They are then required to complete the training and submit the Lead Internal Verifier Declaration Form.

Q14 Where can I get further information?

A14 Go to our FS English homepage www.edexcel.com/fs where you can find the 2012-13 Handbook for Quality Assurance, Sample Assessment Record Sheets and much more. With other questions, email: fsassessment@pearson.com.