

# GUIDANCE ON THE MONITORING OF ASSESSMENT ASSOCIATES' PERFORMANCE FOR BTEC, NVQ AND CRA AAs 2008-2009

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland require awarding bodies to carry out a performance evaluation of their **assessment associates (AAs)**. Edexcel employs AAs to carry out quality assurance of the BTEC suite of qualifications - external verifiers, external examiners and risk assessors and has put in place a rigorous process to triangulate feedback from centres, senior assessment associates (SAAs), and internal Edexcel personnel. The BTEC Assessment Department is responsible for the co-ordination of the monitoring process of all assessment associates for BTEC vocational qualifications, National Vocational Qualifications and Centre Risk Assessment.

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This guidance gives information on the:

- Model for monitoring AA performance
- Time lines associated with AA monitoring
- Procedures for monitoring AA performance
- Creation of the sample and calculation of the grade
- Grade definitions and contract implications
- Appeals process
- Edexcel contacts relating to AA monitoring.

## 2 THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING MODEL

At the start of the quality assurance cycle for each qualification area, a sample of AAs is identified to be included in monitoring; this will include all new AAs recruited to each role. Over a four-year period, every AA will have their performance monitored at least once.

There are four stages in the performance monitoring cycle:

### Stage 1

The sample of AAs is created for each BTEC role. This includes all new AAs. Details of the AAs in the sample are circulated by email to the people who provide feedback on performance

- centres' Quality Nominees
- senior assessment associates (SAAs)
- Edexcel AA Deployment Team

AAs in the sample are not informed that their performance is being monitored.

### Stage 2

AAs fulfil their role and the monitoring takes place, using the appropriate online feedback forms, accessible through Edexcel Online. Throughout this stage, emails reminders are sent, with details of AAs who have not yet been fed back on.

The criteria against which AAs are judged relate to communication, reporting, judgement, professionalism, and adhering to procedures (see section 3 for more detail).

### Stage 3

The feedback process is completed and submitted online for each AA by the relevant parties.

### Stage 4

The Performance Review Meeting takes place, where performance grades for each AA in the sample are confirmed.

Every AA has a performance grade for each role recorded. If an AA is not in the monitoring sample, the previous year's grade will be rolled over. Grades are communicated to all individuals each year. These grades inform subsequent allocation contracts.

## 2.1 PROPOSED CALENDAR DATES FOR THE MONITORING CYCLE BY QUALIFICATION ROLE

<b>BTEC NQF 2-3 inc Short Courses (L1-3)</b>	
STAGE 1	JANUARY
STAGE 2	FEB-MAY
STAGE 3	MAY
STAGE 4	JUNE

<b>BTEC HE</b>	
STAGE 1	MAY
STAGE 2	MAY-JULY
STAGE 3	AUGUST
STAGE 4	SEPTEMBER

<b>BTEC FAD</b>	
STAGE 1	JANUARY
STAGE 2	FEB-JUNE
STAGE 3	JUNE
STAGE 4	JULY

<b>EDEXCEL NVO</b>	
STAGE 1	NOVEMBER
STAGE 2	DEC-MAY
STAGE 3	JUNE
STAGE 4	JULY

<b>BTEC ENTRY/INTRODUCTORY</b>	
STAGE 1	JANUARY
STAGE 2	FEB-MAY
STAGE 3	MAY
STAGE 4	JUNE

<b>CENTRE RISK ASSESSORS</b>	
STAGE 1	OCTOBER
STAGE 2	NOV-FEBRUARY
STAGE 3	MARCH
STAGE 4	APRIL

<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>	
STAGE 1	MAY
STAGE 2	MAY-JULY
STAGE 3	AUGUST
STAGE 4	SEPTEMBER

## 3 THE AA MONITORING PROCESS

### 3.1 THE CENTRE ROLE

The centre is the recipient of the AA's service, whilst fulfilling the quality assurance role. From when the contract is accepted and the allocation appears on Edexcel Online, until the successful closure of the process, the centre develops an important working relationship with the AA and is thus in a unique position to judge performance.

On occasions relationships between an AA and a centres can be fraught, particularly when quality issues are identified and remedial work is required. We expect the AA to be sensitive in their handling of the situation and support centre staff through what can be a stressful period.

Edexcel welcomes feedback on the AAs in the sample - both negative and positive comments. **The feedback remains confidential at all times and is never shared with an AA.** If there are concerns about an AA's performance, Edexcel will raise this with the AA but the comments and the source are not divulged.

As well as feeding back on associates in the formal sample, centres may feed back on the performance of any other associates and the BTEC Assessment team will facilitate this.

The criteria we ask centres to judge AA performance against are:

- Communication - Timeliness, Clarity, Effectiveness
- Procedure - Availability, Delivery, Reporting
- Professionalism - Quality of Advice, Integrity, Demeanour.

### 3.2. THE SENIOR ASSESSMENT ASSOCIATE ROLE

The senior assessment associate (SAA) supports the AAs during the quality assurance cycle and will scrutinise reports. In exceptional circumstances they may accompany the AA on a visit to a centre. The criteria against which they will judge performance are:

- Reporting - Completeness, Presentation, Action (clarity/SMART).
- Judgements - Certification status, Certification justification, Actions (justification).

### 3.3 THE AA DEPLOYMENT TEAM ROLE

The AA Deployment Team deal with an AA's contracts and are responsible for ensuring that the quality assurance cycle is completed on time. They will chase up reports as the deadline for completion approaches. The criteria against which they will judge AA performance are:

- Functionality - Capacity, Flexibility, Availability.
- Procedure - Contracts, Reporting.

## 4 CREATION OF THE SAMPLE

The monitoring sample is generated at the start of the quality assurance cycle and, with a few exceptions, is random. All new AAs are probationary in their first year and are drawn automatically into the sample so that their performance is monitored. Future work with Edexcel will be dependant on the outcome of this monitoring.

The Quality Nominee is informed by email of the AAs who are in the monitoring sample for a particular qualification and they should pass this information to programme staff who are in a position to give feedback. Similarly, if the centre's risk assessor is in the sample, the Quality Nominee is informed by email; for this role, it is expected that they will give the feedback.

## 5 GRADE DEFINITIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CONTRACTS

The scores are then electronically aggregated to produce an overall performance grade, which will inform contracts allocated the next year.

**A** - Exceptional performance, demonstrating competence in excess of the standard that is expected and required. Generally achieved after some years' experience of the role and as a result of formal monitoring. Maximum number of allocations, according to sector needs.

**B** - Excellent performance, demonstrating competence at the standard that is expected and required. This is the grade we expect most associates to achieve. Maximum allocations according to sector needs.

**C** - Reasonable performance but lacking in one or more areas and demonstrating competence below the standard that is both expected and required, which may be due to inexperience. Minimum allocations according to sector needs.

**E** - Serious performance issues, demonstrating a level of competence far below the standard that is expected and required. If this grade is awarded then the associate's contract is withdrawn and the associate is not invited for training the following year.

**D: New** - Included automatically in the sample for performance monitoring the following year. Minimum allocations according to sector needs.

## 6 TO GIVE FEEDBACK ON AAs IN THE MONITORING SAMPLE - USING THE FORM

A web based form is available for centres to feed back on AA performance. This is located on Edexcel Online and staff will need a username (unique email address) and password to access the form. Exams Officers can set up passwords for basic access so that staff can use Edexcel Online for this and other purposes.

Feedback forms are designed to capture data for the key performance criteria identified, which are subdivided into performance indicators, and are scored 1-5, 1 denoting weak performance and 5 strong performance. If a low score of 1 or 2 is given, then comments are required to support the low score.

## 7 ASSESSMENT ASSOCIATES NOT INCLUDED IN THE MONITORING SAMPLE

If an AA is not in the formal monitoring sample, centres can still give feedback on performance by contacting [BTECAAMonitoring@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:BTECAAMonitoring@edexcel.org.uk). Centres cannot feed back on non-sample AAs through Edexcel Online.

## 8 KEY EDEXCEL CONTACTS

For issues relating to this process, contact [BTECAAMonitoring@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:BTECAAMonitoring@edexcel.org.uk).  
For issues relating to deployment, contact [QAS@edexcel.org.uk](mailto:QAS@edexcel.org.uk).