



South Tyneside Council

Examination Policy



The Beacon Centre
Leading The Way To A Brighter Future

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Next review – September 2023

| Reviewed by | Signature | Date |
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| SLT | | |
| Management Committee | | |



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Examination Policy

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The Exam Policy

The purpose of this exam policy is:

- To ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently and in the best interest of candidates.
- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in The Beacon Centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

The exam policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team/Management Committee on a yearly basis.

Exam responsibilities

Teachers within The Beacon Centre and the pupils' mainstream school are responsible for:

- Notification of access arrangements/requirements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to the examination officer/examination administration assistant

The Sen Coordinator (SENCo) within The Beacon Centre and the mainstream school are responsible for:

- Identification and testing of candidates, requirements for access arrangements.
- Provision of additional support – with spelling, reading, mathematics, dyslexia or essential skills, hearing impairment, English for speakers of other languages, IT equipment – to help candidates achieve their course aims.

Lead invigilator/invigilators are responsible for:

- Collection of exam papers and other material from the examination officer /examination administration assistant
- Before the start of the exam.
- Collection of all exam papers in the correct order at the end of the exam and their return to the examination officer/examination administration assistant
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Candidates are responsible for

- Confirmation and signing of entries.
- Understanding coursework regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.



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Qualifications

The qualifications offered at The Beacon Centre are decided by the Senior Leadership Team.

The qualifications offered are Functional Skills: Literacy, Numeracy and ICT, BTEC Level 1/2, GCSE, OCR Nationals and Ifs awards.

Informing the exams officer of changes to a syllabus is the responsibility of the Subject Teacher and Senior Leadership Team.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the subject teachers, Senior Leader responsible for examinations and Head Teacher.

Exam Series and Timetables

Exam Seasons

Internal assessments are scheduled half-termly.

External exams and assessments are scheduled in May and June; computer-based exams are available on demand.

Internal exams held under external exam conditions.

Mock examinations for Year 11 students are scheduled for Spring 1st half term

The Head Teacher decides which exam series are used in The Beacon Centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exam officer will circulate the exam timetable for External exams.

Entries, entry details and late entries

The QCDA recommends the use of Exam fees estimator tool and the exemplar case study 'Reducing late exams entries: Practical advice from your exam's office colleagues'.

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Head Teacher, Subject teachers and Senior Leader responsible for exams.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal.

Entry deadlines are circulated to subject teachers via briefing meeting.

Late entries can only be authorised by the Head Teacher.



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Retake decisions will be made in consultation with the Exams Officer, Head Teacher and subject teachers.

Exam fees

Candidates will not be charged for changes of tier, withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

GCSE entry exam fees are paid by The Beacon Centre (P/Ex pupils) and mainstream schools (Referred pupils).

Exam fees are paid by The Beacon Centre and schools where appropriate.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the School following discussion with the Head Teacher and Senior Leader responsible for exams.

Fee reimbursements can be sought from candidates who decide to sit an exam after the late entry/withdrawal deadline/fail to sit an exam/do not meet the necessary coursework requirements without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances.

Re-sit fees are paid by the Centre.

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

The DDA introduced measures aimed at eliminating the discrimination often faced by disabled people. The main provisions of the Act give protection to disabled people in the areas of employment and education.

A person has a disability for the purpose of the DDA if s/he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her/his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

To find out more about exactly how your school can satisfy the requirements of the DDA visit the DDA information page on the QCDA website.

Access arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an exam, and the date of that exam. The SENCo can then inform individual staff of any special arrangements that individual candidates can be granted during the course and in the exam.



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A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the Doctor and Educational Psychologist/specialist teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Submitting completed access arrangement applications to the awarding bodies is the responsibility of the Exam Officer.

Rooming for access arrangement candidates will be arranged by the SENCo with the Exams Officer.

Invigilation and support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo with the Exams Officer.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the Exams Officer.

Estimated grades

The subject teacher is responsible for submitting estimated grades which are an accurate reflection of the grade a student should achieve. These must be completed when requested by the Exams Officer.

Managing invigilators

Members of the Senior Leadership Team, support staff and some teachers or are used to invigilate examinations.

These invigilators will be used for internal exams and external exams.

Recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership Team if required.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration.

DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the LEA.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the centre administration.

Malpractice

The Head Teacher is responsible for investigating suspected malpractice.

Exam Days



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The Exams Officer will book all exam rooms after liaison with other users and make the question papers, other exam stationery and materials available for the invigilator.

The Beacon Centre is responsible for arranging the setting up of the allocated rooms.

The Exams Officer will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

In practical exams subject teachers may be on hand in case of any technical difficulties.

Exam papers must not be read by subject teachers or removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to subject teachers at the end of the exam session.

A relevant subject teacher may be available to read out any subject – specific instructions and start the exam, if required.

Candidates

The Beacon Centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other electronic devices apply at all times.

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and The Beacon Centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines. Candidates are expected to stay for the full exam time at the discretion of the exams officer or senior invigilator.

For exams longer than one-hour candidates may leave the exam early, but no sooner than one hour after the published starting time. They will not be allowed to return.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam day or subsequently.

For clash candidates, the supervision of escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight supervision is the responsibility of the Exams Officer and Senior Leadership Team.

Should a candidate be ill before an exam, suffer bereavement or other trauma, be taken ill during the exam itself or otherwise disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, then it is the candidate's responsibility to alert The Beacon Centre, the Exams Officer, or the exam invigilator, to that effect.



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The candidate must support any special consideration claim with appropriate evidence within three days of the exam, for example by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

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Internal Assessments and Appeals

Internal assessment replaces the largely discontinued term coursework

It is the duty of subject teachers to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each dispatch, including the recipient details and the date and time sent.

Marks and appeals

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Officer by the subject teachers.

Appeals against internal assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy, available from the office.

Results

Results, enquiries about results (EARs) and access to scripts (ATS)

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Head Teacher.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Head Teacher.

EARs

EARs may be requested by The Beacon Centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates' consent is required before any EAR is requested.

If a result is queried, the Exams Officer, teaching staff and Head Teacher will investigate the feasibility of asking for a re-mark at The Beacon Centre's expense.



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When The Beacon Centre does not support a candidate's or parent's request for an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice or subject staff, they will be charged.

The Beacon Centre is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assesses pupils' work for external qualifications, from either legacy coursework or controlled assessment; this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned. Assessments under controlled supervision should be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in the activity. Pupils' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the awarding body (examination board). Where a set of work is divided between staff consistency should be assured by internal moderation and standardisation.

If a pupil feels that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, s/he may make use of this appeals procedure. Note that appeals may only be made against the process that led to the assessment and not against the mark or grade.

Appeals should be made as soon as possible and must be made at least two weeks before the end of the last externally assessed paper in the examination series.

1. Appeals should be made in writing to the Examinations Officer who will initiate the investigation of the appeal. Steps will be taken to ensure that any senior member of staff directly involved in investigation will not have been directly involved in the assessment in question.
2. The member of staff appointed to investigate the appeal will decide whether the process used for internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding body and the examination code of practice of the QCDA. This will be done before the end of the examination series.
3. The pupil will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any correspondence with the awarding body, any changes made to the assessment of the work, and any changes made to improve matters in the future.
4. The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Head Teacher. A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed internally it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation sometimes changes the marks awarded for internally assessed work. That is outside the control of The Beacon Centre and is not covered by this procedure. If you have concerns about it, please ask the Examinations Officer for a copy of the appeals procedure of the relevant awarding body.

Enquiries About Results (Re-marks)

Where a candidate is unhappy with the mark or grade awarded for an externally assessed examination unit (e.g. a written paper), a clerical or re-mark may be requested in writing via the Examinations Officer.



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The decision as to whether to support such an enquiry will be made by the Head Teacher and subject teacher on the basis of several factors, including knowledge of the examination system and professional judgment.

By consenting to a clerical check or re-mark the candidate will be required to acknowledge that his/her grade may be confirmed, raised or lowered as a result of the enquiry.

Where the pupil wishes to challenge the school's decision not to hold an enquiry about a result, a similar procedure to that described above will be carried out.

ATS (Access to Scripts)

After the release of results, candidates may ask subject staff to request the return of papers within three days' scrutiny of the results.

School staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

Certificates

Certificates can be collected by the student on notification of availability, or if not collected, posted to pupils.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so.

The Beacon Centre retains certificates for six years.