Business & Computing Examinations (BCE)

LONDON (UK)

BCE General Conditions of Recognition Checklist

Condition	Responsible Person(s)	BCE Reference Material

1. **Risk Management**
   1) Identify adverse effects using Project Management Tools and Techniques
     • Brainstorming
     • Nominal Grouping Technique
     • Mind Mapping
     • Delphi Technique
   2) Identify contingencies and communication methods to affected areas i.e. Centres
   3) Analyse Internal Control System
 	
 The primary function of BCE is to provide written assessment to candidates, and assessment account for 95% of BCE income. Reliability, effectiveness and adequacy of assessment management and resources is a major risk factor.
	• Board of Advisors
	 • CEO
	 • Programme Development Manager
	 • Auditor
	 • Quality Assurance Manager
	 • Office Manager
		• Risk Management / Contingency Plan Policies
		 • Risk / Contingency Logs
		 • Malpractice / Maladministration
		 • Chief Examiner Reports
		 • External Verifier Reports
		 • IT Strategy

2. **Integrity** • 95% of our income comes from Qualifications and Assessment; hence BCE, Approved Centre, Examinations and Qualifications **INTEGRITY** are at the core of BCE operations • Integrity of Candidate records	• CEO • Programme Development Manager • Office Manager • Quality Assurance Manager	• Centre Accreditation Handbook • Maladministration/Malpractice Policies • Assessment Quality Assurance Policy • Quality Management Policy • Data Protection Act • Assessment Quality Assurances • Internal Control Evaluation and Management

3. **Personnel Responsibilities**
   1) Job Summary
   2) Terms of Reference
	• CEO
	 • Programme Development
		• Organisational Chart
		 • Job Description
		 • Management Handbook

3) Required knowledge, skills and abilities	• Manager • Office Manager	• Staff Development Policy • Staff Misconduct Policy • Corporate Social Responsibility • Ethics Policy / Equal Opportunity Policy

4. **Ensuring Resources and Arrangements are adequate**
   1) Reliability of BCE's internal controls is an important factor in determining the extent of evaluation necessary.
   2) Sound strategic planning is a critical component of General Management, Qualification Development, Assessment Management and provide the framework from which the executive management directs and controls operations.
   3) Analysis of Internal and External Factors
   4) Consistent rating system for all significant financial, asset quality, internal control management, assessment management, qualifications development, operational management processes, operational management factors and system reviews and techniques.
   5) Operational Management reviews (identify procedures, processes, delivery media and continuous evaluation of functional areas)
   6) Monitoring Financial position/resources
   7) Analysis of anticipated qualifications demand and past trends
   8) Up-to-date inventory of Qualifications (Certificates issued, spoilt, replacements, etc.)
   9) Number of candidates who sat examinations and future numbers
   10) Assessment personnel CVs, planned standardisation meetings/contact dates and schedules
   11) Evaluation and Control Management
	• CEO
	• Programme Development Manager
	• Office Manager
		• BCE Management Handbook
		• Marketing Plan
		• Financial Plans
		• Action Plans
		• Qualifications Support
		• Annual Reports
		• BCE Calendar / Exam Timetable
		• IT Strategy
		• BCE Internal Control Management
		• BCE Operational Management
		• Efficiency & Effectiveness
		• Accountability Framework
		• Internal Operations/Processes

5. **Centre Updates**
   1) BCE Approved Centres point of contacts (Centre Head, exam officer, invigilation officer, including names, telephone numbers, email addresses)
   2) Centre training (record of staff names who attended; planned and unplanned Centre training dates; person undertaking the training)
   3) Regular contact with Centres
   4) Publishing Centre important dates (e.g. Exam fee deadline dates, Centre coursework release dates)
	• Programme Development Manager
	• Office Manager
		• Exam Timetable
		• Approved Centre Database
		• Exemption Policy
		• Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy
		• Maladministration and Malpractice Policy
		• Exam Invigilation Comments
		• Centre Incidents
		• Suspected Malpractice
		• Sanctions Policy

6. **Quality Plan**
   1) Quality Goals and Priorities
      a. Goal 1 Continuously improve the quality of our services
	• CEO	• BCE Management Handbook (Quality Strategic Plan)
		• BCE Strategic Plan

b.   Goal 2   Continuously improve our Assessment Systems and Processes
    c.   Goal 3   Continuously improve our Practices
    d.   Goal 4   Continuously improve our Relationships and Partnerships
    e.   Goal 5   Continuously improve BCE Centre Operational Activities
2) Differentiating regulated and unregulated qualifications
3) Adhering to regulatory requirements (will include retaining data or records which can be used for the purpose of implementing or validating compliance, consistency and completeness)
		• Quality Management Policy

7. Suppliers and Procurement Process Maintain a list of important suppliers and contacts Follow approved procurement process	• Programme Development Manager • Office Manager	• BCE Suppliers • Contacts (Assessment Panel, Auditors etc.) • BCE Approved Centre database

8. Monitoring and Review
  1) Review information we receive from Centres for consistency (i.e. monthly registers, annual reports)
  2) Review complaints database
  3) Compile views of industry, employers, candidates and learners (from stakeholders meetings, emails, telephone enquiries etc.)
  4) Analyse External Auditor reports
  5) Analyse Chief Examinations Officer and External Verifier reports
  6) Analyse Internal Control Reports
  7) Qualifications Development Process
  8) Assessment Management Process
  9) Feedback from Centres
  10) Annual Review Process
	• CEO
	• Board of Advisors
	• Programme Development Manager
	• Quality Assurance Manager
	• Office Manager
	• Marketing Manager
		• Chief Examinations Officer, External Verifier and Auditors' reports
		• Exam Setter /Reviser / Scrutiniser Reports
		   o Exam Questions Validity Criteria Template
		   o Exam Reviser/Scrutiniser Exam Questions Review
		• Audited Reports
		• Evaluation Workpapers
		   o Operational Management Process Framework
		   o Operational Management Process Evaluation
		   o Internal Control Evaluation Management
		   o Qualifications Development Review
		   o Qualifications Currency Evaluation
		   o Assessments Management Review
		   o Assessments Management Evaluation
		   o Report of Evaluation (ROE)

9. **Qualifications and Capabilities**
1) Uniqueness of BCE Qualifications
BCE **mandatory units** which make up Qualification Levels are easily identifiable as:
    i.   a group or individually
    ii. associated, correlated and relevant to each other and the qualification title
    iii. a representation of applicable knowledge, skills, career progression and personal development
    iv. relevant for an individual undertaking a specific role in the workplace
    v. cover a broad spectre of units that are all essential in the current markets
 	
This helps exam setters / scrutinisers / examiners / external verifiers when setting / scrutinising / marking / verifying as the following can easily be identified:
    ▫ diversion from the norm
    ▫ bias
    ▫ discrimination
This is of great importance in sustaining the maintenance and monitoring of qualification and assessment standards.
 	
2) Similar / Identical Units
Identical units are highlighted in the Accreditation Handbook; hence Centres are encouraged to combine learners. This creates the following advantages:
    i.   Learners can be taught by one person resulting in no discrepancies between groups.
    ii. Assessment also set by one person; avoiding discrepancies between groups.
    iii. Feedback is from a small group and this enables us to:
        • go through all information
        • contact each individually for clarification
hence the relevant information we receive is proportional to our organisational size
 	
3) BCE Qualifications Academic Grouping:
	• Programme Design and Review Panel
	
	• Assessment Panel
	
	• Programme Development Manager
		• Qualifications Development & Assessments Management Documents
		    o Principles for Examination & Assessment
		    o Syllabus Development Process
		    o Statement of Equity
		    o Qualification & Performance Specification Criteria
		    o Assessment Standards
		    o Aggregation of Qualification Results
		    o Qualification Strategy
		    o Assessment Strategy
		• Centre Procedures
		    o Centre Complaints Management
		    o Learning Resources & Learning Environment
		    o Teaching & Learning Strategy
		    o Supporting Robust and Fair Assessment
		    o BCE Assessment Procedures
		    o Approved Centre Management Principles

Academic Grouping table:

Business	**Computing**
Group 1: Accounting / Finance	**Group 3:** Information Technology / Computer Science / Programming / Database
Group 2: Business/Management / Human Resources / Marketing /Administrative / Hospitality (Hotel Management / Travel & Tourism)	**Group 4:** Networking
	Group 5: Web Design / Graphic Design

Advantages

a) This enables us to manage qualifications easily (small groups of professionals with knowledge and understanding covering all qualifications and/or units in an Academic Group. These professionals have the knowledge and understanding which in part subject-specific and part generic; and also

professional skills related to each academic grouping; hence reduces the number of exam setters / scrutinisers / markers / verifiers; suitable to our organisational size).

b) One examiner can mark Certificate Level 3 or 4; Diploma Level 5 or 6 in each Academic Group.

c) This helps us identify a general understanding of candidates and quickly gain insight knowledge regarding inconsistency or malpractice; as a small group of professionals will cover a wide variety of subject areas.

d) At most, only a few exam setters/scrutinisers/markers/verifiers; need to be engaged; this enables us to manage our resources well.

e) By having a small but efficient and knowledgeable group of exam setters / scrutinise/markers/verifiers:

    i. we are able to maintain security of assessment;

    ii. identify cheating between centres (as one person has access to different groups);

    iii. weaknesses and risks in assessment (as one person can have access/exposure to a number of different qualifications);

    iv. enables us to monitor a small group; pertinent to our organisational size;

4) Risks

Because of a small group of exam setters / scrutinisers / markers / verifiers; risks in qualifications and assessments are easily identified. The same person who scrutinises Certificate 4, does Level 5 and is able to identify the following weaknesses:

    a. similarity of questions within a qualification and between qualifications

    b. progression inconsistencies between Credit Framework Levels

    c. progression inconsistencies between qualifications

5) Monitoring

a) Because units in a qualification are *distinct* yet *interrelated*, we are able to achieve a good response by monitoring i.e. "Accounting" qualification as this can be done by the same person covering a number of Centres and can easily identify valuable information than five different people assessing i.e. five different centres.

b) Examiners and External Verifier feedback is also valuable as the outcome from a small group covering different qualifications would easily reach a consensus agreement.

c) Statement of Comparability; small groups with diverse knowledge and skills would provide immeasurable information on the comparable level of grouped qualifications and standards.

6) Better Implementation

a) Because our qualifications can be divided according to Academic Groups; this makes it easier for Centres to implement BCE Qualifications. Lecturers would have interlinking knowledge and skills; hence exposure resulting in meaningful feedback to BCE.

b) Small Centres can also have a small number of qualified personnel who can take a variety of

units.		
10. **Qualifications Development** 1) Independent Experts None of the Programme Design & Review Panel group members are full-time employed by BCE. They are all independent experts working in relevant fields; all fully qualified. 2) Piloting of BCE Qualifications Pilot duration is 6 months to 1 year. Organisations used for pilot schemes are BCE Approved Centres and Corporate Clients. **Centres** It will be clearly highlighted to Centres that qualifications are for pilot study, and pilot scheme lasts 1 year. **Corporate Clients** Five day training seminars using a third-party and this runs for 6 months. 3) Annual Reviews – evaluate the "*currency*" of qualifications taking into consideration Centre Reports, industry changes and requirements etc.	As Point 9 above	As Point 9 above

11. **Assessment Management**
1) Independent Experts
None of the Assessment Panel group members are full-time employed by BCE. They are all independent experts working in relevant fields; all fully qualified.
 	
2) Exam Setter, Reviser/Scrutiniser Guidelines
BCE has documentation to help Exam Setters, Revisers/Scrutiniser.
 	
3) Assessment Calendar
 All examination questions are set at the beginning of each year (January/February as per BCE Calendar dates) and placed in a secure question data bank.
Advantages
   i. **Security** – exam setters would not have the knowledge of which questions would be used in the exam.
  ii. **Logistics** – once a year operation.
 iii. **Good planning** – this means we are prepared well in advance for each exam window and questions will be despatched on time.
 iv. **Exam leakage** – incase of exam compromise, we have enough exam papers on standby.
	As Point 9 above	• Terms of Reference
		• Code of Conduct of Exam Setters, Revisers/Scrutinisers
		• Exam Questions Validity Criteria
		• Reviser/Scrutiniser Examination Questions Review

12. **Accountability Framework** *Ensuring personnel:*	• CEO	• Accreditation Handbook

1) Understand BCE responsibilities
2) Understand Approved Centre responsibilities
3) Understand Regulatory compliance requirements; including data or records which can be used for the purpose of implementing or validating compliance.
4) Understand the principles of improvement and effectiveness
5) Understand the importance of reporting to stakeholders on our progress, to demonstrate how we are meeting our commitments and delivering against our targets.
6) Understand accountability measurements to promote quality improvement and achieve our goals
7) Routinely take required necessary steps by:
   i. Going through our policies / procedures
   ii. Conducting Annual Reviews on:
     • Qualifications Development
     • Qualifications Currency
     • Assessment Management
     • Centre Reports
     • Internal Control
     • Operational Management (procedures, resources, delivery methods and continuous improvement)
	• Programme Development Manager
	• Office Manager
		• BCE Values and Ethics
		• BCE Evaluation and Monitoring
		• BCE Governance & Planning
		• IT Management

13. Maladministration and/or Malpractice Outlining steps to reduce risk of Maladministration/Malpractice; including: • appointing responsible person to undertake investigations including terms of reference; • breakdown of how investigations are undertaken; • outlining the principles to be followed (lawful procedures); • identifying when parties involved are contacted and interviewed; • outlining acceptable evidence and assurances of confidentiality; • expressing how evidence is gathered, collated and stored;	• CEO • Programme Development Manager • Quality Assurance Manager	• Maladministration and Malpractice Policy • Quality Assurance Manager responsibilities • Appeals Policy • Complaints Policy • Assessment Quality Assurance Policy • Suspected Malpractice Form • Exam Invigilation Comments • Centre Incident Report Form • Chief Examinations Officer / External Verifier Reports
14. Financial Ability Financial worries affect BCE ability to make effective decisions; thereby raising the risk of making mistakes which leads to more less efficiency. **Organisational Financial Capability:** BCE's ability to manage people and resources to gain competitive advantage. It: • focuses on internal processes and systems for meeting organisational, Centres, Learner and other	• CEO	• Finance Policy • Management Handbook

stakeholder needs;
- creates organisational-specific competencies that provide competitive advantage since they are unique;
- ensures that employee skills and efforts are directed toward achieving organisational financial goals and strategies.

Traditional Sources of Competitive Advantage:
- **Economic/financial capability:** able to produce goods or services at lower cost than competitors.
- **Strategic/marketing capability:** products or goods that differentiate BCE from its competitors, typically by "adding-value" or "product-portfolio mix."
- **Technological capability:** products or services that customers receive are innovative, high-quality, state-of-the art; typically, in how they are built, designed or delivered.

Strategic planning focuses on resource allocation. BCE organisational financial capability focuses on achieving goals through personnel commitment and competence.

Two criteria for competitive advantage:
1)   adding perceived value to the customer;
2)   offering uniqueness that cannot be easily imitated by a competitor;

Organisational financial capability enhances perceived customer value in three ways:
1)   **Responsiveness:** the ability to understand and meet customer needs more quickly than competitors.
2)   **Relationships:** the ability to develop enduring relationship between BCE and it customers.
3)   **Service quality:** the ability to design, develop and deliver service that meets or exceeds customer expectations.

Organisational financial capability enhances uniqueness because it is difficult to imitate:
- Imitation requires changing the way people think, act, and interact.
- Social engineering of complex social processes such as culture, teamwork, leadership are neither well-understood nor easily replicated.

Four critical elements for BCE:
- Shared mindset
- Management practices
- Capacity for Change (through understanding and managing organisational systems)

• Leadership at all levels in the organisation
 	
Shared Mindset
   • Common understanding end goals (strategies) and means (processes, work systems, activities).
   • Congruence between BCE and stakeholder expectations.
 	
Management Practices
   • Policies, programmes, operating procedures, and traditions that guide work.
   • Transforming individual behaviour to create customer satisfaction and consistency in customer treatment.
   • Complementing and integrating with one another to create common expectations, behaviours and goals.
 	
Capacity for Change
   • Ability to reduce cycle time of all activities
   • Four Principles:
      o **Symbioses:** ability to cope with external change; a bridge between internal action and external conditions
      o **Reflexiveness:** ability to learn from past experiences; self-assessment and continuous learning
      o **Alignment:** ability to integrate tasks, structures, processes, and systems with political, technical, and cultural aspects of the organisation.
      o **Self-renewal:** ability to change over time successfully when needed.
 	
Leadership
   • Owning passionately a vision which is promoted both within and outside the organisation.
   • Translating external conditions into vision for the organisation and how personnel act to attain vision.
   • Empowering individuals at all levels within the organisation to act within his or her domain.		