

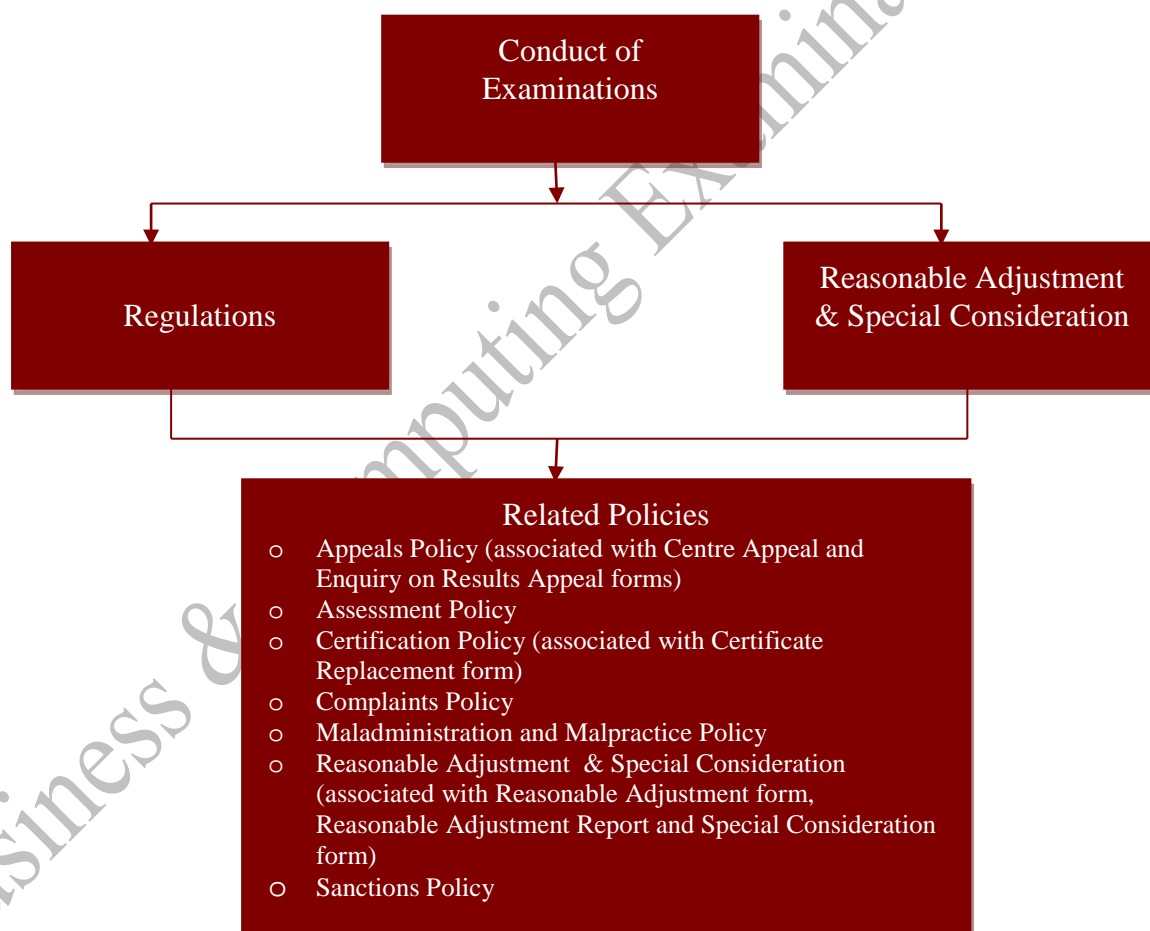


Business & Computing Examinations (BCE) LONDON (UK)

Examination Regulations Policy

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Responsibility for policy:	Programme Development & Services
Responsibility for implementation:	Programme Development Manager

Examination Regulation Framework



Introduction

Business & Computing Examinations (BCE)

- Sets and marks the examinations which determine the BCE practitioner qualification.
- Decides on examination procedure
- Provides specification for all BCE qualifications
- Sets an international standard for the education of Computing, Business and Hospitality studies
- Has a determination of educational character and ethos
- Promotes articulation of vision, values and strategic direction

BCE is also responsible for

- a) setting/developing examinations
- b) administering examinations
- c) marking examinations
- d) delivering examinations/results
- e) providing answer sheets, but not calculators or electronic media i.e. CD/flash drives

Candidates are issued with a candidate number after completing the BCE Candidate Examination Registration Form.

All candidate examination scripts and coursework are forwarded to BCE London for marking.

- Exams are held three times a year
- The exams are attempted in order (learners start from Level 3 or 4 Certificate, Level 5 Diploma and then Level 6 Diploma). It is necessary to successfully complete one qualification level in order to do another.
- Learners have to pass all units in order to obtain a qualification. There is no time limit to complete all units. Learners have to re-sit failed units.
- Examination application forms, closing dates and exam dates are published on BCE website and also advertised at Approved Centres.

Centres should check for public holidays and notify BCE if an exam date falls on a public holiday in their country. **If an exam week falls on a public holiday, the Centre should notify BCE and written permission would be given to postpone the exam to the following week. Postponed examinations cannot be written a week before the actual date, but a week later.**

Why regulate

Regulations are the act of controlling or governing activities, in our case, examinations.

The main reasons for regulating are:

- a) protect the integrity of examinations
- b) to make sure everybody gets a fair mark/result
- c) to make the examination process reliable
- d) the whole idea of exam testing is to enable learners to think and apply knowledge, if the examination process is not regulated, the intended purpose is not achieved.
- e) to make sure the appropriate level of knowledge is reflected.
- f) to make sure only genuine learners receive awards

Conferment of Examination Awards

- i. BCE can only confer a Level 3 or 4 Certificate, Level 5 Diploma or Level 6 Diploma [award] upon individuals who pursue a qualification and have passed all the prescribed units, including project/coursework.
- ii. Results are sent to relevant centres
- iii. Direct communication between learners and BCE is prohibited.
- iv. Learners convey their grievances through their Centres

Aegrotat Award

- i. A learner prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from undertaking an examination, is allowed to sit examinations at the next available examination date. [see Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy]
- ii. Centres may give *aegrotat* awards.

Conduct of Examinations

1. For each invigilated examination there shall be designated, by the BCE Examinations Officer, a Senior Invigilator responsible for the conduct of the examination, together with such other invigilators as may be necessary.
2. Attendance at all examinations is compulsory. A candidate who is absent from any examination must, without delay (maximum 5 working days), submit to their centres his or her reasons for absence and, in the case of illness, submit a medical certificate.
3. Candidates are required to be available for the entire duration of the main examination periods. Examinations can take place twice a day (morning and afternoon) for the entire duration of the examination periods.
 - a. Each examination session shall be conducted on the day and at the time shown by the examination timetable authorised by the Examinations Officer. The time allowed for the examination shall be shown on the question paper.
 - b. BCE will have approved in advance; in the case of candidate's disability, injury, medical condition, learning difficulties such as impairment, dyslexia or for other good cause, special arrangements for the conduct of that candidate's examination. In order to apply for such requirements, candidates must meet with the Disabilities or the Dyslexia Manager/Officer at their centres; complete the relevant Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration Forms and the centre management will confirm to BCE by completing the Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Report.
 - c. Notwithstanding the provisions of these Regulations, the Examinations Officer may, for good cause, approve on behalf of the awarding body special arrangements for the conduct of a particular examination or examinations.
4. Candidates are required to arrive at the exam venue 30 to 45 minutes before the start of the exam.
5. Each candidate will be required to identify himself or herself in the examination room by producing his or her ID card.
 - a. No candidate can be admitted to an examination later than one hour after the beginning of the examination. A candidate who arrives late will not be given extra time, except in exceptional circumstances outside his/her control. Candidates who are more than one hour late will not be permitted to sit their exam.
 - b. No candidate will be permitted to leave earlier than one hour after the beginning of the examination nor within 15 minutes of the end of the examination.
 - c. A candidate leaving before the end of the examination must surrender his or her examination answer-sheet sheet to an invigilator and will not be re-admitted.
 - d. A candidate leaving the examination room temporarily for any reason must be accompanied by an invigilator.
 - e. A candidate must sit at the desk allocated and place his or her registration ID card face up on the desk to enable the invigilator to confirm identity.
 - f. Candidates may not talk to each other from the time of entering the examination room until the time they leave. A candidate who needs to attract the attention of the invigilator is required to raise his/her hand.
 - g. No candidate may start writing until the invigilator announces the start of the examination.
 - h. At the end of the examination, all candidates must remain seated until all examination answer-sheets have been collected and the invigilator in charge directs that they may leave.
 - i. All candidates should sign on completion of each exam sitting and when handing-in their coursework. After invigilation staff stop all candidates from writing, candidates sign exam register; one at a time (to enable invigilation staff clear verification). All candidate exam scripts for each qualification should be sorted according to Candidate Exam Numbers or Candidate Exam Number Request list.
6. No examination materials may be removed from the examination room by a candidate. BCE advise centres to collect and keep all exam question papers to enable future learners access to past papers.
7. Large bags may be placed in the examination room only at the discretion of the invigilator in charge. Candidates are required to leave all personal items in the designated areas at the beginning of the examination. Possession of a mobile phone or any electronic device (with the exception of permitted calculators) is strictly prohibited.

8. During an examination, candidates must not consult or have access to unauthorised materials such as books, electronic devices, notes or other aids. Candidates are permitted to use a completely clear plastic bag or clear case with no writing in any area to contain their pens, pencils, rulers etc.
9. Candidates may only use non-programmable calculators. Candidates are not allowed to store formulae in calculators and exam invigilators will check that all calculators' memories are cleared at the start of the exam.
10. Any unauthorised material found after an examination has begun will be confiscated and submitted to the Examinations officer for checking. This includes mobile phones and other unauthorised electronic devices.
11. Candidates are responsible for checking that they have the correct examination paper and materials needed to complete their exam.
12. A candidate who suspects that there is an error in an examination paper should consult an invigilator.
13. Candidates will be liable to Disciplinary Proceedings, as laid down in the Regulations, for irregular conduct relating to an examination including:
 - a. consulting or having access to unauthorised material such as books, electronic devices, and notes during an examination. All BCE examinations are *closed book*.
 - b. aiding or attempting to aid another candidate during an examination
 - c. obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another candidate during examination
 - d. attempting to read the work of another candidate
 - e. the removal of examination stationary from the examination room e.g. exam question papers.
 - f. indiscipline or causing a disturbance during an examination
 - g. plagiarism
 - h. impersonation
 - i. any deed (verbal or physical) deemed inappropriate or considered as an examination offence by an invigilator.
14. In the case of an irregularity discovered during an invigilated examination, the Examinations Officer shall take such immediate action as he or she considers necessary, and shall report the matter, using the prescribed form [Suspected Malpractice Form] to BCE.
15. In the event that the fire alarm is activated and the exam room evacuated during an examination, candidates will continue to be under exam regulations. When it is safe to re-enter the building, the Examinations Officer will decide if the examination is to continue.
16. Examinations Officer has a general discretion to take such action during an examination as may be required in consequence of unforeseen circumstances, subject to a report being made to BCE as soon as possible.

The Quality Assurance within the responsibilities delegated to it by the CEO has responsibility for the discipline of approved centres.

Penalties – available either at preliminary or disciplinary stage are:

- i. Expulsion – centre is de-registered
- ii. Suspension – centre is suspended for a certain period.
- iii. Exclusion – centre excluded from offering certain examinations
- iv. Reported to relevant local authorities; i.e. the police or education department

Appeal Procedures

A centre for which a penalty has been determined has the right of appeal.

The appeal will not take the form of a re-hearing of the case. An appeal may only be made on the grounds that:

- i. there were defects in the conduct of the previous disciplinary investigation such as to render the decision unsound
- ii. there is significant and relevant evidence that, for demonstrable, valid, and over-riding reasons, could not be submitted previously.

The grounds of appeal must be stated in writing in advance to BCE. A written record of this process and its outcome will be kept.

For more information, see **BCE Appeals Policy**

Particulars of Misconduct

Complaints of Misconduct – complaints alleging misconduct by a registered centre. This includes:

- (a) misappropriation of examination fees
- (b) overcharging examinations
- (c) not sending examinations on time
- (d) not emailing learners list as required
- (e) holding examination results
- (f) not sending all learners exam fees to BCE

1. General Statement of Misconduct

The essence of misconduct under the disciplinary regulations is improper interference, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of an Approved Centre or those who study at it or action which otherwise damages the awarding body.

Further particulars of misconduct are contained in 2 below but the above general statement must be shown to apply to the conduct complained of, if misconduct is to be proved.

2. What constitute Misconduct?

Subject always to 1 above, the following shall constitute misconduct:

- i) disruption of, or improper interference with, BCE staff;
- ii) obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of a member of staff or other employee of BCE or any authorised visitor to an Approved Centre;
- iii) violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive behaviour or languages whilst engaged in BCE activities;
- iv) fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to BCE as an organisation or its staff or in connection with holding any office in relation to BCE examinations;
- v) breach of the provisions of any examination regulations;
- vi) misuse of BCE material e.g. logos;
- vii) conduct which constitutes a criminal offence where that conduct:
 - a) damages the good name of the awarding body
 - b) false information about the assessments and examinations
 - c) misappropriation of examination fees
- viii) behaviour which brings the Examinations into disrepute;
- ix) failure to disclose names and other relevant details to an Examinations Officer in circumstances when it is reasonable to require that such information be given;
- x) failure to comply with security of examination instructions and procedures;
- xi) failure to comply with a penalty previously imposed;
- xii) conduct which constitutes unsuitability for the profession;
- xiii) not adhering to BCE enforcement(s).

BCE Learners' Responsibilities

Learners following a qualification of study validated by the Business & Computing Examinations at institutions operating BCE qualifications of study should *note* that validated Centres have their own procedures of handling matters of learner discipline as set out in learner policy handbooks or other documentation provided by the institution.

However, BCE remind candidates of the following:

Admission of learners to undertake examinations

- i. Applications to sit for examinations are made through the centres.
- ii. Learners are required to pay examination fees by the stated deadline dates
- iii. Learners are required to provide verification of qualifications
- iv. Each learner is given an examination ID number.
- v. No candidate is allowed to sit examinations until they pay examination fees
- vi. The authority to grant exemptions shall rest with BCE (see Exemption Policy)
- vii. Learners should pass all relevant units in order to obtain a Level 3 or 4 Certificate, Level 5 Diploma or Level 6 Diploma.

- viii. Transfer of examination fee to another person is not allowed. Those who fail to sit for an examination due to illness or other reasons should notify their Centres at the earliest convenience. [see Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy]

Cheating

The BCE takes very seriously any form of cheating in examinations or other form of illegal activities such as plagiarism, impersonation, collusion and disruption.

Copyright

Copyright of a learner's coursework lies with the learner's responsibility. Learners who produce identical coursework will all fail.

Examination policy on sickness certification

Candidates who are prevented by ill-health from attending one or more examinations are required to submit medical evidence of their illness *5-10 days after the exam week* or at the earliest convenience.

Medical certificates will be scrutinised by the appropriate officers and will not automatically be accepted.

Candidates who decide for whatever reasons not to sit for examinations should communicate to BCE 8 weeks before examination date.

For more information, see **Reasonable Adjustment and Special Consideration Policy**.

Disclosure of Examination Results

Examinations results take approximately 8 weeks (2 months). Candidates are informed through their Centres and also BCE publishes on the web site exam dispatch dates.

Complaints procedure

Learners who wish to make a complaint against the Centre concerning the quality of education or any related service should first do so at the local level, by raising the issues with the Centre staff.

For more information, see **Complaints Policy**.

Centre Responsibilities

Approved Centre Management are responsible for ensuring that:

1. Agreed arrangements remain in force between the qualifications.
2. Learners are provided with timely information about assessment requirements and arrangements.
3. Learners' results are made available to them as soon as possible.
4. Learners' details for those who paid examination fees are forwarded to BCE on agreed times.
5. BCE Terms and Condition, required monthly information and annual reports are adhered to.

Ordering Coursework

Centres should request for coursework the following week after exam fee deadline

[Centres should ensure they email BCE the registers of learner every month]

Late work submission

Learners are reminded to hand-in their coursework/project the last Friday before the exam week. We do not accept late work. However, we consider fair and equitable procedures that apply to reasonable adjustments. For more information see Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy.

Re-sits

Learners are allowed to re-sit failed unit(s) or coursework.

Malpractice

Malpractice involves a deliberate act of wrongdoing, contrary to official examination rules, and is designed to place a learner at an unfair advantage or disadvantage. BCE takes any form of malpractice seriously. In the event a Centre is involved in any form of malpractice, approval will be withdrawn.

Forms of Malpractice

Examination Development	Description	Involves
Leakage	Content of the examination paper(s) is disclosed prior to taking the examination	Members of examination authority, Centre administration
Exam preparation	Candidates come across exam content and practice the questions	Centre staff, members of examination authority
Impersonation	An individual who is not registered as a candidate takes the place of one that is registered.	Involves collusion between centre head and examination officer. Sometimes involves exchange of money or favour for a friend
External assistance	Individuals who are not examination candidates giving unauthorised assistance to candidates	Usually involves invigilators
Smuggling of foreign materials	Relates to unauthorised materials e.g. notebooks, scribbled notes, charts smuggled in pants, shoes etc or information written on parts of the body	Usually only candidates are involved.

[see BCE Malpractice and Maladministration Policy for more information]

Exam invigilation

Minimum number of invigilators required is 3 for up to 100 candidates.

The examination process is as follows:

- i. Exams will be held at a major sports hall and accommodate all candidates at once. However, in some countries, examinations are held at centres.
- ii. Exams are held twice a day – 9am and 2pm.
- iii. Arrangements of desks to be 1m apart minimum
- iv. Candidates who arrive 60 minutes after the exam starts should only be allowed at the discretion of the chief-invigilator.
- v. All candidates should be checked as they go into the exam room and everybody should be seated 15 minutes before starting time.
- vi. Coursework should be submitted on the last Friday before the first day of the examinations.
- vii. All examinations will be dispatched on the last day of the exam or the next day. Exams are sent directly to BCE London offices.