

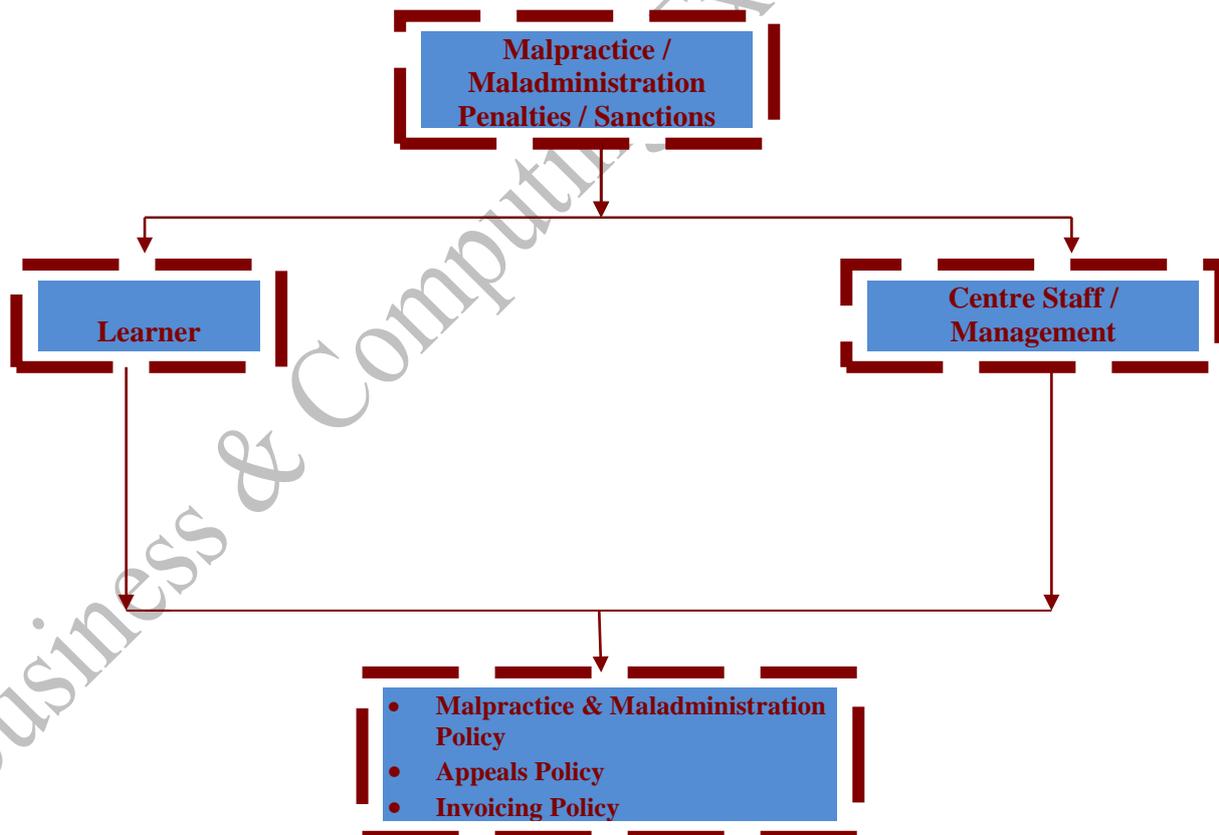


Business & Computing Examinations (BCE) LONDON (UK)

Sanctions Policy

Policy No.:	P023
Date of issue:	April 2012, revised September 2020
Status:	Approved
Responsibility for policy:	Programme Development & Services
Responsibility for implementation:	Programme Development Manager

Sanctions Framework



Overview

BCE uses sanctions to manage incidents of malpractice and maladministration. It is important that all familiarise themselves with this document in conjunction with the BCE Malpractice and Maladministration Policy. Please note that going forward the term 'malpractice' will be used as a catch for all malpractice and maladministration. Definitions of these terms are provided in BCE's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.

Working in partnership with Centres

As an organisation we look to work in partnership with our approved *Centres*. In gaining successful approval, BCE has made a judgement that Centres have the necessary expertise, resources, systems and processes to deliver high quality qualifications. On this basis, we expect incidents of malpractice to be rare.

However, it is paramount that we safeguard the interests of learners at all times. Our Malpractices and Maladministration Policy and Sanctions Policy provide a framework designed to ensure these interests are protected.

In gaining centre approval, Centres will have also agreed to BCE terms and conditions and committed to report to BCE in a timely fashion. Any incidents of malpractice should be reported to BCE immediately. This allows us to work together to deal with the issue and reduce the need for sanctions penalties to be applied.

Serious incidents of malpractice and maladministration can carry serious consequences. For example, it carries the risk of Centre Approval being withdrawn and, in certain circumstances, a fine against the Centre. A breach of the BCE policies and regulations may also result in reputational damage to Centres.

BCE will determine the application of a sanction according to the evidence presented, the nature and circumstances of the malpractice, and the number of previous warnings given. Not all the sanctions are applicable to every type of incident or circumstance.

BCE may, at their discretion, impose sanctions against a centre or learner. These sanctions and penalties may be applied individually or in combination. The following are examples of sanctions. Please note that these examples are not exhaustive and are for guidance:

Examples of BCE Sanctions

Learners

- Written warning given to the learner.
- Assessment evidence produced by the learner will be omitted.
- Disqualification from the unit or whole qualification.
- Barred from entering BCE qualifications for a defined period of time or indefinitely.

Centre staff

- A written warning provided to that member of staff.
- Additional supervision and training given to that member of staff by BCE (however, centre has to pay towards the cost).
- The imposition of special conditions on that member of staff in relation to their role in future BCE examinations.

- A temporary suspension from invigilating in BCE examinations/or supporting learners prepare for BCE examinations.
- Suspension of Centre member of staff from all involvement in BCE qualifications.

Centres

- Fine may be imposed.
- Written warning given to the centre.
- Review with actions/conditions.
- Additional monitoring, inspection or supervision.
- The deployment of independent invigilators.
- A temporary suspension of certification.
- A temporary suspension of registration and certification.
- Withdrawal of approval for specific qualifications.
- Withdrawal of approval for centres.
- Supervision and enforcement

BCE Staff

Please note that disciplinary action in relation to incidents of malpractice by BCE staff is defined in BCE's Staff Misconduct Policy.

The Application of BCE Penalties and Sanctions

BCE will apply penalties and sanctions in a consistent and fair manner. All incidents of malpractice and the action taken is tracked centrally by BCE to ensure consistency in practice. Where serious incidents are proven we will make this information available to learners through the BCE website to ensure transparency.

Please note these examples are indicative. Each incident of malpractice is reviewed on its merits. All centres will be given detailed training on what constitutes malpractice and maladministration, what measures should be taken to reduce the likelihood of incidents occurring and what action should be taken if a suspected incident has occurred.

Learners

Example 1: A learner breaks the invigilation rules/regulations when sitting in an examination.

Action: Some discretion is needed to establish the intent of the learner and seriousness of the breach of regulations. However, if deliberate cheating is established, learners will be given zero marks for the examination.

Example 2: Learners are proven to have plagiarised parts of their coursework.

Action: Learners will get zero marks for this coursework and the centre will be informed.

Example 3: Learners are proven to have arranged for another person to impersonate them in sitting an examination

Action: This incident is treated very seriously by BCE and will typically result in learners being disqualified for that qualification and barred from entering future BCE qualifications.

Centre Staff:

Example 1: A member of centre staff provide learners with an unacceptable level of guidance in preparing for an examination.

Action: Depending on the seriousness of the malpractice, BCE sanctions might range from a formal warning letter coupled with additional supervision and training to temporary or permanent suspension from BCE examinations.

Example 2: A member of centre staff inadvertently loses a suite of examinations papers.

Action: BCE defines this as an act of maladministration which while inadvertent is damaging for learners.

In this incident, BCE will issue a warning letter to the member of staff and centre, provide further training if needed and supervise the implementation of a remedial plan to prevent this type of incident happening in the future. At the same time the centre would be asked to pay towards the cost of resending examination papers and also a penalty will apply.

Example 3: Centre staff are found to have breached security and distributed confidential examination papers to learners.

Action: BCE views this as serious incident of malpractice and would typically suspend the member of staff from any future involvement in BCE examinations and depending on the actions taken by the centre, make a judgement on whether further sanctions need to be applied to that centre on top of the penalty.

Centres:

Example 1: A centre provides misleading marketing information about its qualifications and related fees.

Action BCE would provide a written warning to the centre and supervise the implementation of a remedial plan to prevent this happening again.

Example 2: A centre persistently fails to adhere to BCE invigilation/exam regulation requirements.

Action: BCE would in the interests of safeguarding the integrity of its examinations take a number of actions including deploying independent invigilators, suspending approval for particular qualification and if the centre is not responsive ultimately suspend centre approval.

Example 3: A centre fails to report a serious incident of malpractice to BCE

Action: This would be treated very seriously by BCE and typically would result in a temporary or permanent suspension of centre approval.