

Exam Policy 2020

Compiled by: L. Gell

Signed by HoC: D. Mayhew

Signed by AVA Committee: B.Norman

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Exam Policy - Alde Valley Academy

“Every child can learn. Just not on the same day or in the same way.” It's not that students don't want to learn, they are just not being taught in a way that they can learn. “
(George Evans, 1001 Pearls of Teachers' Wisdom, 2011)

Introduction

The centre is committed to ensuring that the exams management and administration process is run effectively and efficiently and in compliance with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

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 centre's exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy.

This exam policy will be reviewed annually.

This exam policy will be reviewed by the Head of Centre, Alde Valley Academy Committee and the Exams Officer.

Exam Responsibilities

Head of Centre

Overall responsibility for the Academy as an exam centre:

- accountable to the awarding bodies for ensuring that the centre is compliant with the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements in order to ensure security and integrity of the examinations/ assessments at all times
- advises on appeals and re-marks
- the Head of Centre is responsible for reporting all suspicions or actual incidents of malpractice. Refer to the JCQ document Suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments
- Organisation of teaching and learning
- External validation of courses followed at Key Stage 4

Exams Officer

Responsible for having in place a written examination contingency plan/examination policy which covers all aspects of examination administration. This plan must allow members of staff designated by the Head of Centre, to carry out the role of the Examination Officer in the event of his/her absence.

Manages the administration of public and internal exams and analysis of exam results:

- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Team Leaders and form tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various exam boards
- Oversees the production and distribution to staff, governors and candidates of an annual calendar for all exams in which candidates will be involved and communicates regularly with staff concerning imminent deadlines and events
- Ensures that candidates and their parents are informed of and understand those aspects of the exam timetable that will affect them

- Consults with teaching staff to ensure that necessary coursework is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ guidelines
- Provides and confirms detailed data on estimated entries
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration using the JCQ Access arrangements and special considerations regulations and Guidance relating to candidates who are eligible for adjustments in examinations
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes
- Accounts for income and expenditures relating to all exam costs/charges
- Liaises with the Associate Principal to ensure that sufficient exam invigilators are recruited
- Trains, monitors and manages the team of exams invigilators ensuring that all requirements for the conduct of exams are met
- Prepares and presents reports to the Senior Leadership Team and Faculty Team Leaders showing results achieved in relation to expected grades and comparable data for previous years, indicating where future procedural improvements might be made
- Submits candidates' coursework marks, tracks dispatch and stores returned coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with the SLT, any appeals/re-mark requests
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams

Team Leaders

- Guidance and pastoral oversight of candidates who are unsure about exam entries or amendments to entries
- Involvement in post-results procedures
- Accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declaration sheets.
- Accurate completion of entry and all other mark sheets and adherence to deadlines as set by the Exams Officer

Teachers

- Notification of access arrangements (as soon as possible after the start of the course).
- Submission of candidates' names to Team Leader/school/curriculum.

SENCO

- Administration of access arrangements
- 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
- Invigilators
- Collection of exam papers and other material from the Exams Office 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 Exams Office
- Ensure all candidates have an equal opportunity to do well
- Ensure exam security before, during and after the exam
- Prevent possible candidate malpractice
- Avoid possible administration failures
- Ensure exams are conducted fairly and to JCQ regulations
- Candidates
- Confirmation and signing of entries

- Understanding the regulations of coursework and control assessments and signing a declaration that authenticates the work as their own

The statutory tests and qualifications offered

The statutory tests and qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Head of Centre.

The statutory tests and qualifications offered are GCSE, ECDL, Functional Skills, Entry Level, ASDAN, and BTEC.

Any change of syllabus recommended by the Team Leaders must be agreed by Line Manager. Any changes to courses/qualifications must be agreed by the the Head of Centre.. The Exam Office must be informed by 1 July.

Decisions on whether a student should not take qualifications in one or more subject will be taken by the Head of Centre having considered all available information.

At Key Stage 4

All students will be entitled, and enabled, to achieve an entry for qualifications from an external awarding body.

Exam seasons and timetables

Exam seasons

Internal exams are scheduled in November and February

External exams are scheduled in March, April, May and June. BTEC examinations are held through the academic year.

All internal exams are held under external exam conditions.

Which exam series are used in the centre is decided by the Head of Centre.

Timetables

Once confirmed, the Exams Officer will circulate the exam timetables for internal exams and external exams.

Entries, entry deadlines and late entries

Entries

It is expected that all students will be entered for qualifications in the subjects they are studying. The tier of entry (where relevant) will be determined by the Team Leader with the subject teacher.

Candidates, or parents/carers, can request a subject entry or change of level which will be considered by the Team Leader.

The Academy will consider requests to enter candidates who are not Academy students (e.g. staff members).

Late entries

Entry deadlines are circulated to Team Leaders via email.

Late entries are authorised by the Head of Centre.

Exam Fees

The Centre will pay all normal exam fees on behalf of candidates.

Candidates or Faculties 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.

The Equality Act 2010, special needs and access arrangements

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 extends the application of the Equality Act to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

Special needs

A candidate's special needs requirements are determined by the SENCO, doctor and educational psychologist / specialist teacher.

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.

Access arrangements

Making special arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the SENCO.

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

Estimated Grades

The Team Leaders will submit estimated grades to the Exams Officer when requested by the Exams Officer

Managing invigilators and exam days

Managing invigilators

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

The recruitment of invigilators is the responsibility of the Head of Centre and Exams Officer. Recruitment processes are in line with the Safer Recruitment Policy.

Securing the necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DSB) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Headteachers PA.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

Invigilators' rates of pay are set by the Centre administration.

Exam days

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.

Site management is responsible for setting up the allocated rooms.

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

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 invigilators or removed from the exam room before the end of a session.

Preparation for the exam, the Exams Officer and invigilators must:

- Check candidates' seats are the correct distance apart (1.25m).
- Put an exam mat on each desk which will have name, centre number, exam number and a photo of the candidate. The photo of the candidate will assist with the identification
- Warning Signs to candidates MUST be displayed clearly.
- Check no work is displayed on walls.
- Make sure the clock is working and is visible to all candidates.
- Centre number MUST be displayed – 19127 (or 8466357 for NCFE)
- Check mobile telephones and smart watches are not in Examination Room.
- Ensure all sealed examination papers and stationery are ready.
- Be aware of any special announcements which must be made (ie Erratum Notice).
- Examination details must be displayed on Flip Chart/Whiteboard.
- Clear pencil cases, no calculators (unless specified on exam paper), or calculator cases, no tippex/correcting pens.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In an emergency such as a fire alarm or a bomb alert the following action will be taken by the Exam Officer and/or invigilators. On hearing the alarm the Exam Officer or Senior Invigilator will use their mobile to check if the alarm is real. On receiving confirmation it is a real emergency the following action will be taken.

- Stop the candidates from writing and ask candidates to close their answer booklets
- Collect the attendance register and evacuate the examination room
- Advise candidates to leave all question papers and scripts in the examination room. Candidates must leave bags in the examination room. Candidates must leave the room in silence
- Candidates from the examination room(s) will leave in their row and will line up in the same row on the concrete playground before the playing field.
- Candidates must be supervised as closely as possible while they are out of the examination room to make sure there is no discussion about the examination. The time and the length of interruption must be noted.
- Check all candidates are present according to the seating plan/attendance register.
- Senior Invigilator from each room to advise the Exam Officer whether all students and invigilators are present.
- Exam Officer to confirm that all students and staff are accounted for.

- On returning to the examination room(s), all candidates must be allowed the full working time set for the examination.
- If there are only a few candidates, consider the possibility of taking the candidates (with question papers and scripts) to another place to finish the examination.
- Make a full report of the incident and of the action taken and send to the relevant awarding body.

Candidates, clash candidates and special consideration

Candidates

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

Candidates' personal belongings remain their own responsibility and the centre accepts no liability for their loss or damage.

Disruptive candidates are dealt with in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Candidates may leave the exam room for a genuine purpose requiring an immediate return to the exam room, in which case a member of staff must accompany them.

The Exams Officer will attempt to contact any candidate who is not present at the start of an exam and deal with them in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Clash candidates

The Exams Officer will be responsible as necessary for supervising escorts, identifying a secure venue and arranging overnight stays.

Special consideration

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 centre, the Exams Officer, or the Exam Invigilator, to that effect.

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

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body before the end of the exam period

Coursework, controlled assessments and appeals against internal assessments

Coursework

Candidates who have to prepare coursework should do so by the end of the course.

Team Leaders will ensure all coursework is ready for dispatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will keep a record of what has been sent when and to whom.

Marks for all internally assessed work and estimated grades are provided to the Exams Office by the Team Leaders.

Controlled Assessments

At the end of the academic year, Team Leaders to schedule controlled assessments for the following academic year. This must be agreed by the Head of Centre.

All staff must follow procedures outlined in the Controlled Assessment Policy (found in appendix 11.4).

Team Leaders must advise the Exam Officer of all unit codes for controlled assessments. All marks for all controlled assessments must be given to the Exams Office for submission by the beginning of May.

Appeals against internal assessments

The Centre is obliged to publish a separate procedure on this subject, which can be found in 12.4.

The main points are:

- appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded
- candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification
- appeals should be made in writing by 30 June to the Head of Centre (or other nominee) who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements
- the Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

Controlled Assessment Policy

The Centre is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' controlled assessment/coursework this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. The Centre is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

If a candidate believes that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this appeals procedure. N.B. an appeal may only be made against the assessment process and not against the mark submitted to the awarding body.

- Appeals should be made as early as possible and no later than two weeks before the last timetabled examination in the series (eg the last GCSE written paper in the June GCSE examination series).
- Appeals must be made in writing by the candidate's parent/carer to the Exams Officer.
- The Head of Centre will appoint a senior member of staff, ie an Assistant Principal, to conduct the investigation. The senior member of staff will not have had any involvement in the internal assessment process for that subject.
- The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for internal assessment conformed to the awarding body and any changes made to internal assessment procedures.

- The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to internal assessment procedures.
- The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Headteacher and will be logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. Should the appeal bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed.
- Any candidates' work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of this Centre and is not covered by this procedure.

Outlining staff responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team

- Accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments. Ensure assessments comply with JCQ guidelines and awarding bodies' subject-specific instructions.
- At the end of the academic year, begin coordinating with Team Leaders to schedule controlled assessments for the following academic year.
- Map overall resource management requirements for the year. As part of this resolve:
 - clashes/ problems over the timing or operation of controlled assessments.
 - issues arising from the need for particular facilities (rooms, IT networks, time out of school etc.)
- Ensure that all staff involved have a calendar of events
- Create, publish and update an internal appeals policy for controlled assessments.

Team Leaders/Learning Coordinators

- Decide on the awarding body and specification for a particular GCSE.
- Ensure that at least 40% of overall assessment (controlled and/or external assessment) is taken in the exam series in which the qualification is certificated, to satisfy the terminal assessment requirement in accordance with the awarding body specification.
- Standardise internally the marking of all teachers involved in assessing an internally assessed component. Where work for a component has been marked by more than one teacher in a centre, standardisation of marking should be carried out by one of the following procedures:

Either Re-mark a sample of work which has been marked by each teacher:

Or Meet with all the teachers responsible for marking a component and exchange some marked work and compare their marking standards.

Where standards are found to be inconsistent, get the relevant teacher(s) to make adjustments to their marks or re-consider the marks of all candidates for whom they were responsible. Ensure all new marks are checked.

- Ensure that individual teachers understand their responsibilities with regard to controlled assessment.
- Ensure that individual teachers understand the requirements of the awarding body's specification and are familiar with the relevant teachers' notes, and any other subject specific instructions.
- Where appropriate, develop new assessment tasks or contextualise sample awarding body assessment tasks to meet local circumstances, in line with awarding body specifications and control requirements.

Teaching staff

- Understand and comply with the general guidelines contained in the JCQ publication *Instructions for conducting controlled assessments*.
 - Understand and comply with the awarding body specification for conducting controlled assessments, including any subject-specific instructions, teachers' notes or additional information on the awarding body's website.
 - Supply to the Exams Officer details of all unit codes for controlled assessments.
 - Obtain confidential materials/tasks set by awarding bodies in sufficient time to prepare for the assessment(s) and ensure that such materials are stored securely at all times.
 - Supervise assessments (at the specified level of control). Undertake the tasks required under the regulations, only permitting assistance to students as the specification allows.
 - Ensure that students and supervising teachers sign authentication forms on completion of an assessment.
 - Mark internally assessed components using the mark schemes provided by the awarding body. Submit marks through the exams office to the awarding body when required, keeping a record of the marks awarded.
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- Retain candidates' work securely between assessment sessions (if more than one).
 - Post-completion, retain candidates' work securely until the closing date for enquiries about results. In the event that an enquiry is submitted, retain candidates work securely until the outcome of the enquiry and any subsequent appeal has been conveyed to the centre.
 - Ask the appropriate special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) for any assistance required for the administration and management of access arrangements.
 - Keep an attendance register and if a student is absent allow the student to make up missed time.
 - When scheduling controlled assessments, include additional hours to what is needed to ensure all students meet the required controlled assessment time.
 - Request invigilation from the Exam Officer at least two weeks before the assessment date to allow sufficient time for planning.
 - When taking students out on a Field Trip relating to the controlled assessment, teachers must complete a risk assessment as detailed in the Academy's Trip Policy.

Exams Officer

- Enter students for individual units, whether assessed by controlled assessment, external exam or on-screen test, before the deadline for final entries.
- Enter students' 'cash-in' codes for the terminal exam series.
- Where confidential materials are directly received by the Exams Officer, to be responsible for receipt, safe storage and safe transmission, whether in CD or hard copy format.
- Download and distribute marksheets for teaching staff to use, and collect and send marksheets to awarding bodies before deadlines.
- On the few occasions where controlled assessment cannot be conducted in the classroom, arrange suitable accommodation where controlled assessment can be carried out, at the direction of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Arrange invigilation for formal assessments.

Special educational needs coordinator/additional learning support

- Ensure access arrangements have been applied for.
- Work with teaching staff to ensure requirements for support staff are met.

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

Results

In addition to individual results slips candidates will receive a summary results sheet on results days either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide stamped, addressed envelope).

Arrangements for the Academy to be open on results days are made by the Exams Officer in liaison with the Head of Centre.

The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Exams Officer in liaison with the Head of Centre.

EARs

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking.

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

When the Centre does not uphold an EAR, a candidate may apply to have an enquiry carried out. If a candidate requires this against the advice of subject staff, they will be charged.

Team Leaders may request an EAR, where this is not upheld, the cost will come from Faculty capitation.

ATS

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

Centre 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.
(See also section 5: Exam fees)

12.4 Internal Appeals Procedure

Policy on Internal Assessments for Qualifications with English Awarding Bodies

In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of external qualifications produced by the QCA, College Academy is committed to ensuring that:

- Internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant Specifications for each subject.
- The consistency of internal assessment is assured through internal standardisation as set out by the Awarding Bodies.
- Staff responsible for internal standardisation and/or assessment attend any compulsory training sessions.

Written Appeals Procedure

Each Awarding Body publishes procedures for appeals against its decisions, and the Examinations Officer will be able to advise students and parents of these procedures.

Appeals may be made to the Academy regarding the *procedures* used in the internal assessment, but *not the actual marks or grades* submitted by the Academy for moderation by the Awarding Body.

A student or parent wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Examinations Officer, as soon as possible to discuss the appeal, and a written appeal must be received by the Academy *at least two weeks before the date of the last external exam in the subject*.

On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry into the internal assessment will be conducted by the Examinations Officer and the Curriculum Manager. This enquiry will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.

The appellant will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and of any steps taken to further protect the interests of the candidates.

Statement for Students:

“If at any stage during your exam courses you have concerns about the procedures used in assessing your internally marked work for public exams (eg coursework / portfolio / projects) you should see the Examinations Officer, as soon as possible”.

13. Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

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

Replacement certificates are only issued if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred.

The Centre retains certificates for six years.

Appendix for BCS Requirements

Quality Assurance Procedure

The minimum requirement for a Centre's Quality Assurance procedure is detailed below:

- The Centre is committed to Quality Assurance and believes it is an integral part of the Centre's processes.
- The focus of the Centre is on Learners with the provision of relevant and flexible quality training programmes and assessment to suit their needs and lifestyles.
- The provision is regularly monitored and reviewed by your named quality assurance representative.
- An Internal Verification process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained by cross-marking.
- Internal Verification is carried out on an on-going basis.
- All cases of borderline achievement are Internally Verified.
- At least 10% of other assessments are checked across all markers and modules.
- Where a new marker is assessing, all work is double marked until the Centre Manager is satisfied with the standard.
- All new invigilators are required to be observed during the first six months and annually thereafter to ensure assessment regulations are being followed.
- Existing invigilators should be observed conducting an assessment at least once a year.
- Internal Verification is recorded on Learner work and records and on central recording systems.
- Information from the awarding body is disseminated to all members of staff involved in assessing.
- The organisation's policy for Equal Opportunities is followed and monitored.

Learner Appeals Procedures

- The minimum requirement for a Centre's Learner Appeals procedure is detailed below:
- The procedure must set out the purpose of the procedure, who it's intended for, who owns it and when it will be reviewed.
- The procedure is required to dovetail into the BCS Appeals procedure that is published on the Approved Centre Forum.

For Manual Marking the BCS requirements are:

- Learners who are unhappy with any aspect of the assessment and award process should first discuss the problem with their Centre Representative or the Centre Manager within 5 days of receiving their result
- The reasons for dissatisfaction must be made clear by Learner at this time
- The Centre will keep a record of such discussion together with date and outcome
- Where necessary the 1st marker will be instructed to re-mark, and the 2nd marker will also be instructed to mark or re-mark
- It should be noted that if the Learner was borderline double marking should already have been undertaken
- If this does not provide satisfaction the Learner may raise a formal appeal
- Appeals will only be accepted if made in writing (not e-mail) to the Centre Manager within 10 days of receiving their result, outlining clearly the circumstance of the appeal
- The 1st and 2nd markers will re-mark again, or consider if there are any aspects that should be taken into account in the Learners performance

- In some circumstances the Learner may be offered a free re-test (e.g. hardware or software problems)
- If this is not the case and the result remains unchanged and the Centre Manager is unable to resolve the impasse then the Learner must write to named representative (within 5 days of receiving the 3rd result) who will act as an independent arbiter)
- If a Learner is not able to resolve an appeal at the approved centre then he/she has the right to appeal to BCS. This may be done via the Centre Manager or direct to the BCS Quality Team in writing. Learner appeals must be made to BCS within 60 days of the date of the assessment together with the appeal fee. This fee will be refunded if the Learner's result improves following the appeal. The address will be supplied on request.
- BCS will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and advise the Learner or centre of the timescale for a decision.
- The BCS Representative will investigate the circumstances of the appeal and make a report to the appeals panel. In very exceptional cases, the appeals panel may request the Centre Manager, possibly accompanied by the Learner, to attend a meeting of the panel to provide further explanation of the circumstances of the appeal.
- Appeals panel decisions will be given in writing to the Centre Manager and the Learner and are final.

For Automated Assessment the BCS requirements are:

- Learners who are unhappy with any aspect of the assessment process should first discuss the problem with their Centre Representative or the Centre Manager or representative within 5 working days of receiving their result
- The Learner must make the reasons clear at this time
- Assessments are undertaken using automated testing software which has been approved by the ECDL Foundation. In the event of a Learner raising a complaint the assessment report that will have been produced by the system will be fully discussed with the Learner
- An action plan will be agreed and a further assessment date scheduled. In some circumstances the Learner may be offered a free re-test (e.g. if there had been hardware or software problems)
- If the Learner is unhappy with the decision of the Centre Manager the Learner must write to the named representative within 5 working days who will fully review the complaint and attempt to find a solution
- The Centre will keep a written record of each stage of the process with dates and outcomes
- If a Learner is not able to resolve an appeal at the approved centre then he/she has the right to appeal to BCS. This may be done via the Centre Manager or direct to the BCS Quality Team in writing. Learner appeals must be made to BCS within 90 days of the date of the assessment together with the appeal fee. This fee will be refunded if the Learner's result improves following the appeal. The address will be supplied on request.
- BCS will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and advise the Learner or centre of the timescale for a decision.
- The BCS Representative will investigate the circumstances of the appeal and make a report to the appeals panel. In very exceptional cases, the appeals panel may request the Centre Manager possibly accompanied by the Learner, to attend a meeting of the panel to provide further explanation of the circumstances of the appeal
- Appeals panel decisions will be given in writing to the Centre Manager and the Learner and are final.

For Evidence Based Assessment the BCS requirements are:

During any stage of the Appeals Procedure the Learner is entitled to be represented or accompanied, should they wish.

All Learners who are being assessed by an Approved Centre Assessor have the right to appeal if they disagree with an assessment decision. In the event of a dispute the following stages should be followed:

Stage 1

The Learner should appeal in writing to the Assessor clearly stating their reasons for disagreement and the evidence in the portfolio which the Learner believes meets the competence requirements of the knowledge and understanding and skills and techniques. The Assessor will meet with the Learner within 10 working days and go through the assessment process, clearly explaining the outcome. The Assessor will confirm the outcome in writing to the Learner.

Stage 2

Learners who are not satisfied with the outcome from Stage 1 may then appeal in writing to the Internal Verifier. The Internal Verifier will meet with the Learner and the Assessor within 10 working days and will confirm the outcome in writing to the Learner.

Stage 3

Learners who are not satisfied with the outcome after Stage 2 and have exhausted all of the internal appeals procedures may then appeal in writing to BCS (the Awarding Body). At this point the Awarding Body's Appeals Procedure will be followed. Centre will be requested to provide reports from Stages 1 and 2.

Learner appeals must be made to BCS within 60 days of the date of the assessment together with the appeal fee. This fee will be refunded if the Learner's result improves following the appeal.

BCS will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and advise the Learner or Centre of the timescale for a decision.

The BCS Representative will investigate the circumstances of the appeal and make a report to the appeals panel. In very exceptional cases, the appeals panel may request the Centre Manager, possibly accompanied by the Learner, to attend a meeting of the panel to provide further explanation of the circumstances of the appeal. Appeals panel decisions will be given in writing to the Centre Manager and the Learner and are final.

If the decision affects other results, appropriate steps will be taken to protect the interests of all Learners and the integrity of the qualification.

Malpractice & Maladministration

The minimum requirement for a Centre's Malpractice and Maladministration policy is detailed below:

- The policy must set out its purpose, who it is intended for, who owns it and when it will be reviewed.
- Timescales for conducting internal investigations
- A statement that the centre intend to co-operate fully with any Awarding Organisation or regulator investigation. Supplying timely, accurate and full information.

Full procedures can be found in the Malpractice Policy.

Centre's & associated third party responsibility

It is important that anyone involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of BCS qualifications, and learners, are fully aware of the contents of the policy and that arrangements are in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration.

Malpractice and maladministration is defined as:

Definition of Malpractice

Malpractice is essentially any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes regulations and compromises the integrity of the internal or external assessment process and/or the validity of certificates. It covers any deliberate actions, neglect, default or other practice that compromises, or could compromise:

- the assessment process
- the integrity of a regulated qualification
- the validity of a result or certificate
- the reputation and credibility of BCS
- the qualification or the wider qualifications community.

Malpractice may include a range of issues from the failure to maintain appropriate records or systems to the deliberate falsification of records in order to claim certificates.

For the purpose of this policy this term also covers misconduct and forms of unnecessary discrimination or bias towards certain or groups of learners.

Definition of Maladministration

Maladministration is essentially any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with administrative regulations and requirements and includes the application of persistent mistakes or poor administration (e.g. within a centre, inappropriate learner records).

Process for reporting an event of malpractice or maladministration

Anybody who identifies or is made aware of suspected or actual cases of malpractice or maladministration at any time must immediately notify BCS.

If a centre has conducted an initial investigation prior to formally notifying BCS, the centre should ensure that staff involved in the initial investigation are competent and have no personal interest in the outcome of the investigation. However, it is important to note that in all instances the centre must immediately notify BCS if malpractice is suspected or maladministration has occurred as BCS have a responsibility to the regulatory authorities to ensure that all investigations are carried out rigorously and effectively.

In all cases of suspected malpractice and maladministration reported, BCS will protect the identity of the 'informant' in accordance with our duty of confidentiality and/or any other legal duty.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Committee will review this policy at least every two years and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the Academy