



# **Complaints and Appeals Procedure for Examinations**

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Key Staff involved in the complaints and appeals procedure
<b>Head of Centre / Principal</b>
<b>Vice Principal</b>
<b>Examinations Officer</b>
<b>SENCo</b>

## Purpose of the procedure

This procedure confirms Blackwater Integrated College's compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (section 5.8) that the centre will draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers their written complaints and appeals procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification.

Key Staff involved in the complaints and appeals procedure
<b>Head of Centre / Principal</b>
<b>Vice Principal</b>
<b>Examinations Officer</b>
<b>SENCo</b>

## Grounds for complaint

A candidate (or his/her/parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below:

### **Teaching and learning**

- Quality of teaching and learning, for example:
  - Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
  - Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
  - Core content not adequately covered
  - Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
- Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time to an exam candidate
- The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
- The marking of an internal assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not undertaken according to the requirements of the awarding body (complainant should refer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure
- Candidate not informed of his/her centre assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not informed of his/her centre assessed marks in sufficient time to request/appeal a review of marking prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not given sufficient time to review materials to make a decision whether to request a review of centre assessed marks

## **Access arrangements**

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding his/her access arrangements
- Candidate did not consent to personal data being shared electronically (by the non-acquisition of a signed data protection notice/candidate data personal consent form.)
- Candidate not informed/adequately informed of the arrangements in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangements would not apply
- Exam information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment put in place failed during exam/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment.

## **Entries**

- Failure to clearly explain a decision of early entry for a qualification to candidate (or parent/carer)
- Candidate not entered/entered late (incurring a late entry fee) for a required exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong tier of entry

## **Conducting examinations**

- Failure to adequately brief candidate on exam timetable/exam regulations prior to exam/assessment taking place
- Room in which exam held did not provide candidate with appropriate conditions for taking the exam
- Inadequate invigilation in exam room
- Failure to conduct exam according to the regulations
- Online system failed during on-screen exam/assessment
- Disruption during exam/assessment
- Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice incident not investigated/reported
- Eligible application for special consideration for a candidate not submitted/not submitted to timescale
- Failure to inform/update candidate on the outcome of a special consideration application

## **Results and Post-results**

- Before exams, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the accessibility of senior members of centre staff after the publication of results
- Candidate not having access to a member of senior staff after the publication of results to discuss/make decision on the submission of a review/enquiry
- Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result (complainant to refer via exams officer to awarding body post-results services)
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal (complainant to refer via Exams Officer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong exam paper for a candidate
- Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- Centre applied for a post-results service for candidate without gaining required candidate consent/permission

## **Complaints and Appeals Procedure**

If a candidate (or his/her/their parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification he/she is following, Blackwater Integrated College encourages him/her/them to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. Please address any concerns or complaints by sending an email to the Principal.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or his/her/their parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

### **How to make a formal complaint**

- A formal complaint should be submitted in writing by completing a complaints and appeals form (see Annex A to this document).
- Completed forms should be returned to the Principal
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days

### **How a formal complaint is investigated**

- The Principal will investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings and conclusion.
- The findings and conclusion will be provided to the complainant within 2 working weeks.

## **Appeals**

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

- Any appeal must be submitted in writing by again completing a complaints and appeals form
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 working days
- The appeal will be referred to Chair of Governors who will follow the College Complaints Procedure.
- The Chair of Governors will inform the appellant of the final conclusion as soon as possible and within 4 working weeks.

## **Reviews of marking – centre-assessed marks GCE coursework**

### **GCE, GCSE and Vocational Technical Qualifications non-examination assessments**

#### **Project qualifications**

Blackwater Integrated College is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

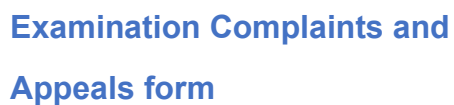
Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, who have been trained in this activity and do not have any potential conflicts of interest. If AI tools have been used to assist in the marking of candidates' work, they will not be the sole marker.

Blackwater Integrated College is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where more than one subject teacher/tutor is involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

1. Blackwater Integrated College will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre's marking before final marks are submitted to the awarding body.
2. Blackwater Integrated College will inform candidates that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre's marking of the assessment.
3. Blackwater Integrated College will, having received a request for materials, promptly make them available to the candidate. This will either be the originals, viewed under supervised conditions, or copies.
4. Blackwater Integrated College will provide candidates with sufficient time, normally at least five working days, to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision.
5. Blackwater Integrated College will provide a clear deadline for candidates to submit a request for a review of the centre's marking. Requests will not be accepted after this deadline. Requests **must** be made in writing and candidates **must** explain on what grounds they wish to request a review.

6. Blackwater Integrated College will allow sufficient time for the review to be carried out, to make any necessary changes to marks and to inform the candidate of the outcome, all before the awarding body's deadline for the submission of marks.
7. Blackwater Integrated College will ensure that the review of marking is conducted by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate for the component in question and has no personal interest in the outcome of the review.
8. Blackwater Integrated College will instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre.
9. Blackwater Integrated College will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre's marking.
10. The outcome of the review of marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. The centre will inform the awarding body if it does not accept the outcome of a review.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding body may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre, whereas moderation by the awarding body ensures that the centre's marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should, therefore, be considered provisional.



- ☐ Complaint/appeal against the centre's delivery of a qualification
- ☐ Complaint/appeal against the centre's administration of a qualification

Completed form to be submitted to the Principal.



### Review of results and Access to scripts

For internal candidates, awarding bodies will only accept requests for reviews of marking from centres and not from candidates or their parents. Centres must ensure that they have a process in place for internal candidates to appeal the centre's decision not to pursue a review of marking.

Candidate consent for clerical re-checks and reviews of marking must be obtained after the publication of results.

Candidates should be aware that their marks and subject grades could go down as well as up and must provide their written consent before a request is submitted.

Written consent from the candidate is also acceptable by email. An online request provides confirmation to the awarding body that the candidate's written consent has been obtained. (The submission of a signed request form does likewise).

Consent forms or emails from candidates must be retained by the centre and kept for at least six months following the outcome of the clerical recheck or review of marking or any subsequent appeal. The awarding bodies reserve the right to request such documentation.

There is a cost to requesting a review or marks or a request for a script. This information will be provided with a pupil's results.

Requests must be made before the deadline for reviews. This date will also be provided with a pupil's results.

#### **Review of Results services Clerical re-check**

Candidate consent is required and must be held on file by the centre.

The request must be received by the awarding body before the close of review deadline.

The deadline for completion is within 10 calendar days of the awarding body receiving the request.

This service will include the following checks:

- that all parts of the script have been marked;
- the totalling of marks;
- the recording of marks

The outcome of the clerical re-check will be reported along with a statement of the total marks awarded for each unit, or component,

#### **Review of marking**

This is a post-results review of the original marking to ensure that the mark scheme has been applied correctly. A marking error can occur because of:

- an administrative error;
- a failure to apply the mark scheme where a task has only a 'right' or 'wrong' answer;
- an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

The awarding body will train its reviewers to conduct reviews of marking accurately and consistently. Reviewers will not re-mark the script. They will only act to correct any errors identified in the original marking. The service is available for externally assessed components of both unitised and linear GCE AS, A-level and GCSE specifications. It is also available for Level 1, 2 and 3 Vocational and Technical qualifications.

Candidate consent is required and must be held on file by the centre.

The request must be received by the awarding body before the close of review deadline.

The deadline for completion is within 20 calendar days of the awarding body receiving the request.

This service will include:

- the clerical re-checks detailed previously;
- a review of marking as described above.

### **Access to scripts**

Centres/candidates may request copies of scripts to support:

- reviews of marking; Candidates must fill in consent form and return to the centre well before the close of review date to allow time for the paper to be sent to the centre and then forwarded to the candidate. A review of marking can be ordered after receiving the paper but not after the review of marks date.
- teaching and learning

Centres must submit requests online via the awarding bodies' extranet sites.

There are different prices for each of these services which will be provided on results day.

The deadline for copies of scripts to support teaching and learning will be provided on results day.

The required consent forms are at the end of this document.

### Appealing an exam boards decision

The appeals process is available to centres and private candidates after receiving the outcome of a review of results.

Reference should be made to the JCQ document A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes. This document provides full details of the awarding bodies' appeals processes and the associated timescales. It is available on the JCQ website:  
<http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/appeals>.

Appeals can only be submitted after the outcome of a review of results has been reported to the centre. An appeal against a review of moderation decision cannot be made on behalf of an individual candidate. In the case of internal candidates, only the head of centre can submit an appeal to the relevant awarding body. Appeals must be made in writing and clearly state the grounds for appeal. Awarding bodies may charge a fee for appeals. This fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

Appeals must be made within 30 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the outcome of the clerical re-check, review of marking or review of moderation ("the Outcome"). If the reasons for the Outcome and/or a copy of the script(s) have been provided within 15 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the Outcome, an application for an appeal must still be submitted within 30 calendar days of receiving it. If the reasons for the Outcome and/or a copy of the script(s) have been provided beyond 15 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the Outcome, an application for an appeal must be submitted within 15 calendar days of receiving these.

If the appeal is in relation to special consideration, access arrangements or special consideration the appeal request should be made within 14 calendar days of receiving the original decision and should set out clearly and concisely the grounds for the appeal.

There is generally a two-stage appeals process:

- Stage One – the preliminary appeal – the case will be reviewed by a member of the awarding body who has not had any previous involvement with or personal interest in the matter.
- Stage Two – the appeal hearing – the case will be considered by a panel which will include at least one independent person.

At each stage, the appeal will either be upheld, not upheld or partially upheld.

An awarding body will send the centre or private candidate an outcome letter for each appeal once a decision has been reached.

A request for an appeal hearing must be made within 14 calendar days of receipt of the preliminary appeal outcome letter. Awarding bodies will usually reject appeals made outside of this timescale.

**More information about post result services and appeals are available on the JCQ and relevant awarding bodies websites.**



## Candidate consent form for access to and use of examination scripts

AQA

OCR

Pearson

WJEC

Centre number	Centre name
Candidate number	Candidate name
Qualification level/subject	Component/unit code

☐ I consent to my scripts being accessed by my centre.

Tick ONE of the boxes below:

☐ If any of my scripts are used in the classroom, I do not wish anyone to know they are mine. My name and candidate number must be removed.

☐ If any of my scripts are used in the classroom, I have no objection to other people knowing they are mine.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**This form should be retained on the centre's files for at least six months.**

## Clerical re-checks, reviews of marking and appeals

AQA

OCR

Pearson

WJEC

### Candidate consent form

#### Information for candidates

The following information explains what may happen following a clerical re-check, a review of marking and any subsequent appeal.

If your school or college submits a request for a clerical re-check or a review of the original marking, and then a subsequent appeal, for one of your examinations after your subject grade has been issued, there are three possible outcomes:

- Your original mark is lowered, so your final grade may be lower than the original grade you received.
- Your original mark is confirmed as correct, so there is no change to your grade.
- Your original mark is raised, so your final grade may be higher than the original grade you received.

To proceed with the clerical re-check or review of marking, you **must** sign the form below. This tells the head of your school or college that you have understood what the outcome might be, and that you give your consent to the clerical re-check or review of marking being submitted.

#### Candidate consent form

Centre number	Centre name
Candidate number	Candidate name

Details of review (Awarding Body, Qualification level, Subject title, component/unit)

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I give my consent to the head of my school or college to submit a clerical re-check or a review of marking for the examination(s) listed above. In giving consent I understand that the final subject grade and/or mark awarded to me following a clerical re-check or a review of marking, and any subsequent appeal, may be lower than, higher than, or the same as the result which was originally awarded for this subject.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**This form should be retained on the centre's files for at least six months following the outcome of the clerical re-check, review of marking or any subsequent appeal.**

