

Bishop Challoner

Catholic College



Exam Policy
2025 – 2026

BCCC Exam Policy

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.
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- To ensure the operation of an efficient exam system with clear guidelines for candidates and parents.

It is the responsibility of candidates and parents to read and understand this policy.

Exam responsibilities

The Exams Officer manages the administration of public and internal exams (CAT testing and all Mocks) and:

- Understands the contents of annually updated JCQ publications including:
- General regulations for approved centres
- Instructions for conducting examinations
- Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments
- Post-results services (PRS)
- Is familiar with the contents of annually updated information from awarding bodies on administrative procedures, key tasks, key dates and deadlines
- Ensures awarding bodies are notified before the associated entries are submitted, where a candidate is being taught and prepared for examinations and assessments by a relative or where a relative of exams office staff is being entered for examinations and assessments
- Advises the Senior Leadership team, subject and class tutors and other relevant support staff on annual exam timetables and application procedures as set by the various awarding bodies including BTEC
- Manages the production of the Exam Policy handbook and updates the school website to include the latest version;
- 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 all necessary NEA/ coursework/ controlled assessment is completed on time and in accordance with JCQ and exam board guidelines;
- Receives, checks and stores securely all exam papers and completed scripts;
- Administers access arrangements and makes applications for special consideration in accordance with JCQ guidelines;
- Identifies and manages exam timetable clashes;
- Ensures that candidates' NEA/controlled assessment/coursework marks are entered on time by heads of department, tracks despatch and distributes returned NEA/controlled assessment/coursework and any other material required by the appropriate awarding bodies correctly and on schedule;
- Arranges for the dissemination of exam results and certificates to candidates and forwards, in consultation with department heads, any appeals/re-mark requests;
- Maintains systems and processes to support the timely entry of candidates for their exams.

Head of Centre

- Ensures the centre has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught
- Ensures the National Centre Number Register Annual Update (administered on behalf of the JCQ member awarding bodies by OCR) is responded to by the end of October confirming they are both aware of and adhering to the latest version of the JCQ regulations and instructions for conducting examinations and approves the Head of Centre formal declaration
- Ensures centre staff are supported and appropriately trained to undertake key tasks within the exams process
- Ensures centre staff undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer
- Ensures security within the examination process is managed according to JCQ and awarding body regulations, guidance and instructions including
- The location of the centre's secure storage unit is in an area solely assigned to examinations
- The relevant awarding body is immediately informed if the security of question papers or confidential supporting instructions is put at risk
- That arrangements are in place to check that the correct question paper packets are opened by authorised members of centre staff
- Ensures risks to the exam process are assessed and appropriate risk management processes/contingency plans are in place (that allows the Head of Centre to act immediately in the event of an emergency or staff absence)
- Ensures the centre has a child protection/safeguarding policy in place, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance, which satisfies current legislative requirements
- Ensures the centre has a data protection policy in place

Deputy Head

- Organises teaching and learning;
- Manages external validation of courses followed at key stage 4/post-16.

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- Ensuring teaching staff undertake key tasks, as detailed in this policy, within the exams process (exam cycle) and meet internal deadlines set by the Examinations Officer and SENCo
- Ensuring teaching staff keep themselves updated with awarding body teacher-specific information to confirm effective delivery of qualifications
- Ensures teaching staff attend relevant awarding body training and update events

The Sen Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for:

- 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.
- Is familiar with the contents, refers to and directs relevant centre staff to annually updated JCQ publications including Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- Leads on the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments process (referred to in this policy as 'access arrangements')
- If not the qualified access arrangements assessor, works with the person appointed, on all matters relating to assessing candidates and the administration of the assessment process

- Presents when requested by a JCQ Centre Inspector, evidence of the assessor's qualification

Candidates are responsible for:

- Confirmation of entries
- Understanding coursework/controlled assessment regulations and signing a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own.

Qualifications

The qualifications offered at this centre are decided by the Heads of Department and Senior Leadership team.

The qualifications offered are GCE, GCSE, BTEC and OCR Cambridge Nationals and Cambridge Technicals.

The Awarding Bodies used are:

AQA www.aqa.org.uk OCR www.ocr.org.uk

Edexcel www.edexcel.com WJEC/Eduqas www.wjec.co.uk

The subjects offered for these qualifications in any academic year may be found in the centre's published prospectus/guided choices booklet for that year.

Decisions on whether a candidate should be entered for a particular subject will be taken in consultation with the Candidates, Parents/Carers, Subject teachers, SENCo and the Deputy Head.

Exam Series and Timetables

Exam seasons

External exams and assessments are scheduled in November, January (OCR Cambridge Nationals only), May and June.

Internal exams may be held under external exam conditions.

The Head of Department decides which exam series are used in the centre.

Timetable

Once confirmed, the exams officer will place the exam timetable for External exams on the school website.

Entries, entry details and late entries

Candidates are selected for their exam entries by the Heads of Department and Subject teachers.

Candidates or parents/carers can request a subject entry, change of level or withdrawal. The centre does not act as an exam centre for other organisations.

Late entries are authorised by Heads of Department and Deputy Head.

A2 retakes are allowed, restricted to the Summer exam season as determined by the DfE. Retake decisions will be made in consultation with Candidates, Subject teachers and Heads of Department.

Late entry or amendment fees are paid by the departments or the student if the request is made after the deadline date set by the awarding bodies.

Fee reimbursements are sought from candidates who:

- decide to sit or withdraw from an exam after the late entry or withdrawal deadline date set by the awarding bodies;
- fail to sit an exam without medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances;
- do not meet the necessary course requirements

In the majority of cases, re-sit fees are always paid for by the candidate* unless medical evidence or evidence of other mitigating circumstances is supplied to the Exams Officer. If the Centre has previously agreed to pay for an entry, but the request is submitted by the candidate after the exam board deadline date, then the candidate will always be liable for any late entry fees if the request could have been made on time by the candidate. It is not the responsibility of the school to chase up any candidate to determine if a re-sit is required. This decision must be made by the candidate by the deadline date set by the Exams Officer.

Failure to attend an examination or pay for a re-sit could mean that the qualification is not completed and a grade cannot be awarded in that subject, or, a grade will be issued based only on the completed units.

Candidates will be able to access re-sit request forms on the school website to allow them to pay for a re-sit in a particular subject. Any candidates returning their re-sit form after the deadline date shown on it may be required to pay late entry fees that will double, or even triple, the cost of an entry.

*see Exam Fees and Re-sits sections below for information on when candidates will be exempt from paying re-sit fees.

Exam Fees

Candidates or departments will not be charged for changes of tier or withdrawals made by the proper procedures or alterations arising from administrative processes provided these are made within the time allowed by the awarding bodies.

First sitting of GCSE entry exam fees are paid for by the Centre. Non-attendance to lessons may result in a student not being entered for an exam.

First sitting of A2 entry exam fees are paid for by the Centre.

Where a student would like to sit an exam that is not part of the curriculum the entry fee for this must be paid for by the student. The Centre retains the right to not enter a student for an examination if the entry requirements cannot be met by the Centre.

Bishop Challoner is committed to ensuring equal opportunity and access for all its pupils. Any pupil currently in receipt of free school meals will receive a 50% discount on the cost of re-sit fees.

However, late fees incurred as a result of a candidate failing to meet the deadline dates set by the awarding bodies must be paid in full by the candidate.

Exam Re-sits

Year 12 and 13 candidates are always required to pay for their re-sit fees unless the following applies:

Where a candidate has completed the first year of a legacy GCE course (AS level), but may need to repeat the year, the Centre will pay for the first sitting of any repeated legacy AS level units. Any further re-sit of an AS level unit must be paid for by the candidate. The decision to repeat a year must be agreed by the Head of Sixth Form.

Where a candidate enrolls on a Foundation course in the 6th Form, and they are required to re-sit their GCSE in English Language or Mathematics to gain a grade 4, the Centre will pay for the first re-sit attempt only regardless of when this is taken. Any subsequent re-sit must be paid for by the candidate. For example, if the first re-sit attempt is taken in November of Year 12 this will be paid for by the Centre. Any further re-sits taken in Year 12 and/or Year 13 must be paid for by the candidate.

An entry will only be made in a season when the subject teacher feels it is appropriate for them. In all instances the candidate must return a signed re-sit form which will be made available on the school website. If a candidate wishes to be entered earlier than is recommended by the subject teacher then the candidate must pay for this entry.

Note that failure to attend the first re-sit opportunity, or withdrawing after the deadline date set by the awarding bodies, will mean that the candidate will have to pay for the second entry that the Centre makes in that subject.

Any candidate in Year 12 or 13 who have already obtained a grade 4 in GCSE English Language or Mathematics, but would like to improve upon this grade, will be required to pay for their re-sit. An entry will be made upon receipt of a re-sit form and the full fee.

Malpractice

The Exams Officer and a member of the Leadership team are responsible for investigating suspected malpractice in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Any cases of alleged, suspected or actual incidents of malpractice or maladministration before, during or after examinations/assessments (by centre staff, candidates, invigilators) will be investigated and reported to the awarding body immediately, by completing the appropriate documentation.

Conflicts of interest

Ensures the relevant awarding bodies are informed before the published deadline for entries for each examination series of any potential conflict of interest where:

1. a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which includes internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)

2. a candidate is being taught and prepared for a qualification which includes internally assessed components/units by a member of centre staff with a close relationship to the candidate

Maintains clear records that confirm the measures taken/protocols in place to mitigate any potential risk to the integrity of the qualifications affected by the above, and where:

1. a member of exams office staff has a close relationship to a candidate being entered for exams and assessments at the centre or at another centre
2. a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at the centre which does not include internally assessed components/units (taking at the centre as a last resort where unable to find an alternative centre)
3. a member of centre staff is taking a qualification at another centre

Ensures other relevant centre staff where they may be involved in the receipt and dispatch of confidential exam materials are briefed on the requirements for maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of the exam materials

Staff Conflict of Interest

The Exams Office will e-mail all staff annually (prior to the entry deadline) to ask them to declare any conflict of interest they may have for the upcoming external exams.

Where staff have declared a conflict they will be asked to complete a form stating the nature of the conflict. This information will be collated by the EO and where necessary the relevant information will be submitted to the Awarding Bodies.

A risk assessment will be carried out to mitigate any risks to the security of the exams.

Ensures members of centre staff do not forward e-mails and letters from awarding body or JCQ personnel without prior consent to third parties or upload such correspondence onto social media sites and applications

Ensures members of centre staff do not advise parents/candidates to contact awarding bodies/JCQ directly nor provide them with addresses/email addresses of awarding body examining/assessment personnel or JCQ personnel

The Equality Act

The Equality Act 2010 strengthens the duty to make reasonable adjustments to general qualifications. All exam centre staff must ensure that the access arrangements and special consideration regulations and guidance are consistent with the law.

The centre will meet the requirements of the Act by ensuring that the exams centre is accessible and improves candidate experience. This is the responsibility of the Deputy Head, Exams officer and SENCo. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with permanent or temporary disabilities which could include placing students near to exits, ensuring sufficient space between desks for wheelchairs, rooming students into exam rooms at ground level, allowing rest breaks, enlarging scripts, provision of a Word Processor etc. This is in addition to any access arrangements that are made for students. Requests for separate rooming arrangements must be supported by medical evidence detailing a need for this and there must be a history of need supported by the Centre. All requests for exam arrangements must be with the SENCo by the end of February to allow sufficient time for the requests to be processed by the exam boards. Requests received after this date may not be processed.

Access Arrangements

The SENCo will inform subject teachers of candidates with special educational needs who are embarking on a course leading to an 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.

A candidate's access arrangements requirement is determined by the Educational psychologist/Specialist teacher.

Making access arrangements for candidates to take exams is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. 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 Exams Officer.

Invigilation for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the Exams Officer.

Support for access arrangement candidates will be organised by the SENCo.

Managing Invigilators

External and internal staff are used to invigilate examinations.

Recruitment and training of external invigilators is the responsibility of the Exams Officer. A record of the training provided to invigilators will be kept on file for the required period.

Securing the necessary Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) clearance for new invigilators is the responsibility of the Centre administration. DBS fees for securing such clearance are paid by the centre.

Invigilators are timetabled and briefed by the Exams Officer.

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.

Invigilators will start all exams in accordance with JCQ guidelines.

Subject staff may be present at the start of the exam to assist with identification of candidates but must not advise on which questions or sections are to be attempted.

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 removed from the exam room before the end of a session. Papers will be distributed to heads of department at the end of the exam session.

Candidates

The centre's published rules on acceptable dress, behaviour and candidates' use of mobile phones and other 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 are expected to stay for the full exam time. Candidates may only leave the exam room for a genuine purpose and are required to return immediately to the exam room. They must be accompanied by a member of staff at all times.

The Exams Officer is responsible for handling late or absent candidates on exam days 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 be disadvantaged or disturbed during an exam, 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 by providing a letter from the candidate's doctor.

The Exams Officer will then forward a completed special consideration form to the relevant awarding body within seven days of the exam.

Internal Assessments and Appeals

It is the duty of Heads of Department to ensure that all internal assessment is ready for despatch at the correct time. The Exams Officer will assist by keeping a record of each despatch, including the recipient details and the date sent.

Appeals against internal and external assessments

The process for managing appeals against internal and external assessments is detailed in a separate appeals policy which can be found on the school website.

Results and Post Results Services

Candidates will receive individual result slips on results days, either in person at the centre or by post to their home addresses (candidates to provide self addressed envelope).

Results can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. Candidates should provide a letter to this effect.

Arrangements for the centre to be open on results days are made by the Deputy Head. The provision of staff on results days is the responsibility of the Senior Leadership team.

Enquiries about Results (EARs)

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The candidates consent is required before any EAR is requested.

Candidates, or parents, can request that an EAR be carried out and they will be charged for this service before a request is made to the awarding body. The Exam Officer will make available to every candidate on results day an up-to-date table showing the fees and deadline dates for the EAR service as set by the awarding bodies. Each candidate will also have a copy of an EAR request form.

If a result is queried by a Head of Department then the fee will be paid for by the requesting department.

If the centres marks for internal assessment have been accepted by an awarding body without change then it is not possible to request a re-mark of this component.

Access to Scripts (ATS)

After the release of results, candidates may request the return of one or more of their exam papers and they will be charged for this service.

Centre staff may also request scripts for investigation or for teaching purposes. For the latter, the consent of candidates must be obtained.

GCE and GCSE re-marks cannot be applied for once a script has been returned.

Certificates

Certificates are collected and signed for.

Certificates can be collected on behalf of a candidate by third parties, provided they have been authorised to do so. Candidates should provide a letter to this effect.

The centre retains certificates for a minimum of one year after the date of issue. After this time centres are allowed by the awarding bodies to destroy any uncollected certificates.

If a certificate has been destroyed then a transcript of results may be issued by an awarding body if a candidate agrees to pay the costs incurred, currently around £45 per awarding body.