Full name of policy:	FE Examination Policy
Requirement for policy:	To comply with JCQ requirements
Name and post of person responsible:	Pippa Cavoto FE Examinations Team Leader
Highest College body approving the policy:	Head of Centre
Date of approval:	16/03/2022
Frequency of review:	Annually
Dates of previous reviews:	November 2020
Date of next formal review:	November 2022
Equality Impact Screening:	Completed, access arrangements for exams ensure equality of opportunity for all students
Equality Impact Assessment: **(If required)**	
Policy Reference:	All policies can be located in the following places: 'T' Drive – Exams folder Microsoft Teams area – FE policies BLC website
Total number of pages: **(Including appendices and front sheet)**	9
Comments:	This policy should be read in conjunction with: • Specific JCQ/Awarding organisation requirements and guidelines • Student Assessment Malpractice Policy • BLC Assessment Policy • Controlled Assessment/NEA Policy and Procedure • Staff Assessment Malpractice and Maladministration Policy • Exams Contingency Plan

FE Exam Policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure the planning and management of exams is conducted efficiently, and in the best interests of the students.
- Assure the operation of an effective 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 policy will be reviewed every year by the FE Examinations Team Leader and Exams and Assessments Specialist.

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1. Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Overall responsibility for Buxton & Leek College as Head of Centre including Conflicts of Interest.

SLT

- ensure that the College has appropriate accommodation to support the size of the cohorts being taught
- understand the contents, refer to and direct relevant College staff to annually updated JCQ publications including:
  - General Regulations for Approved Centres (GR)
  - Instructions for Conducting Examinations (ICE)
  - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments (AA)
  - Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments (SMEA)
  - Instructions for Conducting Non-examination Assessments (NEA) (and the Instructions for Conducting Controlled Assessment and Coursework)

- ensure that curriculum models and the delivery of teaching & learning has fully prepared students for their examinations
- ensure that staff within their area of line management undertake key tasks within the exams process and meet internal deadlines set by the FE Examinations Team Leader.

Quality Team

- act as a key point of contact for awarding organisations in relation to controlled assessments;

- understand 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)
- report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice in examinations with regard to members of staff - refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations

FE Examinations Team Leader

- Management of the team
- Ensure internal and external deadlines are met
- Oversee policy and processes
- Plans and accounts for expenditure relating to all costs and charges related to exams.
- Organises recruitment, training, and management of a team of invigilators including processing pay claims.
- Report all suspected or actual incidents of malpractice in examinations regarding students and communicates findings, sanctions, and any coordinates any associated appeals - refer to the JCQ document Suspected Malpractice in Examinations

Exams and Assessment Specialist

- Ensure consistency of exam processes are adhered to across sites
- Maintain and update policies
- Oversees the exam and assessment process to ensure compliance
- Advises the Senior Leadership Team, Curriculum Leaders and other relevant support staff on key dates, revisions to exam rules and regulations, and other exam procedures, as instructed by the JCQ and various awarding bodies
- Oversees the production and distribution of exam timetables to staff, students, and parents, communicating regularly with staff concerning entry deadlines and additional fees

- Identify and manage exam timetable clashes

Exams Team - Senior Administrators

- Manages the administration of external and certain internal exam entries, and dissemination of exam results
- Receives, checks, and securely stores all exam papers and associated materials.
- Administers access arrangements in line with JCQ and awarding organisation regulations, as instructed by the Learning Support Team
- Submits candidate coursework and NEA (non-examination assessment) marks, completed exam scripts and associated materials to awarding bodies as required and within set deadlines
- Authorises and submits applications for special consideration, following discussion with relevant staff and parties involved
- Arranges for dissemination of exam results and certificates
- Authorises and submits enquiries about results
- Maintains systems and processes to support the above responsibilities

Curriculum Leaders

- Checks and confirms enrolment on correct programmes (and units where relevant) prior to registration, advises on subsequent transfers and withdrawals where necessary
- Offers guidance to students regarding their exam entries and relevant procedures, as well as behaviours expected of them during the exams
- Ensures accurate completion of coursework mark sheets and declarations; assists the Exams Team with accurate and timely submissions of mark.
- Applications for Special Consideration will be authorised by the FE Examination Team Leader following consultation with Curriculum Leaders

Learning Support Team

- Assesses students requiring access arrangements.
- Ensures timely submission of Form 8s and other relevant assessment documentation to the Exams Team to enable correct facilitation of exam access arrangements where applicable.

Invigilators

- Attend regular training and ensure full understanding of procedures and updates to regulations for paper-based and onscreen exams, as instructed by the JCQ and various awarding organisations
- Complete "The Exams Office" accredited training
- Collection of exam papers and related materials from the Exams office prior to exam, maintaining confidentiality and security of papers
- Communicate exam operations to students, including the explanation of the format of each examination session

- Ensure correct paper is given to the student
- Notify students of exam room regulations and time progress notifications during extended exam sessions
- Manages the conduct of exams to ensure there is no malpractice or maladministration in line with JCQ and awarding organisation regulations
- Collection and collation of exam papers following exam and return all materials to exams office, maintaining confidentiality and security of papers

Students

- Ensure they are in possession of necessary equipment for exams in line with regulations.
- Read their exam timetables fully, in order to ensure that they arrive promptly to attend exams on the correct date, at the correct venue.
- Follow the instructions of invigilators and support staff at all times whilst under exam conditions.
- understand controlled assessment regulations and sign a declaration that authenticates the coursework as their own
- inform the Exams Team via email (to examsudcb@blc.ac.uk) of non-attendance to an exam (stating their student number, exam subject, day and time of the relevant exam) at least 48 hours before the scheduled date to avoid the non-attendance charge (see point 5 in this policy)

2. Exam Series and Timetables

External exams are scheduled by the Exams Team according to the dates and times stipulated by the awarding bodies.

On demand and other internal exams are scheduled by the Exams Team according to dates and times agreed between Curriculum Leaders and the Exams Team

3. Registration and Certification

a) Registration

The Exams Team will communicate a report of student enrolments with Curriculum Leaders. After corresponding with their team, Curriculum Leaders will then confirm, in writing, the students that require registration. At the initial registration stage, curriculum staff do not need to stipulate specific units that the students will be studying; this information will be confirmed during the claims process, where Curriculum Leaders will indicate units following the combination guidelines.

If staff do wish to communicate these units before the claims process is due to begin, a Self-Regulated Framework (SRF) will be created during the academic year by the Exams Team following discussion between members of the Curriculum and Exams teams. The SRF

allows the centre to design a qualification to best meet students' needs, and is composed from existing regulated BTEC units, or units specifically designed for the centre's individual needs. The tailor-made SRF will also reduce opportunity for errors, such as incorrect units being claimed; inputting of incorrect grades; ensuring in-year transfers or withdrawals have been actioned and the final student list is accurate.

For EAL Apprenticeship registrations, the above procedure differs, whereby Curriculum Leaders must inform the Exams Team, in writing, of specific units that the apprentice will be studying, including unit codes and titles. Requests for Level 3 registrations must also include an APA (Accreditation of Prior Achievement) of Level 2 qualifications, so that appropriate data checks can be made to ensure that students have completed their Level 2 qualification, and registrations for Level 3 qualifications can be made in a timely manner.

b) BTEC Certification and Claims

Once the students' work has been internally verified and all required assessments have been completed, individual appointments are arranged between a member of the Curriculum Team and the students. Another member of the Curriculum Team should also be present to act as a witness, this member of the Curriculum Team should also do a second pair of eye's check, to ensure all units are eligible for the specific qualification and provide additional support if required.

The student's grades are matched to assessment records and the SRF is completed following guidance from the Exams Team and/or the Internal Quality Nominee. To ensure the process is completed according to the FE Exams policy, a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Curriculum Lead may be present to oversee proceedings.

The final SRF sent to the Exams Team for claiming should be countersigned by the second member of the Curriculum Team and all records will be retained by the Senior Exams Administrator for the duration recommended by the Awarding organisation in the possible event of audits or post-results appeals.

Any anomalies with grades and assessment records must be reported immediately to the Internal Quality Nominee or the Operations Manager (Quality).

Certificates are posted to the candidate's home address. Certificates are not withheld from students who owe fees. Certificates returned to the Exams Team as not delivered or collected will be retained as directed by the awarding organisation, and securely destroyed after an agreed period of retention.

4. **Entries, Late Entries and Re-Sits**

Students are entered for examinations as per their enrolment and subsequent confirmation by tutors and Curriculum Leader. Examination entries are submitted by the Exams Team in line with awarding organisation deadlines; further deadlines and fee increments are communicated to Curriculum Leaders in advance of the initial entry deadline.

Late entries are accepted if authorised by the Curriculum Leader and FE Examinations Team Leader.

The centre does not accept entries from external candidates.

Candidate statements of entry will be posted to home addresses. *The Exams Team are investigating the possibility of improving this process, through use of ProSolution or emails.*

Re-sit examinations are processed when authorised by the Curriculum Leader.

5. Exam Fees

Registration and examination fees are to be paid for by the Buxton and Leek College budget unless otherwise agreed. End Point Assessments (EPAs) and other fees are also paid for by Buxton and Leek College once the invoice is authorised by the Curriculum Leader. Late entry fees are to be paid for by the party responsible for late submission.

If students are absent from an exam without giving 48 hours' notice, and without good reason, will be required to pay a fee (£12.00 administration fee, plus the cost of the exam).

6. DDA and Access Arrangements

It is the responsibility of all centre staff to ensure that access arrangements regulations and guidance are consistent with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and communicated effectively to students.

Learning Support Team will liaise with Curriculum Leaders to discuss students requiring screening for Access Arrangements – such students will be commonly identified at the enrolment and/or admissions process. Once screened by the SENCo, the Exams Team will be required to submit applications for access arrangements to the relevant awarding bodies, including the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ).

Paperwork relating to the application process, such as Form 8s and screening reports, will be uploaded to a Teams page and stored in the Exams area of the 'T' drive, a copy will be uploaded to the MIS system. This will allow all members of the Exams Team, as well as the Curriculum Leader and members of the Learning Support Team, to access information quickly and effectively. If the online archive is unavailable, there will be a paper copy for staff to access in the Learning Support office.

7. Invigilation/Identity of students

External invigilators, exams staff, or other members authorised by the FE Examinations Team Leader are to be used for all external exams. Recruitment and training of exam invigilators is the responsibility of the FE Examinations Team Leader; DBS checks are to be coordinated by HR staff. A copy of the JCQ Instructions for Conducting Examinations will be distributed to all invigilation staff, as well as any updates for the academic year.

Invigilators are required to confirm the identity of students and will conduct examinations according to JCQ and other awarding organisation regulations. Subject staff are not permitted to enter the exam room, as per JCQ regulations. Centre rules of dress and

behaviour apply. Students' personal belongings remain their own responsibility – they must place mobile phones and other electronic items in their bag, ensuring that they are switched off and will not cause a disturbance to other students during the exam. Tutors and assessors must instruct students regarding the wearing of watches during the exam, as these are no longer permitted

Exam disturbances, disruptive students, and suspected cases of malpractice or maladministration will be reported to the FE Examinations Team Leader – these will be dealt with by the FE Examinations Team Leader and the Head of Centre in line with JCQ and awarding organisation regulations.

Candidate Identification Procedure

> The centre will… verify the identity of all students that they enter for examinations or assessments. The centre must be satisfied that all candidate identities have been checked, whether as part of the initial registration process, or in the case of private candidates through a verification process which involves photo-ID (GR 5.6)
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> The centre will... have in place written procedures to verify the identity of all candidates at the time of the examination or assessment… (GR 5.9)
>
> Invigilators must establish the identity of all candidates sitting examinations.
>
> A private/external candidate or a transferred candidate who is not known to the school or college must show photographic documentary evidence to prove that he/she is the same person who entered/registered for the examination/assessment, e.g. passport or photographic driving licence.
>
> Where it is impossible to identify a candidate due to the wearing of religious clothing, such as a veil, the candidate should be approached by a member of staff of the same gender and taken to a private room where they should be politely asked to remove the religious clothing for identification purposes. Centres must inform candidates in advance of this procedure and well before their first examination.
>
> Once identification has been established, the candidate should replace, for example, their veil and proceed as normal to sit the examination.
>
> Invigilators must be informed of those candidates with access arrangements and must be made aware of the access arrangement(s) awarded. (ICE 16)
>
> - All learners supply ID when they are enrolled and are issued photo ID lanyards which are checked regularly.
> - Photo ID is required as a means of verification of identity in all exams and is checked by invigilators.

8. Special Consideration

It is the responsibility of the student to report any requests for special consideration to the invigilator, a tutor, a member of the Learner Journey Team, or the Exams Team. All applications must be supported by medical or other documentation – it is the candidate's responsibility to provide such evidence.

Applications for Special Consideration will be authorised by the FE Examinations Team Leader following consultation with appropriate members of the College Leadership Team.

9. Results and Post-Results Enquiries

Statement of results are posted to the candidate's home address. Enquiries about results (EARs) are requested by the Curriculum Leader where there are genuine grounds for doing so. Where a candidate requests an EAR against the decision of curriculum staff, they will be responsible for the appropriate fee. EARs will not be submitted until such a fee has been paid.

Student consent must be obtained by curriculum staff or the Exams Team prior to any review of marking request. It must be made clear to the candidate prior to a re-mark being processed that their final grade can go down as well as up or may remain the same.