



Business & Computing Examinations (BCE)

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Examination Regulations Policy

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This policy is to be reviewed in October 2009

Examination Regulations Policy

Business & Computing Examinations (BCE)

- Sets and marks the examinations which determine the BCE practitioner qualification.
- Decides on examination procedure
- Provides syllabus for tutors and candidates
- Aims to set a standard for the education of computing and business studies internationally
- Determination of educational character and ethos
- Articulation of vision, values and strategic direction

BCE is also responsible for

- a) setting/developing examinations
- b) administering/invigilating examinations
- c) marking examinations
- d) delivering examinations/results
- e) providing answer sheets, but not calculators or electronic media i.e. floppy/CD/flash drives

Candidates are issued with a candidate number when their application for an exam is processed by the Business & Computing Examinations (BCE).

All completed examination papers are forwarded to the examiners for marking.

- Exams are held 3 times a year
- The exams are attempted in order (candidates start from Certificate, Diploma and then Advanced Diploma). It is necessary to successfully complete one assessment in order to do another.
- Candidates have to pass all subjects in order to obtain a qualification. There is no time limit to complete all subjects. Candidates have to re-sit failed papers.
- Examination application forms, closing dates and exam dates are published on the home page of the Exam Board website and also advertised at registered centres.

Why regulate

Regulations is the act of controlling or governing activities, in our case, examinations.

The main reasons for regulating are:

- a. protect the integrity of examinations
- b. to make sure everybody gets a fair mark/result
- c. to make the examination process reliable
- d. the whole idea of exam testing is to enable candidates to think and apply knowledge, if the examination process is not regulated, the intended purpose is not achieved.
- e. to make sure the appropriate level of knowledge is reflected.

Conferment of Examination Awards

- i. The Board can only confer a Certificate, Diploma or Advanced Diploma [award] upon individuals who pursue a programme and has passed all the prescribed subjects, including project/coursework.
- ii. Results are sent to relevant centres
- iii. Direct communication between candidates and examination board is prohibited.
- iv. Candidates convey their grievances through their centres

Aegrotat Award

- i. A candidate prevented by illness or other sufficient cause from undertaking an examination, is allowed to sit examinations at the next available examination date. [see examination policy on sickness]
- ii. Centres may give *aegrotat* awards.

Conduct of Examinations

1. For each invigilated examination there shall be designated, by the BCE Examinations Officer, a Senior Invigilator responsible for the conduct of the examination, together with such other invigilators as may be necessary.
2. Attendance at all examinations is compulsory. A candidate who is absent from any examination must, without delay (maximum 1 week), submit to their centres his or her reasons for absence and, in the case of illness, submit a medical certificate.
3. Candidates are required to be available for the entire duration of the main examination periods. Examinations can take place twice a day (morning and afternoon) for the entire duration of the examination periods.
 - b. Each examination session shall be conducted on the day and at the time shown by the examination timetable authorised by the Examinations Officer. The time allowed for the examination shall be shown on the question paper.
 - c. The Examinations Officer may approve, in the case of candidate's disability, injury, medical condition, learning difficulties such as dyslexia or for other good cause, special arrangements for the conduct of that candidate's examination. In order to apply for such requirements, candidates must meet with the Disabilities or the Dyslexia at their centres and the centres notify the Examination board.
 - d. Notwithstanding the provisions of these Regulations, the Examinations Officer may, for good cause, approve on behalf of the Examination Board special arrangements for the conduct of a particular examination or examinations.
4. Candidates are required to arrive at the exam venue 15 to 20 minutes before the start of the exam.
5. Each candidate will be required to identify himself or herself in the examination room by producing his or her examination registration card.
 - b. No candidate can be admitted to an examination later than one hour after the beginning of the examination. A candidate who arrives late will be not be given extra time, except in exceptional circumstances outside his/her control. Candidates who are more than one hour late will not be permitted to sit their exam.
 - c. No candidate will be permitted to leave earlier than one hour after the beginning of the examination nor within fifteen minutes of the end of the examination.

- d. A candidate leaving before the end of the examination must surrender his or her examination answer-sheet sheet to an invigilator and will not be re-admitted.
 - e. A candidate leaving the examination room temporarily for any reason must be accompanied by an invigilator.
 - f. A candidate must sit at the desk allocated and place his or her examination registration card face up on the desk to enable the invigilator to confirm identity.
 - g. Candidates may not talk to each other from the time of entering the examination room until the time they leave. A candidate who needs to attract the attention of the invigilator is required to raise his/her hand.
 - h. No candidate may start writing until the invigilator announces the start of the examination.
 - i. At the end of the examination, all candidates must remain seated until all examination answer-sheets have been collected and the invigilator in charge directs that they may leave.
6. No examination materials may be removed from the examination room by a candidate except, at the discretion of the Examination Board, his or her examination paper.
 7. Large bags may be placed in the examination room only at the discretion of the invigilator in charge. Candidates are required to leave all personal items in the designated areas at the beginning of the examination. Possession of a mobile phone or any electronic device (with the exception of permitted calculators) is strictly prohibited.
 8. During an examination, candidates must not consult or have access to unauthorised materials such as books, electronic devices, notes or other aids. Students are permitted to use a completely clear plastic bag or clear case with no writing in any area to contain their stationery.
 9. Candidates can only use non-programmable calculators. Candidates are not allowed to store formulae in calculators and exam invigilators will check that all calculators' memories are cleared at the start of the exam.
 10. Any unauthorised material found after an examination has begun will be confiscated and submitted to the Examinations officer for checking. This includes mobile phones and other unauthorised electronic devices.
 11. Candidates are responsible for checking that they have the correct examination paper and materials needed to complete their exam.
 12. A candidate who suspects that there is an error in an examination paper should consult an invigilator.
 13. Candidates will be liable to Disciplinary Proceedings, as laid down in the Regulations, for irregular conduct relating to an examination including:
 - b. consulting or having access to unauthorised material such as books, electronic devices, and notes during an examination. All our examinations are *closed book*.
 - c. aiding or attempting to aid another candidate during an examination
 - d. obtaining or attempting to obtain aid from another candidate during examination
 - e. attempting to read the work of another candidate
 - f. the removal of examination stationary from the examination room (exam papers may only be removed if authorisation is given by the head invigilator).

- g. indiscipline or causing a disturbance during an examination
 - h. plagiarism
 - i. impersonation
 - j. any deed (verbal or physical) deemed inappropriate or considered as an examination offence by an invigilator.
14. In the case of an irregularity discovered during an invigilated examination, the Examinations Officer shall take such immediate action as he or she considers necessary, and shall report the matter, using the prescribed form, to the Examination Board.
15. In the event that the fire alarm is activated and the exam room evacuated during an examination, students will continue to be under exam regulations. When it is safe to re-enter the building, the Examinations Officer will decide if the examination is to continue.
16. Examinations Office staff have a general discretion to take such action during an examination as may be required in consequence of unforeseen circumstances, subject to a report being made to the examination board as soon as possible.

Disciplinary Regulations

The Programme Development department within the responsibilities delegated to it by the CEO, has responsibility for the discipline of registered centres.

Complaints of Misconduct – complaints alleging misconduct by a registered centre.

This includes:

- (a) misappropriation of examination fees
- (b) overcharging examinations
- (c) not sending examinations on time
- (d) holding examination results

Penalties – available either at preliminary or disciplinary stage are:

- i) Expulsion – centre is de-registered
- ii) Suspension – centre is suspended for a certain period.
- iii) Exclusion – centre excluded from offering certain examinations
- iv) Reported to relevant local authorities; i.e. the police or education department

Appeal Procedures

A centre for whom a penalty has been determined has the right of appeal.

The appeal will not take the form of a re-hearing of the case. An appeal may only be made on the grounds that:

- i) there were defects in the conduct of the previous disciplinary investigation such as to render the decision unsound
- ii) there is significant and relevant evidence that, for demonstrable, valid, and over-riding reasons, could not be submitted previously.

The grounds of appeal must be stated in writing in advance to Business & Computing Examinations (BCE). A written record of this process and its outcome will be kept.

For more information, see **Enquiries and Appeals Policy**

Particulars of Misconduct

1. General Statement of Misconduct

The essence of misconduct under the disciplinary regulations is improper interference, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of a Registered Centre or those who study at it or action which otherwise damages the Examination board.

Further particulars of misconduct are contained in section 2 below but the above general statement must be shown to apply to the conduct complained of, if misconduct is to be proved.

2. Particulars of Misconduct

Subject always to section 1 above, the following shall constitute misconduct:

- i) disruption of, or improper interference with, the BCE staff
- ii) obstruction of, or improper interference with, the functions, duties or activities of member of staff or other employee of BCE or any authorised visitor to a Registered Centre.
- iii) violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or offensive behaviour or languages whilst engaged in BCE activities
- iv) fraud, deceit, deception or dishonesty in relation to BCE as an organisation or its staff or in connection with holding any office in relation to BCE examinations
- v) breach of the provisions of any examination regulations
- vi) misuse of BCE material e.g. logos
- vii) conduct which constitutes a criminal offence where that conduct:
 - a) damages the good name of Examination Board
 - b) false information about the Examinations
 - c) misappropriation of examination fees
- viii) behaviour which brings the Examinations into disrepute
- ix) failure to disclose names and other relevant details to an Examinations Officer in circumstances when it is reasonable to require that such information be given
- x) failure to comply with security of examination instructions and procedures
- xi) failure to comply with a penalty previously imposed
- xii) conduct which constitutes unsuitability for the profession

Candidates following a programme of study validated by the Business & Computing Examinations

Institutions operating BCE programmes of study validated by BCE have their own procedures for handling matters of student discipline as set out in student handbooks or other documentation provided by the institution.

Admission of students to undertake examinations

- i. Applications to sit for examinations are made through the centres.
- ii. Students are required to pay examination fees
- iii. Students are required to provide verification of qualifications
- iv. Each student is given an examination ID number.
- v. No student is allowed to sit examinations until they pay examination fees
- vi. The authority to grant exemptions shall rest with BCE
- vii. Students should pass all relevant subjects in order to obtain a Certificate, Diploma or Advanced Diploma.

- viii. Transfer of examination fee to another person is not allowed. Those who fail to sit examination due to illness, can sit on the next available date. [see Reasonable adjustment policy on sickness]

Cheating and Examination Conduct

The Examination board takes very seriously any form of cheating in examinations or other form of assessment such as plagiarism, impersonation, collusion and disruption.

Copyright

Copyright of a candidate's coursework lies with the candidate's responsibility. Candidates who produce identical coursework will all fail.

Examination policy on sickness certification

Students who are prevented by ill-health from attending one or more examinations are required to submit medical evidence of their illness.

Medical certificates will be scrutinised by the appropriate officers and will not automatically be accepted.

For more information, see **Reasonable Adjustment Policy**.

Disclosure of Examination Results

Examinations results take about 2 months. Candidates are informed through their centres.

Complaints procedure

Candidates who wish to make a complaint against the Centre concerning the quality of education or any related service should first do so at the local level, by raising the issues with the centre staff.

For more information, see **Complaints Policy**.

Centres' Responsibilities

Registered centre management are responsible for ensuring that:

1. Agreed arrangements remain in force between the programmes
2. Candidates are provided with timely information about assessment requirements and arrangements
3. Candidates' results are made available to them as soon as possible.
4. Candidates' details for those who paid examination fees are forwarded to BCE on agreed times

Late work submission

Candidates are reminded to hand-in their coursework/project on time. We do not accept late work. However, we consider fair and equitable procedures that apply to reasonable adjustments. For more information see reasonable adjustment policy.

Re-sits

Candidates are allowed to re-sit a failed subject or coursework.

Malpractice

Malpractice involves a deliberate act of wrongdoing, contrary to official examination rules, and is designed to place a candidate at an unfair advantage or disadvantage.

Forms of Malpractice

Examination Development	Description	Involves
Leakage	Content of the examination paper(s) is disclosed prior to taking the examination	Members of examination authority, centre administrators
Exam preparation	Candidates come across exam content and practice the questions	Centre staff, members of examination authority
Impersonation	An individual who is not registered as a candidate takes the place of one that is registered.	Involves collusion between centre head and examination officer. Sometimes involves exchange of money or favour for a girl/boy friend
External assistance	Individuals who are not examination candidates giving unauthorised assistance to candidates	Usually involves invigilators
Smuggling of foreign materials	Relates to unauthorised materials e.g. notebooks, scribbled notes, charts smuggled in pants, shoes etc or information written on parts of the body	Usually only candidates are involved.