

CONDUCT OF EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS POLICY

1 Introduction

Pearson is one of the awarding organisations that utilises Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regulations to inform the running of its examinations and external assessments. Thus, it is probable that BTEC centres will utilise JCQ information and regulations to inform, to a lesser or greater degree, its management and conduct of BTEC external assessments. But note that JCQ will not directly advise centres on the conduct of BTEC programmes

JCQ has a wide range of information relating to the conduct and administration of all aspects of examinations and external assessments.

2 Pearson Conduct of Examinations

(Centres need to have external assessment procedures that summarises this detail)

1. Each examination must be taken on the day and at the time as shown on the timetable.
2. The published starting time of all examinations for UK centres is either 9.00 a.m. or 1.30 p.m. Candidates with more than one examination in a session should take these consecutively. A supervised break may be given between consecutive examinations.
3. UK centres may start an examination earlier than, or later than, the published starting time for the session without prior approval from Pearson. However, in order to maintain the security of the examination all candidates must start examinations scheduled for a morning session no earlier than 8.30 a.m. and by 9.30 a.m. and for an afternoon session no earlier than 1.00 p.m. and by 2.00 p.m. except where arrangements have been made for dealing with timetable clashes. No other departure from the timetable is permitted without prior written approval of Pearson. **Examination centres should refer to the JCQ publication 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' in the first instance.**
4. UK based candidates who take an examination earlier than the published starting time shown on the timetable must remain under centre supervision until one hour after the published starting time for that examination.
5. UK based candidates who take an examination later than the published starting time shown on the timetable must remain under centre supervision from 30 minutes after the published starting time for the paper concerned until the time when those candidates begin their examination.
6. When a change is made to the published starting time for an examination it is the responsibility of the centre to inform all candidates affected by the alteration.

3 ICE: Instructions for conducting examinations relevant to BTEC external assessments

1. Instructions for conducting examinations (annual)
2. Conditions for storing confidential examination material
3. Notice to centres: the people present
4. Form 4: word processor cover sheet
5. Form 5: Transcript cover sheet

6. Centre emergency evacuation procedure
7. Examination room incident log

ADMINISTRATION OF EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

External assessment for NQF BTEC programmes

Types of external assessment

1. Paper based
2. Set tasks
3. On screen tests

The most appropriate variant is used for each sector

Management of external assessment

External assessments are set and marked by Pearson: externally set tasks are externally moderated. They are subject to rules of conduct and examination timetables: on-screen tests are on demand. The external assessment must be taken by the learner under controlled examination conditions: this applies to three variants.

Externally assessed units have the same grades as internally assessed units

- L2 – P; M; D
- L1
- Unclassified

Learner preparation

The centre needs to ensure learners are

- fully prepared to sit an external assessment (sample materials and past papers)
- test questions will relate to the entire range of the unit content and in most sectors place emphasis on the application of knowledge by learners
- entry should be based on learner ability to undertake the demands of the test
- entered for assessments at appropriate times with due regard for re-sit opportunities as necessary

External assessment entry

Learners must be entered for an external assessment. This should be completed by the examination officer via EOL

- There are costs associated with entry, but do vary according to the type of test being undertaken

They can be re-sat as many times as centre with learner determines: there is no limit to the number of times a candidate can re-sit

- On-screen assessments are on-demand and can be re-sat without limit

- Paper-based and set task assessments may also be re-sat, but are scheduled into an examination timetable, only once or twice a year: January and June. Centres are advised to review the re-sit opportunities carefully and incorporate them into teaching plans

For information relating to a specific qualification see re-site at knowledgebase.edexcel.com

BTEC external exam timetables and dates –

These timetables are issued annually and cover the schedules of the three types of external assessment for that coming year

Centre Administration of onscreen testing

Onscreen tests can be taken on demand when learners are ready, making them more flexible than traditional paper-based testing. Pearson set out straight forward steps for the conduct of these tests. Re-sits are permissible

Pearson Onscreen Platform (POP)

All onscreen on-demand tests are delivered through POP. Centres need to use specific software though EOL. There are currently two versions of the software available for different testing environments

1. LAN (classroom) designed for use in classroom or IT suite. It gives onscreen coverage of test progress to EO and invigilators who are monitoring the tests
2. Multi-lingual test player for conduct of tests in languages other than English. Can be used for the teaching and assessing BTEC in the medium of Welsh

A Video library covers various aspects of installing software, setting up test room, preparing the assessment etc.

Offline version of the software is designed for the use in the field and gives users the ability to download the relevant test files before sitting the test offline. It is for users with laptops who need to sit tests outside their usual place of work

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This policy will be reviewed every 12 months -June meeting of the FE Quality Enhancement Committee