**BLESSED EDUCATION**

**Complaints and Appeals Policy**

# (including appeals for exams)

# Introduction

There may be an occasion when you need to tell us that something has gone wrong.

If you have a serious concern about the safety or welfare of your child or another student it should be dealt with under our child protection procedures; in such circumstances, please contact Ms Johnson (Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead).

You should report any serious concerns about the behaviour of a staff member directly to the Headteacher; examples of serious concerns include those involving violence, anything of a sexual nature or persistent bullying or humiliation.

All other complaints, including those that may point to poor practice by a member of staff, will be dealt with using the following Complaints Procedure. There are two sections to this procedure: the Informal Complaints Procedure and the Formal Complaints Procedure.

# Section A – Informal Complaints Procedure

Most concerns can be dealt with by liaising with your child’s tutor or other appropriate member of staff. Please call the Centre to arrange to speak to the relevant member of staff (if you are not sure who this would be please seek advice from the receptionist who answers your call). Calls will be acknowledged by the next working day. Please make sure you outline your concern fully to ensure that the Centre has an opportunity to address the issue and, if necessary, put it right. In the event that you feel this Informal Complaints Procedure has not resolved the matter you should then use our Formal Complaints Procedure.

# Section B – Formal Complaints Procedure

The Centre takes complaints very seriously and has a three-stage Formal Complaints Procedure to ensure they are handled properly. You must ensure that the process outlined below is followed and each stage exhausted before moving to the next.

## Stage 1

You should put your complaint in writing to the Headteacher. Complaints must be made within three months of the event. Complaints after this period will not be considered. Within two working days of receipt of your complaint, the Headteacher will inform you of what action will be taken to investigate your complaint, the expected time it will take to do so and commit to providing a written response at the end of the investigation.

If no further communication is received from you within ten working days of receiving a written response from the Headteacher, the matter will be deemed to have been resolved.

## Stage 2

If you still feel that the issue has not been fully investigated or feel that the evidence suggests the Headteacher has come to an incorrect judgement, or you are unhappy with a proposed resolution, you may forward your complaint to the Chair of Governors - Mr M Kinnon (care of the Centre) within ten working days of receipt of the written response from the Headteacher.

Provided the complaint is within the remit of the governors, a complaints panel will meet within ten working days of receipt of the stage 2 complaint and you will be invited to attend. One member of the panel will be a person who is independent of the Centre.

The panel will listen to your complaint or your reasons for rejecting an offered resolution, as well as hearing from the Headteacher the reasons for their position at the end of stage 1 of the Formal Complaints Procedure.

Following this, the panel will either dismiss the complaint or uphold the complaint (in full or in part) and offer some resolutions. You will be given a date by which a decision will be taken and you will be notified of the panel’s judgement and/or proposed resolution(s) in writing. The letter should be in your preferred language. This is the final stage of the Centre’s Formal Complaints Procedure.

## Stage 3

If you are dissatisfied with either the handling of your complain or the outcome you have the right to refer the case to the Department for Education (DfE) using the link below.

https://form.education.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form\_uri=sandbox-publish://AFProcess-f1453496-7d8a-463f-9f33-1da2ac47ed76/AF-Stage-1e64d4cc-25fb-499aa8d7-

74e98203ac00/definition.json&redirectlink=%2Fen&cancelRedirectLink=%2Fen

**Internal Appeals Procedure**

**1. Appeals against internal assessment decisions (centre assessed marks)**

Certain GCSE, GCE and other qualifications contain components of non-examination assessment (or units of coursework) which are internally assessed (marked) by [Blessed Education] and internally standardised. The marks awarded (the internal assessment decisions) which contribute to the final grade of the qualification are then submitted by the deadline set by the awarding body for external moderation.

This procedure confirms compliance with JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-2022 (section 5.7)that the centre will:

* have in place and be available for inspection purposes, a written internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions and to ensure that details of this procedure are communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates
* before submitting marks to the awarding body inform candidates of their centre assessed marks and allow a candidate to request a review of the centre’s marking **Deadlines for the submission of marks**

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| Date | Qualification | Details | Exam series |
| TBC | GCSE | Deadline to submit centre marks and moderation samples | Summer-22 |
| TBC | GCE | Final date for submission of centre assessed marks (AQA, OCR, Pearson and WJEC) | Summer-22 |

Blessed Education is committed to ensuring that whenever their staff mark candidates’ work this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body’s specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Blessed Education ensures that all centre staff follow a robust *Non-examination assessment policy* for the management of GCE and GCSE non-examination assessments. This policy details all procedures relating to non-examination assessments or coursework for GCE, GCSE, Project qualifications and any other vocational qualifications including the marking and quality assurance processes which relevant teaching staff are required to follow.

Candidates’ work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Blessed Education is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates’ work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

On being informed of their centre assessed marks, if a candidate believes that the above procedures were not followed in relation to the marking of his/her work, or that the assessor has not properly applied the mark scheme to her marking, then she may make use of the appeals procedure below to consider whether to request a review of the centre’s marking.

Blessed Education will:

1. ensure that candidates are informed of their centre assessed marks so that they may request a review of the centre’s marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body.

1. inform candidates that they will need to explain on what grounds they wish to request a review of an internally assessed mark as a review will only focus on the quality of their work in meeting the published assessment criteria

1. inform candidates that they may request copies of materials (for example, as a minimum, a copy their marked assessment material (work) and the mark scheme or assessment criteria plus additional materials which may vary from subject to subject) to assist them in considering whether to request a review of the centre’s marking of the assessment

1. having received a request for copies of materials, promptly make them available to the candidate (or for some marked assessment materials, such as art work and recordings, inform the candidate that these will be shared under supervised conditions) within 5 school days

1. inform candidates they will not be allowed access to original assessment material unless supervised

1. provide candidates with sufficient time in order to allow them to review copies of materials and reach a decision, informing candidates that if their decision is to request a review they will need to explain what they believe the issue to be

1. 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 within 5 school days of receiving copies of the requested materials by completing the **internal appeals form**

1. allow 5 school days 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

1. ensure that the review of marking is carried out by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate and has no personal interest in the review

1. instruct the reviewer to ensure that the candidate’s mark is consistent with the standard set by the centre

1. inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review of the centre’s marking

The outcome of the review of the centre’s marking will be made known to the head of centre who will have the final decision if there is any disagreement on the mark to be submitted to the awarding body. A written record of the review will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request.

The awarding body will be informed if the centre does not accept the outcome of a review.

The moderation process carried out by the awarding bodies 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 centre marking is line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should therefore be considered provisional.

**Appeal Stages: Stage One**

The candidate should appeal to the moderator in writing **within one week** of being informed of their marks. The moderator must inform their subject head/teacher that an appeal has been made and pass the written record to them. A written reply must be given by the moderator explaining their decision within one week of receiving the appeal from the candidate. If the candidate is not satisfied with the response from the moderator:

**Stage Two**

The candidate should contact the HOC **within one week** of the moderator’s response. The HOC will review the moderator’s decision and the assessment evidence. The Head of Centre will give a written response to the candidate within one week of receiving the request from the candidate.

**2. Post-results services and appeals including support a clerical check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal**

This procedure confirms Blessed Education’s compliance with JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-2022 (section 5.13)that the centre will:

Following the issue of results, awarding bodies make post-results services available. Information on these are available to candidates on results days, are requested through the exams officer and paid for by the candidate.

Candidates are also informed of the arrangements for post-results services. If the centre or a candidate (or his/her parent/carer) has a concern and believes a result may not be accurate, post-results services are considered.

The JCQ post-results services currently available are detailed below.

**Reviews of Results** (RoRs):

* Service 1 (Clerical re-check)

This is the only service that can be requested for objective tests (multiple choice tests)

* Service 2 (Review of marking)
* Priority Service 2 (Review of marking)

This service is only available for externally assessed components of GCE A-level specifications (an individual awarding body may also offer this priority service for other qualifications)

* Service 3 (Review of moderation)

This service is not available to an individual candidate **Access to Scripts** (ATS):

* Copies of scripts to support reviews of marking
* copies of scripts to support teaching and learning

Where a concern is expressed that a particular result may not be accurate, the centre will look at the marks awarded for each component part of the qualification alongside any mark schemes, relevant result reports, grade boundary information etc. when made available by the awarding body to determine if the centre supports any concerns.

For written components that contributed to the final result, the centre will:

1. Where a place a university or Centre is at risk, consider supporting a request for a Priority Service 2 review of marking
2. In all other instances, consider accessing the script by:
   1. (where the service is made available by the awarding body) requesting a priority copy of the candidate’s script to support a review of marking by the awarding body deadline or
   2. (where the option is made available by the awarding body) viewing the candidate’s marked script online to consider if requesting a review of marking is appropriate
3. Collect informed written consent/permission from the candidate to access his/her script
4. On access to the script, consider if it is felt that the agreed mark scheme has been applied correctly in the original marking and if the centre considers there are any errors in the marking
5. Support a request for the appropriate RoR service (clerical re-check or review of marking) if any error is identified]
6. Collect informed written consent from the candidate to request the RoR service before the request is submitted
7. Where relevant, advise an affected candidate to inform any third party (such as a university or Centre) that a review of marking has been submitted to an awarding body

Written candidate consent (informed consent via candidate email is acceptable) is required in all cases before a request for a RoR service 1 or 2 (including priority service 2) is submitted to the awarding body. Consent is required to confirm the candidate understands that the final subject grade and/or mark awarded 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. Candidate consent must only be collected after the publication of results.

For any moderated components that contributed to the final result, the centre will:

* Confirm that a review of moderation cannot be undertaken on the work of an individual candidate or the work of candidates not in the original sample submitted for moderation
* Consult the moderator’s report/feedback to identify any issues raised
* Determine if the centre’s internally assessed marks have been accepted without change by the awarding body – if this is the case, a RoR service 3 (Review of moderation) will not be available
* Determine if there are any grounds to submit a request for a review of moderation for the work of all candidates in the original sample

Where a candidate disagrees with a centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking or a review of moderation, the centre will:

* For a review of marking (RoR priority service 2), advise the candidate she may request the review by providing informed written consent and the required fee for this service to the centre by the deadline set by the centre
* For a review of marking (RoR service 1 or 2), first advise the candidate to access a copy of her script to support a review of marking by providing written permission for the centre to access the script and any required fee for this service for the centre to submit this request
* After accessing the script to consider the marking, inform the candidate that if a request for a review of marking (RoR service 1 or 2) is required, this must be submitted by the deadline set by the centre by providing informed written consent and the required fee for this service for the centre to submit this request
* Inform the candidate that a review of moderation (RoR service 3) cannot be requested for the work of an individual candidate or the work of a candidate not in the original sample

If the candidate (or her parent/carer) believes there are grounds to appeal against the centre’s decision not to support a review of results, an internal appeal can be submitted to the centre by completing the internal appeals form at least 5 calendar days prior to the internal deadline for submitting a request for a review of results.

The appellant will be informed of the outcome of his/her appeal before the internal deadline for submitting a RoR.

Following the RoR outcome, an external appeals process is available if the head of centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications **Post Results Services** and **JCQ Appeals Booklet** (A guide to the awarding bodies’ appeals processes) will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the head of centre is satisfied after receiving the RoR outcome, but the candidate (or his/her parent/carer) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, a further internal appeal may be made to the head of centre. Following this, the head of centre’s decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the **JCQ Appeals Booklet**. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

The **internal appeals form** should be completed and submitted to the centre within 5 calendar days of the notification of the outcome of the RoR. Subject to the head of centre’s decision, this will allow the centre to process the preliminary appeal and submit to the awarding body within the required **30 calendar days** of receiving the outcome of the review of results process. Awarding body fees which may be charged for the preliminary appeal must be paid to the centre by the appellant before the preliminary appeal is submitted to the awarding body (fees are available from the exams officer). If the appeal is upheld by the awarding body, this fee will be refunded by the awarding body and repaid to the appellant by the centre.

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| **FOR CENTRE USE ONLY** | |
| Date received |  |
| Reference No. |  |

**Internal appeals form**

Please tick box to indicate the nature of your appeal and complete all white boxes on the form below

* Appeal against an internal assessment decision and/or request for a review of marking
* Appeal against the centre’s decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal

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| Name of appellant |  | Candidate name  if different to appellant |  |
| Awarding body |  | Exam paper code |  |
| Qualification Type  Subject |  | Exam paper title |  |
| **Please state the grounds for your appeal below**                        *(If applicable, tick below)*  £Where my appeal is against an internal assessment decision I wish to request a review of the centre’s marking  *If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically or overleaf if hard copy being completed* | | | |
| Appellant signature: Date of signature: | | | |

**This form must be signed, dated and returned to the subject teacher on behalf of the head of centre to the timescale indicated in the relevant appeals procedure**

**Complaints and appeals log**

On receipt, all complaints/appeals are assigned a reference number and logged. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

The outcome of any review of the centre’s marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and logged as an appeal, so information can be easily made available to an awarding body upon request. The awarding body will be informed if the centre does not accept the outcome of a review – this will be noted on this log.

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**Internal appeals form Stage 2**

Please tick box to indicate the nature of your appeal and complete all white boxes on the form below

£Appeal against an internal assessment decision and/or request for a review of marking

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| Name of appellant |  | Candidate name  if different to appellant |  |
| Awarding body |  | Exam paper code |  |
| Qualifiction  Type  Subject |  | Exam paper title |  |
| **Please state the grounds for your second stage appeal below**            *(If applicable, tick below)*  £Where my appeal is against an internal assessment decision I wish to request a review of the centre’s marking  *If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically or overleaf if hard copy being completed* | | | |
| Appellant signature: Date of signature: | | | |

**This form must be signed, dated and returned to the subject teacher on behalf of the head of centre to the timescale indicated in the relevant appeals procedure**

**Complaints and appeals log stage 2**

On receipt, all complaints/appeals are assigned a reference number and logged. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

The outcome of any review of the centre’s marking will be made known to the head of centre. A written record of the review will be kept and logged as an appeal, so information can be easily made available to an awarding body upon request.

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**Complaints and Appeals Procedure (Exams)**

**Purpose of the procedure**

This procedure confirms Blessed Education’s compliance with JCQ’s General Regulations for Approved Centres 2021-2022 (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 administration of a qualification.

**Grounds for complaint**

A candidate (or her parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list).

**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 [insert who] 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 her parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre’s administration of a qualification she is following, Blessed Education encourages her to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. A concern or complaint should be made in person, to the head of centre.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or her 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**
* Forms are included at the end of this policy
* Completed forms should be returned to the EO
* Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 7 calendar days **How a formal complaint is investigated**
* The head of centre will further 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 4 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 7 calendar days
* The appeal will be referred to the Chair of Governors (or a special Committee of the Governing body) for consideration
* The Chair of Governors (or Committee) will inform the appellant of the final conclusion in due course

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| FOR CENTRE USE ONLY | |
| Date received |  |
| Reference No. |  |

**Complaints and appeals form**

Please tick box to indicate the nature of your complaint/appeal

£Complaint/appeal against the centre’s administration of a qualification

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of complainant/appellant | **name** different to complainant/appellant |
| Candidate name if different to complainant/appellant |  |
| Please state the grounds for your complaint/appeal below                            If your complaint is lengthy please write as bullet points; please keep to the point and include relevant detail such as dates, names etc. and provide any evidence you may have to support what you say Your appeal should identify the centre’s failure to follow procedures as set out in the relevant policy, and/or issues in teaching and learning which have impacted the candidate  If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically or overleaf if hard copy being completed | |
| Detailany steps you have already taken to resolve the issue(s) and what you would consider to be a good resolution to the issue(s) | |
| Complainant/appellant signature: Date of signature: | |

This form must be completed in full; an incomplete form will be returned to the complainant/appellant

**Complaints and appeals log**

On receipt, all complaints/appeals are assigned a reference number and logged. Outcome and outcome date is also recorded.

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Prepared: November 2021

Review: October 2023