



KESH

KING EDWARD VI
SHELDON HEATH ACADEMY

CENTRE POLICY FOR Q-TAGS – SUMMER 2021

(Level 2 and Level 3 BTEC courses)

Other relevant policies and documents:

Non-examination Assessment Policy

BTEC Policy

Examinations' complaints and appeals procedures

Examinations' Contingency Plan

Examinations' Policy

Access Arrangements Policy

Appeals Procedures for Teacher Assessed Grades – Summer 2021

JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021

Friendship
Integrity Benevolence
Honesty **Equality**
Respect Community
Tolerance Aspiration
Our values
Humility Personal responsibility
Justice Dignity Ambition
Co-operation **Humanity**
Excellence Embracing diversity
Belief Empathy Kindness
Understanding Charity
Compassion

This policy was adopted by the Curriculum and Student Welfare Committee in April 2021.

Aims of this Policy:

1. To make it clear the steps all centres must take to ensure that the Q-TAGs they determine for their learners are sufficiently valid and reliable a centre must:
 - Review the specification grading information i.e.. unit-level assessment criteria and grade descriptors with the subject teaching team
 - Consider what evidence you will have from the content you have taught.
 - Collect the evidence.
 - Evaluate the quality of the evidence.
 - Assign a Qualification-Level Teacher Assessed Grade (Q-TAG)
 - Reflect on your judgement before submission.

Further detail in relation to the above steps must be referred to and is available in our guidance, here, with supporting information on our webpage: quals.pearson.com/BTEC2021assessment

2. To ensure that learners can feel confident in the process their centres have taken to determine their Q-TAG.
3. To summarise the existing BTEC policies and confirm that they now also apply in the context of Q-TAG judgements.
4. To reflect and incorporate Ofqual's Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (VCRF) and Guidance that any Q-TAG is based on appropriate sources of evidence and has gone through an internal quality assurance process (which includes final sense check of outcomes against historical centre outcomes).
5. To ensure that the methodology used to determine the Q-TAG is consistent across centres and sufficiently valid, reliable and does not advantage or disadvantage any group of, or individual, learners.

In order to do this the centre will, for each qualification and learner, submit a Q-TAG and Head of Centre Declaration confirming that they have:

1. Ensured that all relevant teaching staff (i.e. Assessors, Internal Verifiers, Heads of Department and Heads of Centre) will use the guidance provided by Pearson to confirm the Q-TAG, and refer to supplementary guidance from JCQ and Ofqual where required.
2. Ensured that the evidence that has been used for each Q-TAG judgement is sufficiently documented to ensure that it can be explained to the learner or Parent or Carer in the case of Appeals, and to Pearson. Centres must take into account previous years' results, if there is a material difference in the results profile expected in 2021, a Centre must be able to explain why its results are significantly out of line with past performance (be that higher or lower).
3. Ensured that all assessment evidence is retained in line with Ofqual's Vocational Contingency Regulatory Framework (evidence which is used to support the Qualification-Level Teacher Assessed Grade should be retained until 6 months after the date of the issue of the result, or the conclusion of any appeal in relation to that result, whichever is later). In some cases, evidence may no longer be available, JCQ has released guidance on the retention of evidence in these circumstances. Evidence must be made available for the purposes of further external quality assurance or an Appeal. This will include documentation that demonstrates the above process for the Q-TAG judgement has been followed, i.e.:
 - Records of Standardisation of Assessors and Internal Verifiers and other relevant members of staff, in relation to the Q-TAG process and holistic judgements
 - Evidence sheets for learners (Existing BTEC templates for actual assessment and Pearson will provide a template for documenting alternative evidence)
 - The alternative sources of evidence that have been considered
 - Any additional Assessment and Internal Verification materials
 - Any assessed learner work assessment records

- Records of performance data used for sense check, with explanation for any deviation in the 2021 Q-TAG judgements (if there is a material difference in the profiles expected in 2021).
4. Ensured they follow all other policies as set out in our Pearson Annual Centre Declaration signed in 2021, including Pearson Terms and Conditions. You can find more information on our Quality Assurance webpages. This includes:
- Safeguarding
 - Health and Safety (including any arrangements for employer Involvement)
 - Special Consideration and Reasonable Adjustment
 - Recognition of Prior Learning
 - Registration and Certification of Learners
 - Assessment
 - Internal verification
 - Plagiarism and Assessment Malpractice
 - Appeals & Complaints

Malpractice

Pearson greatly appreciates all of the hard work that centres will undertake in setting out and implementing their processes to determine grades. Centres are required to submit grades that have been determined in line with published guidance and their own Centre Policy. The decision to not go ahead with exams in Summer 2021 means that the causes and drivers for malpractice will be different to those in a normal examination series. However, malpractice can still occur through genuine error or intent, particularly around the determination of grades. A minority of centre staff may fail to appropriately adhere to the guidance in determining grades and some students might attempt to gain an unfair advantage. To support centres in these challenging times we have set out below some of the circumstances in which Pearson will investigate potential malpractice concerns. Please note that the list is not intended to be exhaustive and there may be other instances of potential malpractice which will require investigation.

a) Centres/centre staff

Pearson's Investigations team will investigate credible allegations of malpractice or issues reported from our monitoring processes that raise concerns about a failure to follow the published requirements for determining grades. Examples include:

- Registrations are made for learners who had not studied the course of entry or had not intended to certificate in summer 2021.
- Grades created for learners who have not been taught sufficient content to provide the basis for that grade.
- A teacher deliberately and inappropriately disregarding the centre's published policy when determining grades.
- A teacher fabricating evidence of learner performance to support an inflated grade.
- A teacher deliberately providing inappropriate levels of support before or during an assessment, including deliberate disclosure of mark schemes and assessment materials, to support an inflated grade.
- A teacher intentionally submitting inflated grades.
- A failure to retain evidence used in the determination of grades in accordance with the Pearson grading guidance.
- A systemic failure to follow the centre's policy in relation to the application of Reasonable Adjustments, Access Arrangements or Special Consideration arrangements for learners in relation to assessments used to determine grades.
- A failure to take reasonable steps to authenticate learner work.

- A failure to appropriately manage Conflicts of Interest (COIs) within a centre.
- A Head of Centre's failure to submit the required declaration when submitting their grades. Grades being released to learners (or their parents/carers) before the issue of results.
- Failure to cooperate with Pearson's quality assurance, appeal or investigation processes.
- Failure to conduct a centre review or submit an appeal when requested to do so by a student

Centres which identify such incidents should report them to our Investigations team by completing a JCQ M2 form (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>) and submitting this and any relevant evidence to pqsmalpractice@pearson.com.

b) Learners

It is possible that some learners may attempt to influence their teachers' judgements about their grades. Learners might attempt to gain an unfair advantage during the centre's process by, for example, submitting fabricated evidence or plagiarised work. Such incidents would constitute malpractice and centres are asked to report these to Pearson in the normal way using the JCQ M1 form (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/malpractice/>) and emailing this and supporting information to candidatemalpractice@pearson.com. Learners, or individuals acting on their behalf such as parents/carers, might also try to influence grade decisions by applying pressure to centres or their staff. We anticipate that the majority of such instances will be dealt with by the centre internally – in such cases, we ask that the centres retain clear and reliable records of the circumstances and the steps taken, and that learners are made aware of the outcome. However, if a learner continues to inappropriately attempt to pressure centre staff then please inform the candidate malpractice investigations team using the JCQ M1 Form. We will contact your centre if we receive credible allegations that such pressure has been applied in order that appropriate steps can be taken. In all the scenarios listed above, as well as any others that have not been explicitly identified here, the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures 2020-2021 (https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Malpractice_20-21_v2-1.pdf) continues to apply. Please be aware that, as always, all investigations into alleged malpractice remain confidential and the findings, including any sanctions imposed, are not publicly disclosed. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding malpractice, please contact the Investigations team via pqsmalpractice@pearson.com