



# The Birtenshaw Group

## Transforming Lives

### Birtenshaw Education Services

### Examinations and External Accreditations

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This policy has been written in line with guidance from external awarding bodies including Edexcel, ASDAN, City and Guilds, AQA and BTEC.

#### **Rationale:**

The aim of Birtenshaw is 'Transforming Lives'. In order to achieve this aim, children and adults are supported in their learning so that they are able to make good progress from their individual starting point. Birtenshaw provides education at varying levels and for some people external accreditations are provided to support long term plans for the future. Assessment methods are both formative and summative and are an opportunity for both learners and teachers to evaluate the learning that has taken place and plan next steps which may include examinations or external accreditations.

Examinations serves three fundamental purposes:

1. To help pupils/learners learn by providing a method of assessing progress and understanding through standardised tests.
2. To provide accurate attainment data for pupils/learners, parents/carers and local authorities.
3. To create opportunities for pupils/learners who may wish to seek further education or employment.

This policy covers the aims and Birtenshaw's commitment in the following areas:

- **Registration and Certification**
- **Assessment**
- **Internal Verification**
- **Appeals**
- **Malpractice**

It also clearly defines the responsibilities of each role within the registration, delivery, assessment and claim of any examination within Birtenshaw.

## **Registration & Certification**

Aim:

- To register individual learners/pupils to the correct programme within agreed timescales.
- To claim valid learner/pupil certificates within agreed timescales.
- To construct a secure, accurate and accessible audit trail to ensure that individual learner/pupil registration and certification claims can be tracked to the certificate which is issued for each learner/pupil.

In order to do this, Birtenshaw will:

- Register each learner/pupil within the awarding body requirements
- Ensure communication between exams officer, quality nominee and internal verifiers provide a way to check the accuracy of learner/pupil registrations
- Make each learner/pupil aware of their registration status where appropriate
- Inform the awarding body of withdrawals, transfers or changes to learner/pupil details
- Ensure that certificate claims are timely and based solely on internally verified assessment records
- Keep all records safely and securely for three years post certification.

## **Qualification Withdrawal**

Birtenshaw's examination offer is lead by the Education Health and Care Plan reviews and is tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils. It is extremely unlikely that an examination would need to be withdrawn.

However in the unlikely case that this is required the Withdrawal Process will follow a two-stage process:

### **Stage 1 – Decision to withdraw**

All current qualifications will be reviewed by the senior leadership team as and when required. They will consider entry data, attainment levels and qualification relevance.

## **Stage 2 – Managing the Withdrawal**

Upon the decision being made to withdraw a qualification, arrangements will be made for pupils to complete the qualification in an alternative location.

The plan will:

- Specify how the interests of pupils in relation to the qualification will be protected.
- Detail how the withdrawal will be communicated to the awarding organisation, regulatory authorities, centres and learners providing details of all deadlines including the last date for accepting entries and the last date for certification.

## **Assessment**

Aim:

- To ensure that assessment strategies are clear, reliable and consistent across Birtenshaw.
- To ensure that the assessment procedure is open, fair and takes into account any special considerations for each pupil/learner.
- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of assessment decisions.

In order to do this, Birtenshaw will ensure that:

- Pupils/learners are provided with assignments that are fit for purpose and are able to produce appropriate evidence for assessment
- Assessors and Teachers develop assessment procedures that will minimise the opportunity for malpractice
- Assessors, Internal Verifiers and Teachers maintain accurate, detailed and secure records of assessment decisions
- A robust and rigorous internal verification procedure is in place.
- Samples are provided for standards verification as required by the awarding organisation

## **Internal Verification**

Aim:

- To ensure there is an accredited Lead Internal Verifier
- To ensure that the Internal Verification procedure is open, fair and takes into account any special considerations for each pupil/learner.

- To ensure that there is accurate and detailed recording of Internal Verification decisions.

In order to do this, Birtenshaw will ensure that:

- Each Lead Internal Verifier oversees effective Internal Verification systems.
- Staff are briefed and trained in the requirements for current Internal Verification procedures
- Effective Internal Verification roles are defined, maintained and supported
- An appropriately structured sample of assessment from all programmes, units, sites and Assessors is Internally Verified, to ensure centre programmes conform to national standards
- Standardisation is assured through cross-verification between class teachers.
- Secure records of all Internal Verification activity are maintained
- **Ensure assessment and internal verification is clear; all assessors mark examinations in purple. The Internal verifier marks in green for easy identification (Bolton School)**

All documentation, forms and assessment spreadsheets are accessible via Birtenshaw's shared drive.

## Appeals

This section of the policy addresses the situation where pupils/learners may wish to appeal against an outcome he/she has received for a qualification.

All pupils and learners at Birtenshaw have the right to make an appeal about the outcome received for the qualifications they are undertaking.

If any pupil/learner wishes to appeal a decision, they should follow the following procedure.

1. If possible, speak to the member of staff responsible for teaching the qualification in the first instance about the reason they wish to appeal.
2. The member of staff has a responsibility to explain to the candidate why he/she received the outcome.
3. If the pupil/learner is not satisfied with the explanation, the piece of work will be re-assessed by another member of staff also involved with that qualification.
4. The pupil/learner will be informed of the outcome of the re-assessment by letter.
5. If the pupil/learner wants to continue the appeal, he/she needs to contact the exams officer, who will provide the pupil/learner with information about the appeals procedure for the relevant awarding body and explain what is involved. The exams officer will assist with the completion of any forms and will correspond with the awarding body on behalf of the pupil/learner.

6. Please note: a pupil/learner must have the support of the centre to be able to appeal against a result.

## **Malpractice**

This section of the policy sets out to define the procedures to be followed in the event of any dispute or allegation regarding staff malpractice in the valuation of internally assessed qualifications (such as ASDAN, C and G, AQA, Functional Skills and BTECs) and also regarding examinations invigilated by staff and assessed externally.

Reporting to ASDAN the centre's responsibilities as outlined in ASDAN's Malpractice and Maladministration policy and procedure Section 3.2 will be adhered to.

### **Examples of Malpractice**

Attempted or actual malpractice activity will not be tolerated. The following are examples of malpractice by staff or other candidates with regards to portfolio-based qualifications. This list is not exhaustive:

- Tampering with candidates work prior to external moderation/verification
- Assisting candidates with the production of work outside of the awarding body guidance
- Fabricating assessment and/or internal verification records or authentication statements

The following are examples of malpractice by staff or other candidates with regard to examinations

- Assisting candidates with exam questions outside of the awarding body guidance
- Allowing candidates to talk, use a mobile phone or go to the toilet unsupervised
- Tampering with scripts prior to external assessments taking place.

All supporting documentation, including the use of calculators and dictionary / thesaurus, are stored in a locked cupboard. Resources used for exams are only to be used for this purpose. These resources are checked prior to each examination by the assessor and centre lead.

### **Staff Malpractice Procedure**

Investigations into allegations will be coordinated by the Head of Service or Julie Barnes; Deputy Chief Executive of Operations, if the allegation involves a class teacher. The initial investigation will be carried out within ten working days. The person responsible for coordinating the investigation will depend on the qualification being investigated. The investigation will involve establishing the full facts and

circumstances of any alleged malpractice. It should not be assumed that because an allegation has been made, it is true. Where appropriate, the staff member concerned and any potential witnesses will be interviewed and their version of events recorded on paper.

The member of staff will be:

- informed in writing of the allegation made against him or her
- informed what evidence there is to support the allegation
- informed of the possible consequences, should malpractice be proven
- given the opportunity to consider their response to the allegations
- given the opportunity to submit a written statement
- given the opportunity to seek advice (as necessary) and to provide a supplementary statement (if required)
- informed of the applicable appeals procedure, should a decision be made against him/her
- informed of the possibility that information relating to a serious case of malpractice will be shared with the relevant awarding body and may be shared with other awarding bodies, the regulators Ofqual, the police and/or professional bodies including the GTC

If work is submitted for moderation/verification or for assessment, which is not the candidate's own work, the awarding body may not be able to give that candidate a result.

### **Staff Malpractice Sanctions**

Where there is evidence from the investigation that a member of staff may be guilty of malpractice, the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure of Birtenshaw will be invoked.

### **Maladministration**

The lead assessor at Birtenshaw (Head of School) will ensure that they will inform the Awarding Body immediately if they are aware that maladministration has occurred, for example incorrect completion of registration of candidates or units and/or incorrect claims for candidate certification.

### **Whistleblowing**

Birtenshaw School will always aim to keep a whistle-blower's identity confidential where asked to do so. The investigator reviewing the allegation will not reveal the whistle-blower's identity unless the whistleblower agrees or it is absolutely necessary for the purposes of the investigation. The investigator will advise the whistleblower if it becomes necessary to reveal their identity against their wishes.

### **Responsibilities:**

Birtenshaw Education Services Examinations and Accreditations Policy  
Reviewed September 2023 – MF  
Next Review – September 2024

**The Head of Centre and Senior Managers are responsible for:**

- Management and delivery of examinations and qualifications at Birtenshaw
- Ensuring that Birtenshaw acts in accordance with the conditions of approval, regulations and any other terms and conditions or policies for each awarding body.
- Ensuring that all quality assurance processes are conducted efficiently.

**The Exams Officers are responsible for:**

- Ensuring pupils/learners are registered on time and correctly.
- Claiming valid pupil/leaners certificates within agreed timescales.

**The Quality nominee (Edexcel BTEC only) is responsible for:**

- Ensuring effective management of Birtenshaw's BTEC programmes and actively promoting good practice.
- Being the main point of contact for the Centre Quality Reviewer. They will agree the agenda of the visit, negotiating when this will take place and which practitioners need to be involved, and complete the Centre Engagement Document.
- Being the initial point of contact for the Standards Verifier and will work with Birtenshaw staff to ensure that Standards Verification can take place.

**The Lead Internal Verifier (Edexcel only) is responsible for:**

- The accountability for the quality assurance across each subject area.
- Signing off assessment and internal verification decisions.
- Ensuring all assessment and verification records are available for scrutiny and be able to confirm that work is authentic and valid.
- Authorising resubmissions fairly and consistently.

**The Internal Verifiers are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that assessment decisions are consistent across the programme by checking that assignments are fit for purpose, standardising assessors and sampling assessment decisions.
- Providing verbal evidence of how Birtenshaw policies and procedures are understood and implemented at programme level during quality management reviews (Edexcel BTEC only)
- Ensuring that all assessment activities are valid, appropriate and fit for purpose
- Ensuring that feedback and outcomes of internal and external moderation support future development of good practice
- Carrying out an annual evaluation and review of internal moderation policy and procedures

- Ensuring that all assessment plans, assignments and assessment decisions have been internally verified and that assessors take appropriate action based on their feedback.

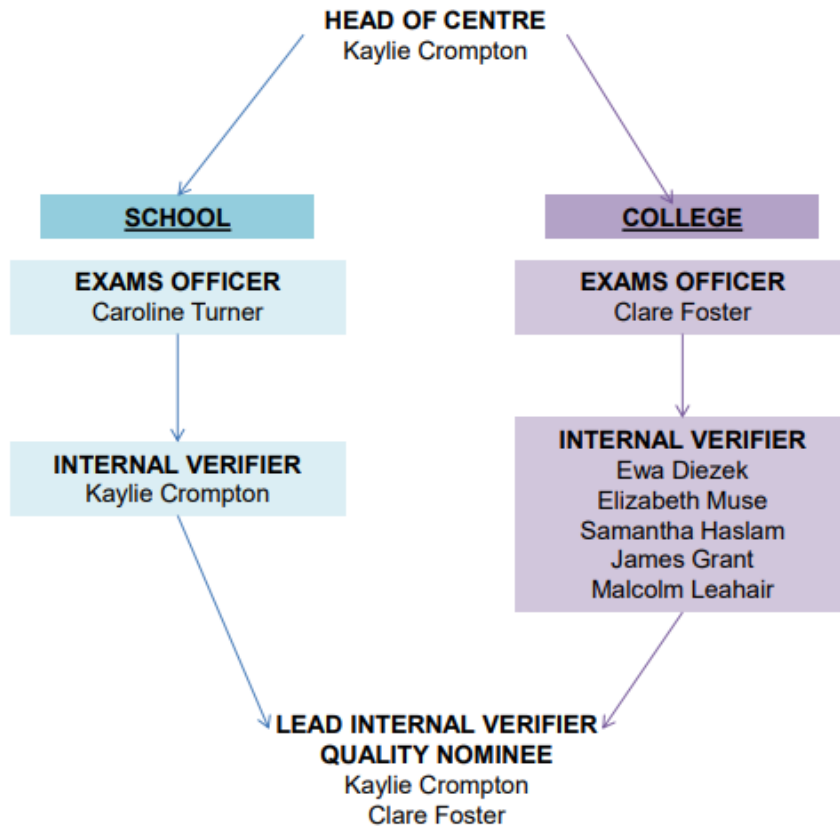
**The class teachers/assessors responsibilities are:**

- Ensure that the curriculum plans meet the criteria of the course specification.
- Assessing pupils/learners against the learning aims and assessment
- Providing verbal evidence of how Birtenshaw policies and procedures are understood and implemented at programme level during quality management reviews (Edexcel BTEC only)
- To provide assessment records and pupil's/learner's work for Standards Verification, and undertake any action required to bring the assessment in line with national standards.





## EXAMINATIONS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



### Equal Opportunities:

Birtenshaw supports the rights of all pupils/learners to equal access and opportunities regardless of age, culture, religion, gender, ability, disability or sexuality.

Birtenshaw promotes an ethos of respect for everyone.