



Pearson

**Withholding results and
certificates from candidates
and learner's policy**

Quality Services and Governance

Who and what is this policy for:

This policy is mainly for centre staff who are delivering Pearson qualifications but will also be helpful to learners who are taking our qualifications.

It explains when we may withhold results or certificates from centres, or request that centres withhold them from their learners.

Pearson Education Ltd – Our Mission and Values

Welcome to Pearson, the world's learning company. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. Whether it's at home, in the classroom or in the workplace, learning is the key to improving our life chances. We are the UK's largest awarding body and we are regulated by Ofqual (England), SQA Accreditation (Scotland), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). We offer academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked, with educational excellence rooted in names like Pearson Edexcel, BTEC, and LCCI.

Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate in a consistent way how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and learners with the design, delivery and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

Contents

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Scope of policy | 3 |
| 2. | Policy purpose | 3 |
| 3. | Policy statement | 3 |
| 4. | Regulatory and other references | 3 |
| 5. | Policy review date | 4 |
| 6. | Useful contacts | 4 |

Withholding results and certificates from candidates and learners policy

Owner Head of Regulation

Authorised by Responsible Officer

March 2019 version 3.0 DCL 1: Public (Unclassified)

Ratified by PUKLT May 2019

1. Scope of policy

1.1 This policy applies to all Pearson approved centres in the UK and internationally

2. Policy purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to clarify when Pearson or our centres may withhold results or certificates from learners.

2.2 We are committed to:

- Making sure our qualifications are fit for purpose and delivered with integrity in a way which best promotes and protects the interests of learners.
- Ensuring that all learners who have successfully demonstrated the required level of achievement will receive their results and certificates in a timely manner.

3. Policy statement

3.1 There are very few cases where we would withhold results or certificates from learners. This may be necessary where:

- There are cases of alleged centre or learner malpractice.
- A result is issued in error.
- There is reasonable evidence that there is a risk to the integrity of the results.

3.2 We may ask you to withhold results or certificates from learners because there is an allegation of malpractice or a result has been issued in error. In such events, we will ask you to hold or return results or certificates until any investigation is completed and any issues are resolved.

3.3 We won't withhold learner results or certificates on financial grounds.

3.4 Any learner who is entered for an examination should expect to be awarded a certificate on successful completion of the relevant assessment. Except in cases described in 3.2 above, you cannot withhold results or certificates from learners under any circumstances, including non-payment of fees. We recommend that you should aim to have secured payment of course fees by the time you register a learner for an examination.

3.5 If you would like to report suspected malpractice relating to the issuing of certificates, guidance can be found in the [JCQ Public Interest Disclosure Act \(Whistleblowing\)](#). You can also report an incident or discuss your concerns with us by emailing our Investigations Team at pgsmalpractice@pearson.com.

4. Regulatory and other references

4.1 UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies that relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference the conditions and criteria that they address.

4.2 This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

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| <u>Ofqual/CCEA Regulation General Conditions of Recognition</u> <u>Qualifications Wales Standard Conditions of Recognition</u> | |
|---|----------------|
| Issuing certificates and replacement certificates | Condition 14 |
| <u>SQA Accreditation Regulatory Principles (2014)</u> | |
| The awarding body and its providers shall have effective, reliable and secure systems for the registration and certification of learners | Principle 15 |
| <u>Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ¹) General Regulations for approved centres (2018- 2019)</u> | |
| Centres must distribute provisional statements of results to all candidates, either electronically or in hard copy, without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees) | Paragraph 5.13 |
| Centres are not permitted to withhold provisional results from candidates under any circumstances. Under the terms of the Data Protection Act centres that receive a Subject Access Request are compelled to release results to candidates within timescales prescribed by the Data Protection Act. | Paragraph 5.13 |
| Centres must distribute certificates to all candidates without delay and regardless of any disputes (such as non-payment of fees). Certificates must not be withheld without prior permission from an awarding body which will only be given in very exceptional circumstances. | Paragraph 5.15 |

5. Policy review date

5.1 This policy will be reviewed in March 2020.

6. Useful contacts

6.1 To discuss your concerns with us about withholding results and certificates, please contact our Regulation Team by email at regulation@pearson.com.

¹ The Joint Council for Qualifications is a membership organisation comprising the eight largest providers of qualifications in the UK.