

A short guide to the BTEC maladministration process

All awarding organisations set deadlines and requirements for the delivery of their qualifications, and it is a condition of approval that all centres adhere to these deadlines. This protects the interests of learners, the integrity of the assessments and ensures that we can issue accurate results to all learners on time. [Ofqual recently wrote to schools and colleges](#), in the context of Level 3 VTQs, with a reminder that “schools and colleges could face investigation or even sanctions if they do not cooperate with requests for information or miss deadlines”.

What is maladministration?

‘Malpractice’ and ‘maladministration’ both involve a failure to follow the rules of an examination or assessment. More information on malpractice processes can be found in the [JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#) document. The procedures set out in the JCQ document are designed to ensure that the process is fair and transparent.

What happens if a centre is being investigated for potential maladministration?

During the maladministration process, every centre can put forward mitigating circumstances we might not currently be aware of, and these will be considered before any decision on maladministration is reached. Any sanction applied is subject to a right of appeal. For more serious sanctions, an external Malpractice Committee will be convened, and the centre and any individuals involved will have the opportunity to submit written statements to the Committee before any decisions are made.

What are the possible outcomes of an investigation for potential maladministration?

Each case will be considered carefully based on individual circumstances. The following are possible sanctions that may be applied in the context of potential maladministration of BTEC qualifications.

- If the centre puts forward acceptable mitigating circumstances, or responds immediately by closing all outstanding centre actions, we are likely not to take any further action.
- If the centre engages with us to resolve all outstanding issues within a reasonable time frame, and there is no adverse impact on learners, they are likely to receive at most a warning. A warning is a formal sanction which remains on our records and may lead to more severe sanctions being imposed in future if there is a repeat of the issues or other malpractice.
- If the root cause of the issues is a failure of centre processes or staff capability, the warning may be coupled with a requirement for training or a centre action plan.
- If an individual member of staff is found to be wilfully obstructive or negligent, we may debar them from any involvement in our assessments in future.
- In extreme cases, where a centre fails to engage with us at all, or where a qualification has been misdelivered to the extent that learner results cannot be issued, we may remove approval to offer some or all of our qualifications.