

Bedales Senior Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs) Policy

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Tick relevant box(es) ✓ how this Policy should appear:

ISI Document		
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Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs) Policy

In search of a Better Education

There is much talk currently in educational and political circles about whether GCSEs are still the right form of assessment for 16-year-olds and whether their content is adequately preparing children for the fast-changing world beyond school. The disruption caused by COVID has also shone a worrying light on the fact that GCSEs rely solely on a single examination after two years study. Many parents, who have been more involved than usual in their children's education because of online learning, have also been questioning the type of education that GCSEs offer; it feels narrow, unimaginative and overly pressurised.

At Bedales we decided 13 years ago that GCSEs were too rigid and that by relying on them solely we were failing our students and narrowing their educational horizons. Today our student's study five GCSEs (English Literature, Maths, Science and a foreign language) and then can choose up to five of the 14 Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs). At Bedales we decided 13 years ago that GCSEs were too rigid and that by relying on them solely we were failing our students and narrowing their educational horizons. Today our student's study five GCSEs (English Literature, Maths, Science and a foreign language) and then can choose up to five of the 14 Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs).

Our alternatives to GCSEs

BACs are two-year courses with continuous assessment as well as, in many cases, a final exam. There is more reliance on collaboration, research, creative thought and problem solving – a natural progression therefore to A Level study. Teachers can shape the syllabus according to current events or their students' interests and go way beyond the narrow confines of the GCSE syllabus. Importantly the courses are externally moderated and recognised and respected by UCAS, universities and employers. Our students go on to study at QS World Top 100 universities, renowned art colleges and music conservatoires.

BACs are in the following subjects:

Ancient Civilisations	Global Perspectives
Art	History
Dance	Music
Design – Product and Fashion	Outdoor Work
Digital Game Design	Philosophy, Religion & Ethics (PRE)
English Literature	Sports Science
Geography	Theatre

Curriculum

Bedales Assessed Courses are created to provide a meaningful alternative to GCSE. This means that we can offer subjects not normally available at that level (Outdoor Work and Digital Game Design, for example); a range of material not normally covered at GCSE (such as in English Literature); units of study not normally studied at that level, (for example the study of metaphysics and philosophy of mind in PRE).

Bedales Assessed Courses also provide considerable freedom for students to study what interests them. Typically, this entails students focusing in on an area of their choosing. Students might also have considerable choice about how they go about that piece of work.

Content for BACs is devised by the relevant Department, in consultation with the External Moderator, the Assistant Head (Learning & Development) and the Deputy Head (Academic). Small changes (such as changing a set text or switching which period of history is taught in which term) are to be encouraged

as part of a culture of continuous improvement and can be decided upon in Departments. More significant changes (such as introducing a whole new unit or whole new assessment objectives) must be made with the awareness of and in consultation with the Assistant Head (Learning & Development), the Deputy Head (Academic) and the External Moderator.

The Head of Department is responsible for creating suitable supporting documentation for the course, including but not limited to:

- Syllabus.
- Assessment Objectives.
- Schemes of Assessment/Mark Schemes.
- Schemes of Work.
- Transcript.

Following some work completed with a working party on BACs, and feedback from Heads of Departments, templates for BAC documentation have been created. Departments are working towards achieving consistency in documentation for September 2024.

Assessment Principles

Bedales Assessed Courses are internally assessed and externally moderated qualifications.

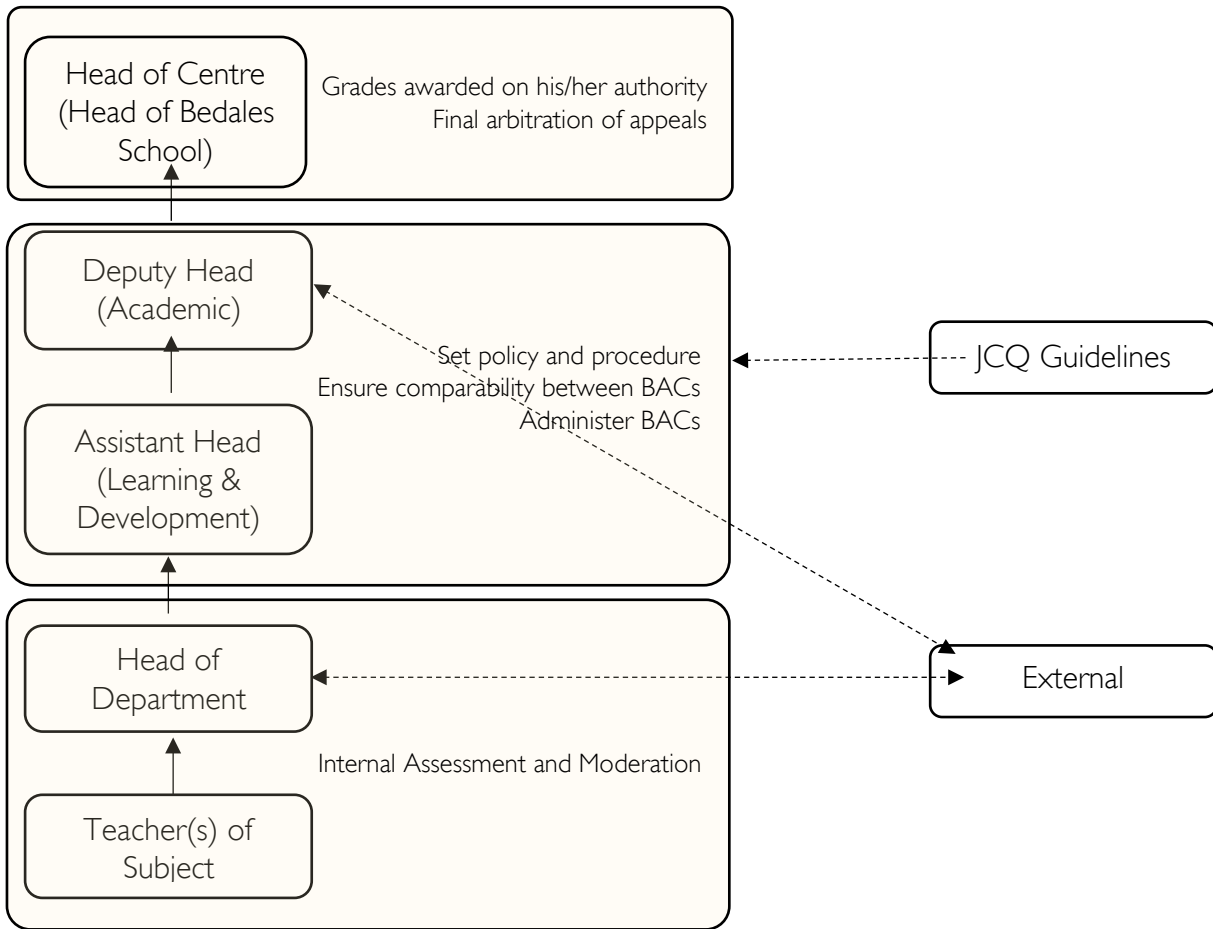
Achievement is assessed through coursework and non-examination assessments, as defined by the JCQ.

Procedures for administering assessments are in accordance with JCQ guidelines, or as close to this as possible, while maintaining the distinctiveness and integrity of our own qualifications.

Internally assessed work for Bedales Assessed Courses (BACs) is marked by the School and moderated by the external moderator appointed by the School.

The final mark is awarded on the authority of the Head of Bedales School.

BAC Organisational Chart



The Role of the Moderator

Bedales Assessed Courses are internally assessed and externally moderated. The moderator is someone with the depth of experience required to judge the standards of BAC work. The moderator is someone who is independent of Bedales, and therefore able to take an impartial view.

Moderators are approached by the School, usually on the recommendation of the Department, since members of the Department are most likely to know of suitable subject specialists. Departments should always consult with the Assistant Head (Learning & Development) or the Deputy Head (Academic) prior to changing moderators. On the whole, moderators serve for around 4 years. This is in order to avoid the problem of 'going native', where moderators no longer have objectivity. It also enables us to consult a number of experts over the years.

Moderators are chosen for their expertise in the following areas:

- Subject expertise.
- Teaching experience.
- Understanding of assessment.
- Experience assessing at GCSE Level.

Past BAC moderators have included: retired Chief Examiners; experienced classroom practitioners; University lecturers working in ITT and Education.

The key duties of a moderator are

- To moderate a sample of BAC assessed work, advising of any changes to marks.
- To comment and advise on assessment procedure.
- To comment and advise on curriculum and assessment.
- To be a sounding board and 'critical friend' to Heads of Department.
- To attend an annual moderators meeting (via Teams).
- To write a report following each moderation cycle.

Moderators' decisions on marks are to be taken as final. The Head of Centre may revert to the moderator if an appeal is made. Moderators' suggestions about curriculum and new directions for the course are advisory only.

Expectations and Procedures: Completion of Work

Guidance for Students

Guidance for students on principles and expectations relating to non-examination assessments and coursework in all qualifications is publicly available on the main School website.

Task setting

The Head of Department takes responsibility for ensuring that coursework tasks and non-examination assessments set for the candidates are properly related to the syllabus for the qualification.

Assessed work might take many forms, including but not limited to: essay; portfolio; performance; artefact.

Assessment Objectives and any specific marking criteria for that task should be shared with and explained to students.

Timings and deadlines

Within each department, candidates will be given adequate, appropriate and equal time to produce coursework. Heads of Department are responsible for setting hand-in dates, and teachers in the department must not change these. Hand-in dates will be published in advance on the Parent Portal BAC Calendar and to students and parents via Teams Assignments Firefly. Details of non-examination assessments will also be shared in advance.

Where multiple classes have lessons on different days, it may be necessary to have deadlines for, for example, drafts, on different days. It is the Head of Department's responsibility to make sure that this is done in an equitable way, so one class does not get more time or support than another.

Deadlines for final submission should be added to the BAC calendar, which is shared with parents. This enables the School to avoid clashes in deadlines and unnecessary burdening of students.

Coursework must be handed in by the departmental deadlines specified in the schedule. Departments may set intermediate deadlines to facilitate formative feedback. The Head of Department must agree the level of support available with teachers, and what is offered must be equitable between classes. For example, one draft should be read and feedback given, and the level of detail in this feedback should be comparable between teachers. Some students should not be able to get feedback on more than one draft.

BAC coursework deadlines are fixed and in the absence of an official extension late submission will be penalised, as detailed below.

Extensions to the submission of intermediate pieces of work may be given by the relevant Head of Department; extension to the submission of final portfolios or the re-arrangement of non-examination assessments must be agreed in writing by the Deputy Head (Academic) Assistant Head (Learning & Development) using the Extension Request form (Appendix 4).

ICT and Student Work

Departments must encourage students in the strongest terms to save, or at least back up, their work onto the cloud-based storage options provided by the School (N drive or One Drive). Teachers should demonstrate to students how to do this and explain the benefits to them in terms of not losing work, should their laptop break.

Should a student disregard this advice, and work is lost, there will be no guarantee that extensions will be given.

Collaborative Projects

Where an assignment may be undertaken as part of a group, students may collaborate in the construction of the product (performance, project etc) but their individual contribution must be clearly identifiable, and it is on this that they will be assessed. 5 marks of the 55 available for the GP collaborative project are awarded for collaboration.

How much teachers can help

Feedback may be given on draft coursework, or may be done more iteratively, as would be appropriate for groups choreographing a dance, for example. It should be made clear to students how much help they can expect from teachers. For example, if the Department offers one draft deadline, teachers must not mark additional drafts.

Teachers must not give credit to any additional assistance given beyond the normal expectations but should assess the work a student completed themselves.

Examples of additional assistance could include:

- Providing writing frames or paragraph headings so students are told what to write.
- Giving such detailed corrections or notes on omissions that leave no room for student initiative.

The Department, in each case, will be the final arbiter of what is appropriate scaffolding to give to an assessed task. Scaffolding offered to some must be available to all. Teachers should share resources and best practices to ensure students are equitably well prepared.

Candidates are free to revise and re-draft their work without teacher involvement as many times as they wish prior to final submission.

How much students can help

Students sharing ideas is a very natural part of learning. When completing coursework, it is essential that students do not share their own work with other candidates, in part or in its entirety.

Candidates must not solicit or accept offers of work from previous years' candidates as exemplars, except as they are provided by the Department.

How much parents can help

Parents/Guardians should encourage their children to take their assignments seriously, and to be working on it in good time. It is a wonderful thing when parents are able to take an interest in the work, and perhaps make suggestions for things to think about, or something to read.

However, as JCQ guidance states, they must not "give direct advice on what should or should not be included".

Filming/Photographing Children and Young People

If videos or photographs/images of candidates are included as evidence of individual participation, Heads of Department must consult the list of parental consents held by External Relations and approach parents for permission if this has not already been given.

As set out elsewhere in School policy, any filming or photographing of students should be done using School devices.

Expectations and Procedures: Submission of Work

JCQ guidelines distinguish between draft and final submission. Work may be submitted in draft form to teachers for guidance, though the Department must set parameters on how much support is offered. The support offered must be the same for everyone (see 'How much to Help', above).

Final submissions of work must be taken as such. Once work is submitted, it cannot be edited or added to. If a student attempts to add to work after the final submission, or if a teacher allows a student to redraft following a final submission, this is to be considered malpractice.

Currently, departments have different practices with regards to final submission of work. In some BAC subjects, each piece is handed in as it is completed. In others, a final portfolio is submitted at the end of Spring Term in Block 5, i.e. at the end of the course.

Authentication of work

Work submitted by the candidate must be authenticated (by signed and dated form) as original work. A Coursework Submission Form must be completed at Final Submission. Irregularities in coursework or non-assessed examinations discovered prior to the student signing a declaration of authentication will be dealt as an internal disciplinary matter.

If a student is found to have submitted authenticated work that breaches the principles of academic integrity, they may be disqualified from the qualification and other Bedales qualifications as appropriate.

An indicative, but not exhaustive list of breaches of academic integrity includes:

- Candidate asks someone else to produce all or part of a piece of coursework on their behalf.
- Candidate asks someone else to sit an assessment on their behalf.
- Candidate submits work that was completed by another candidate, from the current or previous cohorts.
- Candidate passes off research material as their own work.
- Candidate hands in work that was generated by an AI author.

Teachers may make use of Turnitin software and/or ask students to talk about their work in person if there is a concern about academic integrity.

Shortfall in Coursework Procedure & Missing Non-examination Assessment

Sometimes, there is a shortfall in a candidate's coursework submission, or a candidate misses a non-examination assessment through no fault of their own. These reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Illness, both mental and physical.
- Pastoral concerns, such as bereavement.
- Starting Bedales late.

If a student is absent, missing crucial time working on a project, or missing a submission date, an extension can be given to enable the student to produce the work. Applications for an extension should be made initially to the Head of Department, who will discuss it with the Assistant Head (Learning & Development) or the Deputy Head (Academic) before confirming in writing whether an extension has been granted. This process should take no more than three working days. As a rule of thumb, an extension will be equal to the number of days missed from school. This will, however, be considered on a case-by-case basis.

On occasions, illness or pastoral concerns will mean a student misses an assignment altogether. In this case, and only with the agreement of the Deputy Head (Academic), we will apply the special consideration procedure.

Just as would be required for Public Exams, the School reserves the right to request a medical note when extensions are being requested on the grounds of illness. This is, in part, to guide the School in what extensions are appropriate.

Mid-Year starters

Sometimes, a candidate will start at Bedales mid-year, for example in January of Block 4, having missed a term's work. Should a coursework or non-exam assessment have been missed because the student was not yet on roll, the first preference is for the student to catch up with that work and complete the whole

course. If this is not possible, for example, because it is not possible to catch up on the missed teaching, or because the assignment was collaborative, then we apply the Special Consideration procedure.

Students changing courses

Students make their choices for courses in good time in Block 3. At the beginning of the Academic Year in Block 4, a window is provided that allows for late course changes of around one month. This window closes late enough to allow students to have a really good taster of their courses, but early enough to facilitate a change of course without too much on which to catch up.

Changes to BAC courses later than this are not normally recommended, unless it is possible for a student to catch up without a problem. Should a student want to switch courses having missed an assignment, this must only be done with the approval of the relevant Heads of Department, parents, tutor, Houseparent, Head of Year and, finally, the Deputy Head (Academic). Should this change be approved, the student would be expected to complete any missed work. The Special Consideration procedure does not, therefore, apply in this case.

Special Consideration

If a student is absent for an acceptable reason from a non-examination assessment and it cannot be rescheduled before the final moderation process commences or is there is a shortfall in coursework that cannot be caught up, it may be possible in exceptional circumstances for Special Consideration to be made.

The following criteria must be met:

- All of the assessment objectives must have been covered at least once in the work the candidate has submitted.
- Candidates must have been fully prepared for the course but unable to finish the work.
- Candidates must have submitted at least 50% of work for assessment.

Where Special Consideration has been granted and there is an allowable shortfall of coursework or non-examination assessment, the School will follow the 'Estimating the missing mark when a candidate is absent from an examination' process as outlined by JCQ under the direction of the Assistant Head (Learning & Development), the Deputy Head (Academic), the relevant Head of Department and the external moderator.

Non-Submission and Late Submission of Work

The BAC subjects are committed to following the same guidelines and principles of fairness as would apply to any other piece of coursework. If coursework has not been submitted by the deadline and no extension or special consideration has been agreed Departments will trigger a penalty procedure as follows:

A penalty of five three (35) percentage points of the total mark for that task per day will be applied to coursework submitted after a published BAC deadline. These are published on the School website early in the Autumn Term. This is applicable up to a maximum of 10 days, and a 50% penalty, after which no mark will be awarded.

Weekend days are not excluded from this policy, i.e. if a piece of work is submitted on the Monday after a Friday deadline, a 106% penalty will apply. The percentage penalty is to be deducted after the mark is awarded and is not a percentage of the final mark. E.g. a piece of work submitted two days late, and marked at 59% will be awarded 5349%. In circumstances in which a reduction produces marks other than integers, the reduced mark should be rounded up or down to the closest integer.

It should be noted that some subjects have interim deadlines for pieces of work that may or may not be included in a final assessed portfolio. This policy does not apply to those pieces of work, which will be dealt with by the Head of Department. These deadlines are to be distinguished from the published final submission dates.

Candidates will be made aware of this policy, and of the publication of all BAC deadlines.

Expectations and Procedures: marking of Work and Internal Moderation

Assessment of Work

Assessment of work must be against the published criteria. Credit must not be given, nor should it be withheld, on any other grounds. Teachers should annotate work, either on the script itself or on an appended feedback sheet, or both. These annotations must make it clear on what grounds a mark has been awarded. Marking may be done electronically (for example, using the comment feature on Word).

It is good practice to keep copies of marked draft work, and to provide this for the moderator to see, in case this is informative for them.

Staff training and internal moderation

Consistency of internal assessment will be secured through the departmental mark scheme or marking criteria, moderation. Where more than one member of staff carries out assessments, internal moderation of all tasks will take place. This could be achieved by:

- A prior standardization process.
- Moderation of a selection of work by the Department.
- 'Sampling' by the Head of Department to check standards.
- Joint marking of an assessment.

Heads of Department are free to determine which internal moderation process is appropriate for the assessment and taking into account the experience of the Department. Where members of staff are new, it may be appropriate to do a prior standardization process, and a moderation process.

'Rough Equivalence'

Bedales Assessed Courses are designed to have 'Rough Equivalence' with GCSE standards. Work that should achieve grade n at GCSE should therefore achieve this grade at BAC. BACs, like GCSEs, are graded 1-9.

The reason we aim for 'rough equivalence' and not absolute parity is:

- Our assessment methods are often different from GCSEs.
- Some of our subjects are not offered at GCSE.
- Some of our assessments are completed in Block 4, when students are younger than they would be when GCSE exams are taken.

Appeals procedure

Candidates wishing to appeal against the handling of coursework should follow the Whole-School appeals procedure.

If a candidate believes that his or her coursework has not been assessed fairly or that an extension to a coursework deadline was denied without good cause, he or she may have recourse to the appeals procedure. No representation from candidates relating to the mark allocated for internally assessed coursework and non-examination assessments is permissible unless on procedural grounds.

Academic Malpractice Serious Incident Form

Please complete separate forms for each student alleged to have committed malpractice.

Name of student		Block 4	Block 5
BAC Subject			
Teacher registering concern			

Outline of concern

Comment by BAC Head of Department (if appropriate)

Investigation and Comments by BAC Head of Department, unless complainant, then another BAC Head of Department

Comments and Recommendation: Deputy Head (Academic)

Allegation: PROVED UNPROVED

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Requests for Extensions to Coursework Submission Dates

Please read the *Bedales School Procedures relating to Coursework* statement before completing this form.

Student Name (Surname, Forename)	
BAC Subject	
Person seeking extension (if not pupil)	
Reason for seeking extension	Medical / Pastoral / Confidential
Authorised by Head of Department	
Authorised by Deputy Head (Academic)	
Original (published) submission date	
New agreed submission date	
Documentation Attached	Yes / No

Signature of Deputy Head (Academic) _____

Date: _____

Confidentiality Statement: Any supporting material for this request will be retained securely for the length of time determined by Data Protection legislation, and will be destroyed confidentially,

Missing Work and Incomplete Submissions

Student's Full Name		
BAC Course and Year of Award		
Title(s) / Nature of Missing Work		
Value of piece within BAC qualification (if more than 50%, please seek further guidance from the Head of BACs)		
Reason for work's absence from portfolio	<p>Inadvertent destruction of work</p> <p>Student Loss (give details)</p> <p>School Loss (give details)</p>	
Is it proposed to award marks based on supporting evidence from subject teachers and HoDs? (Please seek guidance re supporting evidence)	Y / N	
Please provide supporting evidence		

Agreement to award marks:	Deputy Head (Academic)
Moderator comment and signature (must signed off before the qualification can be awarded)	

Requests for *Special Consideration* award for BAC qualifications

CONFIDENTIAL

All requests for Special Consideration are treated in line with JCQ recommendations.

Student Name (Surname, Forename)	
BAC Subject	
Reason for seeking Special Consideration award (see mandatory attached paperwork)	Medical / Pastoral / Confidential
Authorised by Head of Department	
Authorised by Deputy Head (Academic)	
Comment by Moderator	
Grade awarded on raw marks	
Agreed grade after Special Consideration	

Head of Department _____

Date: _____

Deputy Head (Academic) _____

Date: _____

Confidentiality Statement:

Any supporting material for this request will be retained securely for the length of time determined by Data Protection legislation and will be destroyed confidentially.