

Internal Policy: Learner Appeals Procedure

Purpose

This policy outlines the procedure for learners to appeal against assessment decisions made by our company. As an independent training provider approved to deliver qualifications by an awarding body, we are committed to ensuring that all assessments are fair, consistent, and conducted in line with both our internal standards and the requirements of the awarding body.

Scope

This policy applies to all learners who are enrolled in any qualification program delivered by the company. It covers appeals related to assessment decisions, including grading, feedback, and overall outcomes.

Responsibilities

- **Tutor/Assessor:** Responsible for conducting assessments in a fair and transparent manner, providing clear feedback, and documenting all assessment decisions within the guidance provided by the awarding organisation.
- **Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) (outsourced):** Responsible for ensuring that the assessment process meets the standards required by the awarding body and that the assessor's decisions are consistent and fair.
- **Learners:** Responsible for raising concerns about assessment decisions in a timely manner, following the procedure outlined in this policy.

Grounds for Appeal

Learners may appeal an assessment decision on the following grounds:

- **Procedural Error:** Where there has been an error in the assessment process that may have affected the outcome.
- **Bias or Unfair Treatment:** Where the learner believes that the assessor has not conducted the assessment impartially.
- **Assessment Outcome:** Where the learner believes that the assessment decision does not accurately reflect their performance or the evidence provided.

Appeals Procedure

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- **Timeframe:** Within 5 working days of receiving the assessment decision.
- **Process:** The learner should first discuss their concerns directly with the tutor/assessor, verbally or via e-mail. The tutor/assessor will review the assessment decision and provide a response, aiming to resolve the issue informally.

- **Outcome:** If the learner is satisfied with the explanation or any adjustments made, the appeal process ends here.

Step 2: Formal Appeal

- **Timeframe:** Within 10 working days of receiving the assessment decision.
- **Process:** If the learner is not satisfied with the informal resolution, they may submit a formal written appeal to the company's internal quality assurance (IQA) provider. The appeal must include:
 - The learner's name and contact details.
 - The details of the assessment decision being appealed.
 - The grounds for the appeal and any supporting evidence.
- **Acknowledgement:** The company will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 working days.

Step 3: Internal Review by Independent IQA

- **Timeframe:** The independent IQA will review the appeal within 10 working days of receiving it.
- **Process:** The independent IQA will:
 - Review the assessment records, the learner's appeal, and any other relevant documentation.
 - Consult with the tutor/assessor and/or internal IQA if necessary.
 - Make an independent judgment on the appeal.
- **Outcome:** The learner and tutor will receive a written response from the independent IQA, including the decision and the rationale behind it. The decision will be either:
 - **Uphold the Appeal:** Where the appeal is upheld, the independent IQA may recommend re-assessment, adjustments to the assessment outcome, or other appropriate actions.
 - **Reject the Appeal:** Where the appeal is not upheld, the original assessment decision will stand.

Step 4: Appeal to Awarding Body

- **Process:** If the learner is not satisfied with the outcome of the internal review, they have the right to escalate the appeal to the awarding body in exceptional circumstances in line with the awarding body's 'Enquiries and Appeals Policy'. The learner will be provided with information on how to do this, including contact details for the awarding body.

Confidentiality and Record Keeping

- All appeals will be handled confidentially and in accordance with the company's data protection policy.
- Records of appeals, decisions, and any resulting actions will be maintained securely for a minimum of three years.