

Appeals Policy and Procedure

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Version Control

Version	Date	Author	Changes
1.0	07/08/2024	Elaine Nicholson	Initial policy creation
1.1	30/08/2025	Patsy Crocker	Reviewed for completeness
2.0	Jan 2026	Sophie Gilmore	Comprehensive revision: expanded scope, detailed procedures with timeframes, enhanced responsibilities, regulatory alignment

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a clear, fair, and transparent process for learners and apprentices to appeal against assessment decisions made by Hybrid Training Centre (HTC). It ensures that all appeals are handled consistently, impartially, and in accordance with awarding organisation requirements and regulatory expectations.

The appeals process is designed to:

- Enable learners to enquire, question, or appeal against assessment decisions they believe to be incorrect
- Facilitate early resolution through informal dialogue between the learner and assessor
- Provide a structured escalation pathway when informal resolution is not achieved
- Ensure openness, fairness, and consistency through standardised recording and tracking
- Protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of qualifications
- Facilitate the right of appeal to awarding organisations when internal processes have been exhausted

2. Scope

2.1 Who Can Appeal

This policy applies to:

- Apprentices enrolled on any HTC apprenticeship programme
- Learners undertaking Skills Bootcamp programmes
- Commercial learners enrolled on accredited qualifications
- Any individual whose work has been assessed by HTC for the purpose of certification

2.2 Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be submitted where a learner believes:

- The assessment decision was not made in accordance with the assessment criteria
- The assessment process was not conducted fairly or in line with HTC procedures
- There were extenuating circumstances that were not properly considered
- Administrative or procedural errors affected the outcome
- The published assessment procedures were not followed

2.3 What Cannot Be Appealed

This policy does not cover:

- Disagreement with the academic judgement of an assessor where proper procedures were followed
- Complaints about teaching quality (refer to Complaints Policy)
- Matters relating to discrimination or harassment (refer to Equality and Diversity Policy)
- Outcomes of malpractice or maladministration investigations (refer to Malpractice Policy)

3. Key Definitions

Appeal: A formal request for review of an assessment decision.

Appellant: The learner or apprentice submitting an appeal.

Assessor: The individual who made the original assessment decision.

Internal Quality Assurer (IQA): The individual responsible for verifying assessment decisions and maintaining quality standards.

Curriculum Lead: The manager responsible for a particular curriculum area or qualification.

Working days: Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays and HTC closure days.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Head of Quality

- Overall responsibility for the appeals policy and procedure
- Ensuring appeals are handled consistently and in accordance with awarding organisation requirements
- Maintaining the Appeals Register and reporting trends to the Senior Leadership Team
- Liaising with awarding organisations on external appeals
- Ensuring appeals records are retained for inspection

4.2 Curriculum Leads

- Chairing Stage 3 appeal hearings
- Ensuring assessment decisions within their area comply with policy and awarding organisation requirements

- Implementing any remedial actions arising from appeal outcomes

4.3 Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs)

- Supporting assessors in reviewing decisions at Stage 2
- Providing independent verification of assessment decisions
- Participating in Stage 3 appeal panels

4.4 Assessors

- Conducting assessments in accordance with procedures and assessment criteria
- Providing clear and constructive feedback on assessment decisions
- Engaging constructively in informal discussions with appellants at Stage 1
- Reviewing decisions objectively at Stage 2 in consultation with the IQA

4.5 Learners and Apprentices

- Submitting appeals in accordance with the published procedure and timeframes
- Providing clear reasons and any supporting evidence for the appeal
- Engaging constructively with the appeals process
- Accepting reasonable support offered to prepare their appeal

5. Appeals Procedure

The appeals process follows three internal stages, with an external route available after internal processes are exhausted. Learners are encouraged to attempt informal resolution at the earliest stage.

STAGE 1: INFORMAL RESOLUTION

Timeframe: Within 5 working days of receiving assessment decision

The learner should first discuss their concerns directly with their assessor. This informal conversation aims to:

- Clarify the assessment decision and feedback provided
- Address any misunderstandings about assessment criteria
- Identify whether there are grounds for a formal review

If the matter is resolved, no further action is required. If unresolved, the learner may proceed to Stage 2.

STAGE 2: FORMAL REVIEW

Timeframe: Submit within 5 working days of Stage 1 outcome; Response within 10 working days

The learner submits a written request for formal review to the assessor (or Head of Quality), including:

- Details of the assessment decision being appealed
- Clear reasons why they believe the decision should be reconsidered
- Any supporting evidence

The assessor reviews the decision in consultation with the IQA and meets with the learner to explain the outcome. The decision is recorded in writing.

Support: Learners may request additional time to prepare their appeal or assistance in writing their submission.

STAGE 3: APPEAL HEARING

Timeframe: Submit within 5 working days of Stage 2 outcome; Hearing within 15 working days

If dissatisfied with the Stage 2 outcome, the learner may request a formal appeal hearing in writing to the Curriculum Lead or Head of Quality.

Appeal Panel Composition:

- Curriculum Lead or Head of Quality (Chair)
- Internal Quality Assurer (who was not involved at Stage 2)
- The original assessor

The learner may attend the hearing and present their case. The panel reviews all evidence and makes a final decision, confirmed in writing within 5 working days.

The Stage 3 decision is final within HTC. Further appeal is only available on procedural grounds (via the Complaints Procedure) or to the awarding organisation.

6. External Appeals

Where a learner has exhausted the internal appeals process and remains dissatisfied, they may escalate their appeal to the relevant awarding organisation. HTC will:

- Provide the learner with information about the awarding organisation's appeals procedure
- Supply the awarding organisation with all relevant documentation upon request
- Cooperate fully with any external investigation
- Implement any decisions or recommendations made by the awarding organisation

Key awarding organisation appeals procedures:

- City & Guilds: Appeals Policy and Procedures (available at cityandguilds.com)
- Pearson/BTEC: Qualifications Appeals Process (available at qualifications.pearson.com)
- JCQ qualifications: Joint Council for Qualifications appeals guidance (jcq.org.uk)

7. Timeframes Summary

Stage	Submission Deadline	Response Time
Stage 1: Informal	Within 5 working days of result	Immediate discussion
Stage 2: Formal Review	Within 5 working days of Stage 1	10 working days
Stage 3: Appeal Hearing	Within 5 working days of Stage 2	Hearing within 15 days; decision within 5 days
External Appeal	Per awarding organisation rules	Per awarding organisation rules

8. Recording and Monitoring**8.1 Appeals Register**

All formal appeals (Stage 2 onwards) are recorded in the Appeals Register, which includes:

- Date received and appellant details
- Qualification and assessment concerned
- Grounds for appeal
- Outcome at each stage
- Timeframes achieved
- Any actions taken as a result

8.2 Retention

Appeals records are retained for a minimum of 3 years (or longer where required by the awarding organisation) and are available for inspection by awarding organisations, Ofsted, and other regulatory bodies.

8.3 Quality Improvement

Appeals data is analysed termly and reported to the Senior Leadership Team to identify trends, recurring issues, and opportunities for improving assessment practice.

9. Protection of Learner Interests

HTC is committed to ensuring that:

- No learner is disadvantaged for submitting an appeal in good faith
- Appellants are treated with respect throughout the process
- Support is available for learners who need assistance preparing their appeal
- Where an appeal reveals that other learners may have been affected by the same issue, appropriate remedial action is taken
- Confidentiality is maintained to the extent possible

10. Related Documents

- Assessment Policy and Procedures
- Internal Verification Strategy and Process
- Complaints Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head of Quality or sooner if required by changes to awarding organisation requirements, regulatory guidance, or internal processes. Any amendments are recorded in the version control table and communicated to relevant staff.

Policy Approval

Signature:

Date:

Sophie Gilmore
Group Chief Executive Officer