

Appeals Policy and Process - Qualifications

Regulatory References: I1, I2

Purpose

This policy aims to outline the steps a centre must take when submitting an appeal.

Who does this policy/process apply to?

This policy is aimed at centres and learners, who are using, or have used, any of the products or services offered by Innovate Awarding, and want to submit an appeal regarding:

- The results of assessments
- Decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations
- Decisions relating to any action to be taken against a learner or a centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration, or decisions relating to Recognition of Prior Learning
- The way in which a complaint has been handled

When to use this policy

Appeals can be made by the Head of Centre or manager (Appellant) on behalf of the learner, or a cohort of learners. An appeal can be submitted initially as an enquiry or Stage 1 appeal. Stage 2 appeals can only be submitted after a Stage 1 appeal.

'Appellant' refers to the person who requests the appeal.

The Policy

Response times

We will acknowledge receipt of all appeals within 2 working days. A decision will be made and communicated to you within a maximum of:

- 5 working days following acknowledgement for an Enquiry Stage appeal
- 10 working days following acknowledgement for a Stage 1 appeal
- 20 working days following acknowledgement for a Stage 2 appeal

Fees

Enquiry Stage £15.00
Stage 1 appeal £50.00
Stage 2 appeal £500.00

All* appeals will be charged if the appeal is not upheld.

*We do not make any charges for appeals against malpractice decisions, access arrangements, centre approval decisions or other procedural decisions.

Where other learners may be affected by Innovate Awarding decisions

In cases where the result or outcome of an appeal may affect other learners or centres, appropriate action will be taken depending on the nature of the appeal.

This action could include a full review of standardisation procedures or processes, training for Innovate Awarding or centre staff, additional sampling of learner assessments or additional quality assurance support to the centre.

We will always keep learners and centres informed of our actions.

How to appeal

The enquiry or appeal request **must** be made within **10 working days** of the centre or learner being informed of the decision or outcome. The correct forms must be completed.

Learners who wish to appeal their assessment results, or a decision affecting their learning/achievement, should either be supported by the centre, or have already exhausted the Centre Appeals process if the appeal is related to a qualification that is centre marked. The centre should submit the appeal on behalf of the learner using the appropriate form.

For appeals against qualification decisions there are three stages to the appeal process.

Enquiry Stage – This is a review of decisions regarding results for exams and other externally marked assessments or sanctions given following any EQA activity. The review will consider if we've correctly and fairly applied our relevant policies, processes and procedures relating to the original decision. This stage **does not** involve any remarking of the learner's work. This will be reviewed by the Qualifications Delivery Manager (QDM) or other appropriate Manager in their absence. If the enquiry stage appeal is not upheld, a charge of £15.00 will be incurred by the centre.

The findings and results of this review will take no longer than 5 working days. If the centre or learner is not satisfied with the outcome of the enquiry stage, the appellant can submit the appeal for Stage 1 within 5 working days of the enquiry outcome on behalf of the learner.

Stage 1 – This is a review of the assessment decision (review of marking). This is conducted by an Innovate Awarding employee, who was not part of the original decision but who is qualified to verify assessments. The findings and results of this review will take no longer than 10 working days. As this will be a reassessment if the reviewer does not agree with the original grade, it could be downgraded or upgraded. If the Stage 1 appeal is not upheld, a charge of £50.00 will be incurred by the centre. If the centre or learner is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, the appellant can submit the appeal for Stage 2 within 5 working days of the Stage 1 outcome on behalf of the learner.

Stage 2 – The appeal goes to an appeal panel and all paperwork and decisions are reviewed. The appeals panel's decision is final. If the Stage 2 appeal is not upheld, a charge of £500.00 will be incurred by the centre. We will inform the appellant and learner as soon as possible, but always within 20 working days of receipt of the Stage 2 appeal.

The process

An appropriate stage appeal form must be submitted in writing to Innovate Awarding using the relevant stage appeal form; copies can be downloaded from QuartzWeb or our website www.innovateawarding.org

The forms prompt the centre for the information we require, and these forms and any supporting documentation should be sent to Innovate Awarding.

By email to:

compliance@innovateawarding.org

Or by post:

FAO Compliance
Innovate Awarding
Block F
291 Paintworks
Arnos Vale
BS4 3AW

Next Steps

Enquiry Stage

The enquiry will be reviewed by the CEM, or other appropriate Manager in their absence who may ask for additional information. This will be a clerical review that will check the correct process for marking the learners work was followed and recorded correctly. It will also ensure where appropriate that any grade boundaries have been applied correctly.

They will consider the enquiry and inform the centre or learner as soon as possible of their decision, but always within 5 working days of receipt of the enquiry stage appeal.

If the centre or learner is **not satisfied** with the outcome of the enquiry, a Stage 1 appeal may be submitted by completing the **relevant form** within **5 working days**.

Stage 1

The appeal will be reviewed by a Marker or other appropriate member of staff depending on the nature of the appeal, who was not involved in the original assessment decision. They will also complete the clerical check as described in the enquiry stage. They will check that the mark scheme was applied correctly, and no administration errors have occurred.

The Marker or other appropriate staff member will review all the assessment materials and make a decision regarding the Stage 1 appeal. We will inform the centre or learner as soon as possible, but always within 10 working days of receipt of the Stage 1 appeal.

If the centre or learner is **not satisfied** with the Stage 1 appeal outcome, the appellant can request it is progressed to Stage 2. This must be done by completing and submitting the **relevant form** within **5 working days** of receiving the results of the Stage 1 appeal.

Stage 2

The appeal will be reviewed by Innovate Awarding's appeals panel.

This panel comprises of a minimum of 5 of the following people:

- Independent person with knowledge of the awarding sector (this person's participation on the panel is compulsory).
- Managing Director of Innovate Awarding*
- Director of Compliance*
- Director of Product and Assessment Services

- Head of Development
- Development Manager with subject specialism
- Head of Regulations and Standards
- Technical Assessment Manager
- Compliance Event Manager
- Qualifications Customer Support Manager
- Qualifications Delivery Manager
- Appellant (if they choose to attend). A total of two people can attend comprising of: appellant/learner/provider representative.

*One of these two will chair the meeting

A member of the Regulation and Compliance Team will attend the meeting to take notes.

They will meet to review all the evidence submitted and the procedures followed to ensure we have applied them consistently and fairly and in line with our policy. The appellant and/or learner will be invited to attend the meeting in person/via Microsoft Teams depending on how the meeting is being conducted. Although the appellant and/or learner can attend the panel meeting, they are not permitted to contribute to the meeting/discussion unless input is requested by the panel.

The panel may ask for additional information or request a visit to a centre.

The decision of this panel is final, and we will inform the appellant and learner as soon as possible, but always within 20 working days of receipt of the Stage 2 appeal.

Help and guidance

If you would like to talk to an Innovate Awarding member of staff about any aspect of this policy or process, then please email us at compliance@innovateawarding.org.

Associated policies/documents

- Enquiry Form
- Stage 1 Appeals form
- Stage 2 Appeals form
- Qualification Reasonable Adjustment and Special Considerations Policy and Procedure
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy and Procedure
- Complaints Policy and Procedure