
Appeals Policy

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1 Introduction and Policy Statement

EduQual performs and maintains comprehensive quality assurance processes and procedures. These procedures are designed to safeguard EduQual's integrity as a business and as an Awarding Body, and are also designed to ensure the validity of EduQual-accredited qualifications and EduQual-accredited assessment methodology. In particular, EduQual maintains up-to-date policies for staff and centres in order to meet any requirements stipulated by regulators.

EduQual assessment and quality assurance procedures are designed to ensure fair results for all learners. However, this Appeals Policy exists to provide support for those learners who may consider that the assessments awarded by their centre (and as confirmed or otherwise by EduQual) do not adequately reflect their performance. In such (presumably rare) cases, an appeal may be made through the centre's own appeal process.

2 Statement for Centres

EduQual expects that the vast majority of appeals made by learners will be resolved within the centre that provides the assessments. **Centres are required to have Enquiries and Appeals policies and procedures in place for all EduQual-accredited qualifications and units.** (Guidance on Centre Appeals Processes may be obtained from EduQual once a centre has become accredited by EduQual.)

When a centre's appeal process has been exhausted without adequate resolution, then a direct appeal may be made to EduQual.

3 The EduQual Appeals Process

Appeals regarding assessment can be made where a learner believes that EduQual procedures and policies (and/or those of the regulatory authorities) were not properly followed.

Examples of acceptable grounds for appeals against verification decisions might include circumstances when:

- The learner believes that internal and/or external quality assurance processes were not followed
- The learner believes that the 'marking' of externally-set assignments is not accurate or consistent.

3.1 Making an Appeal to EduQual

In order to make an appeal, the learner must write to the EduQual Director of Compliance, Quality and Qualifications (DCQQ) **within 14 calendar days** of exhausting their centre's own appeal process. The learner's appeal request should include a clear statement of the grounds on which they are making the appeal and, wherever possible, be supported by additional evidence.

There is an appeal fee of £100, which is refundable in full in the event that the appeal is successful. A cheque for this amount, made payable to EduQual Ltd., must be included with the appeal statement. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the learner will not regain this fee.

EduQual will acknowledge the receipt of the appeal request and the fee **within 5 working days of receipt**, and respond to the learner with an indication of the time period within which the appeal will be considered.

3.2 Handling the Appeal within EduQual

Under normal circumstances, EduQual's DCQQ will task the Quality Assurance Manager (QAM) to handle the appeal. The QAM may establish a dedicated, investigative appeals panel chaired independently by an individual who is neither a member of EduQual's staff nor an associate of EduQual.

The QAM and/or panel will investigate the case and prepare a written report.

The report will be sent to the learner within 20 working days of EduQual receiving the learner's initial appeal request.

4 Outline of the Appeals Process

An appeal to EduQual can only be made once the appeals process of the learner's centre has been exhausted and the outcome of that appeal has been communicated clearly and promptly to the learner.

4.1 Responsibility of the Learner

- An appeal to EduQual must be made in writing, and be set out in a clear way that readily identifies the learner's grounds for appeal
- The appeal will be submitted by the learner(s) concerned to EduQual's DCQQ, together with a **fee of £100**. The fee should be sent by the learner as a cheque made payable to EduQual Ltd.
- Appeals sent to EduQual **must be submitted within 14 calendar days** of the notification of the outcome of the original appeal made by the learner to the centre

4.2 Procedure within EduQual

The DCQQ and/or QAM at EduQual will consider the extent to which appropriate procedures were followed in the circumstances leading to or generating the appeal. Considerations made may include scrutiny of:

- Centre quality reports and responses to action plans, as well as procedures for internal assessment and verification
- External quality assurance monitoring
- The setting, administrative and security arrangements for any external assessment tools used

The DCQQ at EduQual may, at his or her option, choose to convene a dedicated appeals panel to deal with the appeal request. The panel will be chaired by an independent expert who is not directly involved with EduQual (including any part of its assessment procedures or its quality assurance

protocols) and/or with the centre concerned. Any declared conflict of interest at this stage (see EduQual's Conflict of Interest Policy) may lead to EduQual's DCQQ assembling a new panel and/or finding a new chairperson.

In addition:

- Consideration of the appeal will focus on whether or not procedures at EduQual are consistent with those of the regulatory authorities, and whether or not they have been properly and fairly applied
- Evidence will be generated and collated by those handling the appeal and will be maintained for a period of 18 months after any final appeal decision has been made

4.3 Outcome of the Appeal

The outcome of the appeal will be communicated in writing to the head of centre and the learner concerned within 20 working days of receipt of the initial appeal request. The outcome will be communicated by or on behalf of EduQual's QAM.

4.4 Regulator recourse

For appeals that relate to EduQual qualifications that are accredited by a UK regulator (e.g. SQA Accreditation), should the complainant be dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal made to EduQual then he/she may consider recourse (i.e. make a complaint) to the regulator. The regulator may then decide to review of the process applied by EduQual to reach the appeal decision. However, it should be noted that the regulator will not consider requests from complainants to reverse assessment decisions / academic judgements. The head of centre will be advised in writing by SQA Accreditation of the outcome of the review.

5 Responsibilities within EduQual for the Appeals Process

The EduQual QAM is accountable to the DCQQ for the following:

- Maintaining of accurate appeals records
- Implementing of any general lessons learnt from ongoing appeals issues
- Regular liaison and sharing of information as appropriate, to ensure consistency and fairness across all aspects of the process outlined in this policy
- Attendance and participation, as appropriate and/or required, at meetings of EduQual's appeals panel