



ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE

Agreed: April 2015 by Performance & Quality Group

To be reviewed: April 2016

It is intended that this procedure is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

1 PURPOSE

All learners are entitled to appeal against an assessment decision or grade in accordance with the College procedure which complies with the requirements of relevant awarding organisations and relevant regulatory authority *Ofqual*.

The assessment process is intended to be planned, transparent, appropriate and fair. The appeals system allows learners who believe that the system does not live up to these aspirations a process within which they can challenge it.

The purpose of this procedure is to support students and staff to appropriately deal with disputes regarding assessment decisions. The support offered through this procedure aims to resolve disputes effectively.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1.1 Staff and learners are partners in the learning and assessment process.
- 1.1.2 Assessment and verification should be undertaken in line with relevant Awarding Organisation requirements.
- 1.1.3 The involvement of staff in the Assessment appeal procedure shall comply with the requirements of the relevant Awarding Organisation.
- 1.1.4 Equal opportunity for all learners.

2 SCOPE

Applicable to all students and staff at all centres of Wiltshire College.

For all appeals **relating to Higher Education assessment decisions**, the academic regulations of the validating University are to be followed.

For all appeals/enquires relating to external assessments/examinations such as GCSE refer to the Exams Policy and/or the Awarding Organisation EAR (Enquiry About Results) procedures

2.1 GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

- 2.1.1 That there were alleged irregularities in the conduct of the assessment. For example inaccurate marking, alleged discrimination or unfairness.
- 2.1.2 That there were circumstances affecting the candidate, which the College staff responsible for the assessment were unaware of, and which may reasonably be considered to have affected the candidate's performance in the assessment.

- 2.1.3** Where assessment decisions made internally contribute to the gaining of an award by a candidate, assessment decisions must be confirmed by the Lead IV/IQA. Until this confirmation is given there can be no appeal.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 STUDENTS

- 3.1.1** The appeals procedure can only be invoked by the individual whose work is the subject of the disputed decision, i.e. it cannot be involved by a third party.

3.2 TUTOR/ASSESSOR (Overseen by Curriculum Manager)

- 3.2.1** Ensure learners are informed of the assessment methodologies used within the course and the grading systems for the qualification;
- 3.2.2** Ensure learners are made aware of and understand the procedures for making an appeal;
- 3.2.3** Follow the appeals procedures as stated below

3.3 QUALITY MANAGER

- 3.3.1** Provide advice and guidance to staff and students on the appeals procedure as required;
- 3.3.2** Make arrangements for and chair stage 3 appeals panels as described below;
- 3.3.3** Review these procedures annually

4 THE APPEALS PROCEDURE

4.1 Internal and External Appeals

Whenever possible the dispute should be resolved within the course team without recourse to the formal appeals procedure. Candidates also have the opportunity to appeal externally to the Awarding Organisation, by following the college procedures or the Awarding Organisation Guidance. Where the College supports the appeal support will be received from the Quality Manager.

4.2 Stage 1 – Informal Review with Assessor

- 4.2.1** Assessor should give a full explanation of the assessment process and how the grading was determined
- 4.2.2** The Assessor may if appropriate, give the student the opportunity to re-submit work by an agreed deadline, within the constraints of the Awarding Organisation regulations.
- 4.2.3** If the student is not satisfied, the Assessor should ensure that the student has a copy of the Assessment Appeal's Procedure, and knows the names of the staff who may be involved in the appeal process or for support

4.3 Stage 2 – Formal Request for Re-Assessment of work

- 4.3.1** If the dispute cannot be resolved informally, the candidate may appeal in writing to the Curriculum Manager. This will be within **five working days of the notification of the failure to resolve the dispute informally**. A written record of the request, dated and signed should be placed in the student's file.
- 4.3.2** The Curriculum Manager shall then make arrangements for the work to be independently re-assessed by a second assessor and IV.
- 4.3.3** A written record of the agreed second marking of the assessment, giving as full an explanation as possible should be signed by the Internal Verifier and second Assessor. A copy should be given to the student and a further copy placed in the Learner's file.

4.4 Stage 3 – Appeal

- 4.4.1** If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, he/she should within 5 working days of receipt of the outcome of Stage 2, lodge an appeal with the Quality Manager. A copy of the appeal shall be placed in the student's file.
- 4.4.2** The Quality Manager will make arrangements for an appeals panel **within ten working days of receiving the appeal**
- 4.4.3** The appeals panel will be composed of:
- The candidate's Curriculum Manager
 - The Lead Internal Verifier (IV), or if there is no Lead IV the Internal Verifier.
 - The Quality Manager.

Where there is a conflict of interest, the College Lead Internal Verifier or another Curriculum Manager may replace any member of the panel.

- 4.4.5** The appeals panel will receive evidence from the candidate and staff member(s) involved, and from other sources, which it considers relevant to the disputed decision. The panel should consider all the evidence, including the original assessment and re- assessment.
- 4.4.6** The panel will consider the appeal in private and will inform the candidate and staff member(s) in writing of the decision of the panel. If the panel cannot reach a decision and require further information all parties will be informed of this within three working days.
- 4.4.7** The outcome of the appeal may be as follows:
- The panel may confirm the original assessment decision.

- Where the grounds on which the appeal was sought are upheld, that is where irregularities in the conduct of the assessment are found, or where there were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance, the panel may declare the assessment invalid and either:
 - Permit re-assessment of the original piece of work or the student may submit an amended piece of work if the awarding board is in agreement.

4.4.8 A signed and dated record of the decision of the panel should be given to the student within 5 working days of the meeting and a further copy placed in the student's file.

4.4.9 The panel may make conditions with which the assessor and /or candidate must comply in the future.

4.4.10 The panel may make recommendations to the Senior Leadership team, through the Quality Manager, relating to future assessment or appeals procedures.

4.4.11 A record of all appeals proceedings and outcomes must be kept centrally.

4.4.12 The College will inform the Awarding Organisation and External Examiner of the outcome of the appeal if it has implications on the centre's results.

4.5 Further Action

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 3, he/she may:

- Use the College Complaints procedure
- Use the relevant Awarding Bodies Appeals/complaints procedure
- Contact the Relevant Regulatory Authority Ofqual <http://www.ofqual.gov.uk>

4.5.1 If the complaint is not resolved by the College Complaints procedures, the learners will have the right, in the case of academic disputes, to appeal to the appropriate awarding body.

4.5.2 If the appeal panel agrees that this is appropriate and supports the appeal; the college will fund the 'Enquiry about Results' (EAR). However, if not and the student disputes the results, the student will have to fund the request for an appeal.

5 Associate Documents (Linked policies etc)

QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Chapter B9: Complaints and appeals

Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy

Exams Policy and Procedure

Awarding Organisation Procedures for EAR/Appeals

6 Monitoring, Review and Evaluation

To be reviewed annually by the Quality Manager