

Internal assessment in vocational qualifications: reviews and appeals policy

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Who and what is this policy for:

This policy is for centres who want to make an appeal against a Pearson decision relating to internal assessment for our vocational qualifications.

We support and encourage reviews and appeals from learners to be resolved within your centre. However, where this has not been possible, you can contact our Vocational Quality Standards Team via the [Pearson Support Portal](#).

Pearson Education Ltd – Our Mission and Values

Welcome to Pearson, the world's learning company. We have a simple mission: to help people make more of their lives through learning. Whether it's at home, in the classroom or in the workplace, learning is the key to improving our life chances. We are the UK's largest awarding body and we are regulated by Ofqual (England), SQA Accreditation (Scotland), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). We offer academic and vocational qualifications that are globally recognised and benchmarked, with educational excellence rooted in names like Edexcel, BTEC, and LCCL.

Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate in a consistent way how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and learners with the design, delivery and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

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1. Scope of policy

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Pearson vocational qualifications where centre based (internal) assessment takes place.
- 1.2 For appeals on General Qualifications (GCSE, GCE, Project and Principal Learning qualifications), external assessments within vocational qualifications (assessments which are set and marked by Pearson) and malpractice sanctions please see the [Post Results Services](#) and A [Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes](#).
- 1.3 For appeals about end-point assessment for apprenticeships please refer to our [policy](#) relating to reviews and appeals for EPA.
- 1.4 Learners taking Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) in England and Wales may have the option to present their appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for students in Higher Education (OIAHE). You can check if your centre is a provider that is covered by the OIA scheme [here](#). Following the OIAHE process does not prevent learners from pursuing a complaint or appeal with us and they may choose whichever route(s) that they feel to be the most appropriate.
- 1.5 You cannot appeal against decisions about centre or qualification approval applications or removal, including where Pearson's terms and conditions have been broken. For further information relating to the removal of centre or programme approval please read our [Policy on the removal of centre or programme approval](#).

About the reviews and appeals process

- 1.6 Centres must have their own policy and procedure on enquiries and appeals for Pearson qualifications. It is important that staff and learners know about the policy and that it is followed. **To support a review or appeal we will ask to see evidence that your internal reviews or appeals procedure has first been fully used.**
- 1.7 Our reviews and appeals procedure will review whether:
- The centre's procedures are consistent with our requirements.
 - The centre's procedures were applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgments.
 - Our external quality assurance activities were consistent with regulatory requirements.
- 1.8 The reviews and appeals process focus on procedure and is not concerned with making judgments about learner work. The process does not normally involve the re-assessment of learner work, but a review may be needed if the outcome of the review or appeal requires it.

2. When to request a review or appeal

- 2.1 There are three stages of reviews or appeal: First stage, review; Second stage, appeal review and Third stage, independent appeals hearing.
- 2.2 A review or appeal can be made where:
- You disagree with the outcome(s) from our external quality assurance activities, for example a Standards Verifier or External Examiner report).
 - You disagree with a qualification decision made by us.
 - A learner disagrees with the outcome of your internal appeals procedure (for example, a decision about assessment outcomes or reasonable adjustments).
- 2.3 While a review or appeal is happening, it is important that you keep all evidence relating to the case. If the review or appeal involves the work of a learner, you will need to keep the work of the whole cohort.

3. Overview of the review and appeals process

First Stage - Reviews

- 3.1 Any reviews about a decision made by us affecting your centre or your learners, including reviews about Standards Verification or External Examiner outcomes, should be communicated to us via the [Pearson Support Portal](#) within 14 working of receiving our decision or results.
- 3.2 Usually centres will make an application on behalf of a learner with their consent. However, learners may also apply directly to us if they have first been through the centre's internal appeals process. Learners who want to enquire about a centres decision which they feel has disadvantaged them, should be communicated to us via the [Pearson Support Portal](#) within 14 working days of being told the outcome of the centre's appeals process.
- 3.3 All cases are reviewed by our assessment experts who have responsibility for the qualification subject.

When to apply: within 14 working days of receiving the decision or result.

How to apply: [Pearson Support Portal](#)

Acknowledgment: we will acknowledge the review within three working days.

Outcome of the application: we will respond to your review within 30 working days of receiving it.

Next step: If you are not happy with the outcome of the review you have 14 working days in which to request that a Preliminary Stage Appeal Investigations is undertaken.

Second Stage – Preliminary Appeal Review

- 3.4** You should make an appeal based only on whether we used procedures that were consistent with the regulatory authorities' requirements and applied our own procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgments. The appeals office may refuse to accept your appeal if no procedural ground is given.
- 3.5** An appeals specialist, with no previous involvement with your case, will review the appeal. The specialist will check all the information against policies and procedures to confirm if correct procedures have been followed.

When to apply: 14 working days of receiving the outcome of the first stage review.

How to apply: [Pearson Support Portal](#)

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge the appeal application within three working days and within 14 working days we will confirm whether the case has been accepted or not.

Outcome of the application: We will write to you with the outcome of the appeal review within 21 working days of confirming our acceptance of the case.

Next step: If you are not happy with the outcome of the appeal review, you may submit a request for an appeal hearing via the [Pearson Support Portal](#).

Third Stage – Pearson Appeal Hearings

- 3.6** Our Appeals Office will accept an appeal if:
- Your Head of Centre makes the appeal in writing within 14 working days of the outcome of the Preliminary Appeal Review.
 - Your centre's appeal process is completed.
 - The preliminary appeal review process or any further work resulting from the review is completed.
- 3.7** The appeal hearing will review evidence to see whether we followed the correct policies and processes.

- 3.8 The hearing is conducted by a panel, normally consisting of three panellists who are independent of Pearson. Panellists are appointed in line with Section 26 of the JCQ Appeals process.
- 3.9 The Appeals Panel will follow the procedure in the JCQ Guide to the Awarding Bodies Appeals Processes.
- 3.10 The Head of your Centre, learner or delegated representative may be asked to attend the hearing. For international centres, the hearing may be held remotely.

When to apply: 14 working days of receiving the outcome of the preliminary appeal review.

How to apply: Pearson Support Portal

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge the application for a hearing within three working days. We have up to 50 working days to hold an appeal hearing.

Outcome of the application: We will write to your head of centre explaining the outcome of the appeals panel within two working days of the hearing.

Next step: This is the last stage of the review and appeals process. A final decision will be made and there is no further route of appeal for vocational qualifications.

4. Feedback and complaints

- 4.1 There is no further stage of appeal to the qualification’s regulators, but you may submit a complaint to the regulators about the way we dealt with your appeal.
- 4.2 Following the completion of the review and appeals process, if you want to submit a complaint to the regulators, you should contact the relevant regulator. These are:

Country	Regulator	Contact
England	Ofqual	complaints@ofqual.gov.uk
Northern Ireland	CCEA Regulation	ccearegulation@ccea.org.uk
Wales	Qualifications Wales	enquiries@qualificationswales.org
Scotland	SQA Accreditation	Online complaint form

5. Fees

- 5.1** For information on fees for reviews or appeals, please visit our website. The fees can be found under the Appeals tab. The latest fees for Reviews of marking and moderation (RoMM) are published here. We reserve the right not to enter discussions on the repayment of any expenses incurred by the centre or third parties about the appeal hearing.
- 5.2** If the review or appeal finds that Pearson made the wrong decision, there will be no charge.

6. Regulatory references

- 6.1** UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies that relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.
- 6.2** This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition, criteria, or principle
Ofqual	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	C2
Ofqual	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	C2.3
Ofqual	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	I1
CCEA	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	C2
CCEA	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	C2.3
CCEA	<u>General Conditions of Recognition</u>	I1
Qualifications Wales	<u>Qualification Wales Standard</u> <u>Conditions of recognition</u>	C2

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition, criteria, or principle
Qualifications Wales	<u>Qualification Wales Standard</u> <u>Conditions of recognition</u>	C2.3
Qualifications Wales	<u>Qualification Wales Standard</u> <u>Conditions of recognition</u>	I1
SQA	<u>Regulatory Principles (2021)</u>	17

7. Policy review date

7.1 This policy will be reviewed in April 2022.

8. Useful contacts

8.1 For more information on Pearson qualifications and services please visit the Delivering BTEC Qualifications section of our website or via the Pearson Support Portal.