

Internal assessment in vocational qualifications reviews and appeals policy

Document summary

This policy is for centres who want to request a review or appeal against a Pearson decision relating to internal assessment of our vocational qualifications.

This policy is also for learners who have completed their centre's appeals process related to internal assessments. We support and encourage reviews and appeals from learners to be resolved within the centre, in line with the centre's policy. However, where the centre process has been completed and a learner has cause to believe the centre's process has not been followed, they can contact Pearson directly.

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Pearson Education Ltd – our mission and values

Our purpose is simple: to help people realize the life they imagine through learning. We believe that every learning opportunity is a chance for a personal breakthrough. That's why our c. 18,000 Pearson employees are committed to creating vibrant and enriching learning experiences designed for real-life impact. We are the world's lifelong learning company, serving customers in nearly 200 countries with digital content, assessments, qualifications, and data. For us, learning isn't just what we do. It's who we are. Visit us at [pearsonplc.com](https://www.pearsonplc.com).

We are regulated by the UK qualifications regulators Ofqual (England), CCEA Regulation (Northern Ireland) and Qualifications Wales (Wales). Our regulatory policies are integral to our approach and articulate how we meet regulatory requirements. These policies are designed to support centres and students and set out clearly our approach to the design, delivery, and award of Pearson qualifications and services.

1. Scope and definition of a review and an appeal

Scope of Policy

- 1.1 This policy applies to all Pearson vocational qualifications where centre marked assessments (internal assessments) takes place.
- 1.2 This policy relates to reviews and appeals from centres or learners against results, malpractice decisions or decisions made in respect of access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations.

What is a review?

- 1.3 A review is the first stage for centres who wish to appeal the outcome(s) of our external quality assurance activities, or a qualification decision made by Pearson. Pearson will conduct a preliminary check that procedures have been followed, and criteria have been reasonably applied.

What is an appeal?

- 1.4 An appeal can be made directly to Pearson by centres in respect of whether the awarding body has made an error on a review of results (review of marking or moderation) or has not applied its procedures consistently, properly or fairly.
- 1.5 For internally assessed qualifications and units, a learner may appeal directly to Pearson if they have completed their centre's internal appeals procedure and have grounds for an appeal against a decision made by the centre in relation to results, malpractice decisions or decisions made in respect of access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations.
- 1.6 For appeals related to General Qualifications (GCSE, GCE, Project and Principal Learning qualifications), external assessments within vocational qualifications (assessments which are set and marked or moderated by Pearson), access arrangements, special consideration or reasonable adjustment appeals and appeals against malpractice decisions/sanctions please see the [Post Results Services](#) information on our website and the JCQ booklet - [A Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes](#).
- 1.7 For appeals related to end-point assessment for apprenticeships please refer to our [policy](#) relating to reviews and appeals for EPA.

- 1.8 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). Centres can check if a provider is covered by the OIAHE scheme [here](#). Following the OIAHE process does not prevent learners from pursuing a complaint or appeal with Pearson and they may choose whichever route(s) they feel to be the most appropriate.
- 1.9 A centre cannot appeal against decisions about centre or qualification approval or removal (unless this is because of a malpractice sanction), including where Pearson's terms and conditions have been breached. For further information relating to the removal of centre or programme approval please read our [Policy on the removal of centre or programme approval](#).

2. Centre and Learner Appeals Process

Procedures

- 2.1 Centres must have their own policy and procedure for enquiries, reviews and appeals for Pearson qualifications. It is important that staff and learners are informed of the centre's policy and that it is followed. To support appeals from learners, we will ask to see evidence that a Centre's internal appeals procedure has first been fully completed.
- 2.2 Our reviews and appeals procedure will determine whether:
- The centre's procedures are consistent with our requirements. Please refer to our [BTEC Centre Guide to Policies and Procedures for vocational qualifications](#) for further details.
 - The centre's procedures were applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements and/or investigating the learner's appeal.
 - Our external quality assurance activities were consistent with regulatory requirements.
- 2.3 The reviews and appeals process focus on procedure and is not concerned with making judgments about learner's internally assessed work. The process does not normally involve the re-assessment of learner work, but this may be undertaken if the outcome of the review or appeal requires it.

Who can request a Review/Appeal

- 2.4 The Head of Centre can request a first-stage review of the outcome(s) of our external quality assurance activities.

- 2.5 The Head of centre can appeal against the outcome(s) of our external quality assurance activities only after a first stage review has been requested and a decision communicated by Pearson.
- 2.6 The Head of centre can appeal against a qualification decision made by Pearson.
- 2.7 Where a learner has completed their centre's internal review and appeals procedure and continues to have grounds for an appeal against a centre's decision in relation to results, malpractice or decisions made in respect of access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations, a learner may appeal directly to Pearson.

Acceptable Grounds

2.8 A review or appeal application can be made **by the Centre** if they consider that:

2.8.1 The outcome of Pearson's external quality assurance activities resulted in the award of grade(s) which could not have been reasonably awarded given the evidence generated by the learner(s). An example of where this may happen is where the Standards Verification (SV) or External Examiner (EE) determined marking was too generous and requested grade amends to the cohort. Please note, a review must have been completed prior to an appeal being submitted on these grounds.

2.8.2 Where decisions on a qualification made by Pearson have impacted on results and Pearson did not apply its procedures consistently, properly, or fairly.

2.9 A review or appeal application can be made **by a learner** if:

- The learner disagrees with the decisions made by the centre in respect of assessment results, reasonable adjustments or malpractice and has completed the centre's internal appeals procedure.
- The learner has reason to believe the centre has not followed its internal appeals procedure (for example, a stage in the process has not been conducted).

2.10 Grounds for incorrect grades or results include:

- The grade or result achieved could not have reasonably been awarded given the evidence generated by the learner.
- Pearson exercised unreasonable assessment judgement (where the grade or result is one that no reasonable standards verifier or external examiner could have appropriately agreed upon).
- Pearson failed to apply appropriate criteria and procedures to the evidence generated by the learner(s).

- 2.11 While a review or appeal is underway, it is important that Centres keep all evidence relating to the case. If the review or appeal involves the work of a learner, Centres will need to keep the work of the whole cohort in case this is needed or affected by the implications of the appeal. Current guidelines say that learner work should be retained for 12 weeks after certification, with BTEC documents being retained for 3 years, but centres should be aware that learner work may need to be held for longer if an appeal is underway.
- 2.12 If an application to appeal is accepted, an investigation into Pearson's procedures will follow.

3. Stage Review and Appeal Process

Stage 1 – Reviews

- 3.1 Any request for a review about a decision made by Pearson affecting a centre or learners, including reviews about Standards Verification or External Examiner outcomes, should be requested via the Pearson Support Portal within 14 calendar days of receiving our decision.
- 3.2 All cases are reviewed by an appropriate member of our staff, including, where relevant, a subject matter expert.

When to apply: within 14 calendar days of receiving the Pearson decision (centres) or the outcome of the centres appeal process (learners).

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

Centres should select: Administrators and Exams > UK Schools and FE Exams Support > Submit a Case

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge the receipt of the request for a review within three working days.

Outcome of the application: We will respond to a request for a review within 30 calendar days of receiving it.

Next step: If Centres are not happy with the outcome of the review, they have 14 calendar days in which to request a Preliminary Appeal.

Stage 2 – Preliminary Appeal

- 3.3 A preliminary appeal must be submitted within 14 calendar days of the outcome of the first stage review (above) via the appeals webform which can be found on the appeals tab on our post-results services webpage here.
- 3.4 Centres 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 Centre appeals if no procedural ground is given.
- 3.5 A learner may appeal directly to Pearson but only following the completion of the centre's internal appeals process.
- 3.6 An appeals case officer, with no previous involvement with the case, will consider the appeal. The case officer will check all the information against relevant policies and procedures to confirm if correct procedures have been followed.

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

How to apply: Applications for preliminary appeal should be made using the appeals webform which can be found on the appeals tab of our post-results services webpage [here](#). The application to appeal should include a clear explanation of the procedural basis for the appeal.

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge receipt of the appeal application automatically once the webform has been successfully submitted. We will contact the appellant as soon as possible, following receipt, if we require further information to allow Pearson to process the appeal.

Outcome of the appeal: We will write to the appellant with the outcome of the appeal within 42 calendar days of the date of receipt of a valid application (including all information required to process the appeal).

Next step: If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome of the preliminary appeal, they may submit a request for an appeal hearing, as outlined below.

Stage 3 – Pearson Appeal Hearings

- 3.7 An application for an appeal hearing should be made using the appeals webform which can be found on the appeals tab on our Post-results services webpage here.
- 3.8 An application for an appeal hearing can only be made once the preliminary appeal has been completed and the outcome has been sent to the appellant.
- 3.9 An application for an appeal hearing must be made within 14 calendar days of the date of the communication of the outcome of the preliminary appeal to the appellant.
- 3.10 An application for an appeal hearing can be made by the head of centre, the head of centre on behalf of a learner or by a learner who has completed the centre's internal review/appeals process, and the Pearson review process, and the preliminary stage of Pearson's appeals process.
- 3.11 The appeal hearing will review evidence to determine whether we followed our policies and processes correctly and fairly in conducting the review and the preliminary appeal.
- 3.12 The appeal hearing will follow the procedure in the JCQ Guide to the Awarding Bodies Appeals Processes.
- 3.13 The Head of Centre, learner or delegated representative will be required to attend the hearing. For international centres, the hearing will be held remotely. Other hearings are usually held remotely, and we will contact the head of the centre or learner (as appropriate) to confirm arrangements for the hearing.

When to apply: 14 calendar days of when we sent the outcome of the preliminary appeal.

How to apply: Using the appeals webform which can be found on the appeals tab on our Post-results services webpage [here](#).

Acknowledgment: We will acknowledge the application for a hearing automatically upon successful submission of the webform application. We have up to 70 calendar days to arrange an appeal hearing.

Outcome of the application: We will write to the appellant explaining the outcome of the appeal hearing within five calendar days of the hearing. A summary report or transcript of the hearing will be provided within 28 calendar days of the hearing. This report or transcript will be confidential to parties to the appeal.

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

4. Appeals against decisions made in respect of access arrangements, reasonable adjustments, and special considerations

- 4.1 [Supplementary guidance for reasonable adjustments and special consideration in internal assessments](#)
- 4.2 Pearson recognises that there are learners who may be placed at a disadvantage in an assessment because of:
 - A permanent or long-term disability, learning difficulty or medical condition.

- A temporary disability, illness, injury or indisposition immediate to or at the time of the assessment.
 - Circumstances that arise at the time of or during the assessment.
- 4.3 Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are pre-assessment adjustments approved before an assessment. They allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary injuries to access the assessment.
- 4.4 **Special consideration** is an adjustment to a learner's achievement, to reflect temporary illness, injury, or other indisposition at the **time of the assessment**.
- 4.5 Applications for appeals can be accepted from a head of centre (on behalf of a learner or group of learners).
- 4.6 Learners and/or their parents/carers can appeal directly to Pearson in relation to internal assessments only when the centre's appeals procedures have been completed.

5. Appeals against decisions made in respect of malpractice or maladministration

- 5.1 A centre may appeal the outcome of a malpractice or maladministration decision and the process for this is provided in the [JCQ booklet - A Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes](#).
- 5.2 A learner should complete the centre's internal review and appeals process for malpractice decisions related to internal assessments. Where the learner has completed the centre's appeals process and has reason to believe the centre has not followed its review and appeals procedure properly, they may appeal directly to Pearson.

6. Fees

- 6.1 For information on fees for reviews or appeals, please visit our [website](#). The fees can be found under the Appeals tab and appeals related to internal assessments are charged at the published rates that apply to appeals related to external assessments. 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 related to the appeal hearing. T level technical Qualification appeal fees can be found here: Post-results services | Pearson qualifications

6.2 If the review or appeal finds that Pearson made the wrong decision, there will be no charge for the appeal.

7. Next Steps (Complaints or EPRS for TQ)

7.1 There is no further stage of appeal. A centre may submit a complaint to the regulators if the centre believes Pearson has not followed its process in dealing with the appeal. For T level Technical Qualifications, centres can use the Ofqual Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) and information about this can be found on the Ofqual website. [Exam procedures review service - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk).

7.2 Following the completion of the review and appeals process, if Centres want to submit a complaint to the regulators, Centres 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

8. Regulatory references

8.1 UK regulators require all awarding organisations to establish and maintain their compliance with regulatory conditions and criteria. As part of this process, policies and guides that relate to Pearson's status as an awarding organisation will reference any conditions and criteria that they address.

8.2 This policy addresses the following regulatory criteria and conditions:

Qualification regulator or relevant governing body	Regulatory rule or guidance document	Regulatory condition or criteria
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	C2; C2.3; I1
CCEA Regulation	General Conditions of Recognition	C2; C2.3; I1
Qualifications Wales	Qualification Wales Standard Conditions of recognition	C2; C2.3; I1

9. Policy review date

9.1 This policy will be reviewed in July 2026.

10. Useful information

10.1 For more information on Pearson qualifications and services please visit the following webpages:

- [Delivering BTEC Qualifications](#)
- [the Pearson Support Portal](#)
- [Post results services: info for students](#)
- [BTEC Quality Assurance](#)

11. Version control

Version	Changes	Date
3	1.3-1.5 Clarification added about the difference between Review and Appeal	14 th August 2025
3	2 Clarification of centre process and who can request a review or appeal on what grounds	14 th August 2025

Version	Changes	Date
3	3.2 Added information about how to raise a case for review requests	14 th August 2025