

## EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS & APPEALS POLICY

### Responsibilities

**Learner/Provider/Parent/Carer:** responsible for initiating the appeals procedure, in the required format, within a defined time frame, when s/he has reason to question an assessment decision.

**Assessor:** responsible for providing clear achievement feedback to learners. If assessment decisions are questioned, the assessor is responsible for processing the learner's appeal within the agreed time.

**Internal verifier/lead internal verifier/senior management:** responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.

**Head of Centre:** responsible for submitting an appeal in writing, to the Awarding Body, if the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the centre's internal appeals procedures.

### Aim:

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision.
- To attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the assessor at the earliest opportunity.
- To standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness.
- To facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding body, where appropriate. To protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

### In order to do this, the centre will:

1. inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure
2. record, track and validate any appeal
3. forward the appeal to the awarding body when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted
4. keep appeals records for inspection by the awarding body for a minimum of 18 months
5. have a staged appeals procedure.
6. will take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results
7. monitor appeals to inform quality improvement. *All appeals at or above Stage 2 must be recorded by the QN. Records must be retained for at least 18 months*

## **Appeals procedure**

- Stage 1 – informal discussion with member of staff assessing. If a resolution is found, the member of staff should record the discussion for reference only, as part of best practice. If a resolution is not achieved, the discussion should be formally recorded and passed on to the programme leader, unless the decision under review is that of the programme leader. If this is the case, the QN or the Senior Management Line Manager for the subject area should be approached.
- Stage 2 – formal review. Programme leader and IV/Lead IV review the assessment decision. A written reply will be given to the learner within 2 weeks.
- Stage 3 – Appeal hearing. The learner must apply to the Operations Manager in writing within 4 weeks of the initiation of the stage 2 formal review. An appeal panel, appointed by the Operations Manager, will meet and review the evidence. A formal response will be given to the learner.
- Stage 4 – External appeal: The grounds for appeal and any supporting documentation must be submitted by the centre to the Awarding Body within a stipulated time set by the Awarding Body