

Appeals Policy

Aligned with Ofsted, NCFE, SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act, and KCSIE

This is a controlled document and, as such, will be kept read only. Any changes must be approved by the Author.

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APPEALS POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

Hatfield Wick Education (HWE) is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and accessible process for learners to appeal against assessment decisions or other outcomes. This policy ensures compliance with statutory frameworks, including the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice, and KCSIE, and aligns with NCFE's requirements and Ofsted's expectations for equality, fairness, and safeguarding.

Hatfield Wick Education will ensure that all learners are informed of their right to appeal and that any appeal submitted to the awarding organisation will be made by the centre on the learner's behalf, with the learner's written consent. Learners will be advised that outcomes of appeals may result in grades being confirmed, raised, or lowered.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all learners enrolled in courses delivered by HWE. Parents, carers, or advocates may support or submit appeals on behalf of learners where appropriate, particularly where the learner has SEND or is under 18.

3. PRINCIPLES

Fairness and Transparency:

All appeals are handled impartially and transparently.

Accessibility and Inclusivity:

Processes accommodate the diverse needs of learners, including those with SEND or other vulnerabilities.

Safeguarding Learners:

Learners are supported emotionally and practically throughout the appeals process.

Compliance with Regulatory Standards:

The policy adheres to NCFE, Ofsted, DfE, Equality Act, SEND Code of Practice, and safeguarding requirements.

Independence of Decision Making

Appeals will be reviewed by staff who were not directly involved in the original assessment decision.

4. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

Learners may appeal on the following grounds:

- Administrative or procedural error.
- Unreasonable academic judgement.

- Failure to apply reasonable adjustments or special considerations.
- New evidence or mitigating circumstances not previously considered.

5. PROCEDURE

Step 1: Informal Discussion

- **Initiation:** The learner contacts the assessor within **five working days** of receiving the assessment decision.
- **Discussion:** An informal meeting is arranged to review the decision. The assessor explains the basis for their judgment and considers the learner's concerns.
- **Outcome:** If resolved, no further action is required. If unresolved, the learner may escalate the appeal.

Step 2: Formal Appeal to the Lead Lecturer

- **Submission:** The learner submits a written appeal within **ten working days** of the informal meeting.

Evidence Requirements:

- Written statement outlining grounds for appeal
- Supporting evidence
- Any relevant mitigating information
- **Review:** The Lead Lecturer reviews the submission and arranges a meeting to discuss the appeal.
- **Outcome:** If appropriate, the assessment is referred for independent internal review.

Step 3: Reassessment by Internal Verifier

- **Evaluation:** An Internal Verifier or appropriately qualified staff member not previously involved reassesses the work in line with awarding organisation standards.
- **Timescale:** Written feedback will normally be provided within **10 working days**.
- **Written Outcome:** All appeal outcomes will be confirmed in writing and will include:
 - Decision reached
 - Rationale
 - Evidence considered

- Further escalation options
- If unresolved, the learner may request escalation to the awarding organisation.
- Timeframes may be extended where reasonable adjustments are required.

Step 4: External Appeal via Head of Centre

- If dissatisfaction remains, HWE will submit an appeal to the awarding organisation in line with NCFE Appeals Procedures.
- Learner written consent must be obtained prior to submission.
- The awarding organisation's decision will be considered final.

6. SAFEGUARDING AND SEND CONSIDERATIONS

Support may be provided by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SEND Coordinator.

Where an appeal raises safeguarding concerns, the DSL will follow safeguarding procedures immediately.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Advocate or parental support
- Alternative communication formats (e.g., Easy Read)
- Extended deadlines
- Assistive technology

All appeals are handled confidentially on a need-to-know basis.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- A secure record of all appeals and outcomes will be maintained.
- Records will be retained for a minimum of **three years**.
- The Quality Nominee will review appeal trends annually to identify improvements.
- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued regulatory compliance.

8. COMMUNICATION

- All staff involved in assessment and appeals will receive regular training on safeguarding, inclusion, and awarding organisation requirements.

- Learners will be informed of the appeals process during induction and via learner handbooks.
- If a learner remains dissatisfied following the appeals process, they may escalate concerns through the Complaints Policy.