

AWARDING ORGANISATION POLICY

Appeals Policy – (AOP-016)

GQA Qualifications – Our Mission and Values

GQA Qualifications Limited is an Awarding Body for specialist sectors and occupational roles. Our current qualifications cover a wide range of sectors, including the Glass and Fenestration Industries, Construction, Print, Automotive Glazing, Polymers, Nuclear, Chimney Occupations, Paper, Meteorology and Print.

Our aim is to work with industries where we have access to knowledge, either within GQA or by developing strong working relationships with sector specialists, giving us a real ability to discuss specific qualifications with both centres and employers.

Qualification development is carried out in accordance with regulatory and Sector Skill Council requirements, using industry experts throughout the development and consultation processes.

At GQA, our purpose is simple: to add life to a lifetime of learning. We believe that every learning opportunity is a chance for a personal breakthrough. That's why our colleagues are committed to creating vibrant and enriching learning experiences designed for real-life impact.

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1. Policy scope and purpose

Everyone has the right to appeal if they believe a decision is incorrect. This policy describes the stages and procedures that will need to be followed if:

Centres:

- dispute the outcomes from external quality assurance activities on assessment sampling.
- contest decisions or sanctions following malpractice or maladministration investigations.
- disagree with decisions about reasonable adjustment or special consideration applications.
- object to decisions or sanctions related to the GQA Centre Agreement.

Learners:

- may contest the outcome of the Centre's internal appeals process regarding assessment results.
- may submit an enquiry concerning an examination result if they believe that the marking was incorrect.
- may appeal a decision to void an assessment.

This policy covers appeals from learners and/or centres regarding;

- Assessment decisions where the appellant feels GQA Qualifications did not apply procedures consistently or properly
- Assessment decisions made by GQA Qualifications
- GQA Qualifications decisions concerning centre applications to offer qualifications
- Contents of centre monitoring reports
- GQA Qualifications' decisions to decline requests for reasonable adjustments or special considerations
- Sanctions/actions applied following verification visits or malpractice/maladministration investigations, or decisions to amend results following such investigations
- GQA Qualifications decision following investigations into complaints about centres
- Inconsistent application of procedures or failure to follow procedures properly and fairly

Important Note: GQA will not hear appeals where centre approval has been removed.

2. Policy Statement

Our review and appeals process will examine whether:

- the Centre's procedures are consistent with our requirements
- the Centre's procedures were applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements
- our external quality assurance activities were applied properly and fairly in arriving at a decision
- our external quality assurance (EQA) activities were consistent with regulatory requirements
- our 'Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy' was followed consistently and applied correctly and fairly in arriving at a judgement
- assessments were marked accurately and in accordance with our mark schemes
- incidents of suspected Malpractice were correctly investigated

There are two stages of enquiry or appeal, depending on the particular decision in question. These are:

- Stage 1 – Review

A Stage 1 Review is only available where:

- the Centre disagrees with the outcome(s) from our external quality assurance (EQA) activities in relation to assessment sampling
- a learner disagrees with the outcome of the Centre's internal appeals procedure concerning assessment outcomes
- a learner wishes to enquire about an examination result if they believe the marking was inaccurate.

- Stage 2 – Appeals Panel

Where possible, GQA Qualifications will attempt to resolve disputes before they reach the appeals stage. GQA Qualifications will undertake an initial, informal assessment of all potential disputes and notify the learner/centre of the decision.

If disputes cannot be resolved this way, the appeals process will be available to learners/centres. In all cases, GQA Qualifications will ensure that the person conducting the initial assessment has no personal interest in the dispute.

GQA requires all Centres to have an accessible appeals policy so learners can dispute results or decisions. Centre staff and learners must be aware of and follow this policy. If an appeal occurs, GQA will request evidence that the Centre's procedure was used.

3. Appeals Fees

GQA Qualifications reserves the right to charge an upfront administrative fee to cover investigation costs, which will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. The price of appeals can be found on the GQA website.

For group appeals, the fee per learner will be reduced based on the number of learners involved. If the appeal is upheld, the fee is waived; if partially upheld, the fee is proportionately waived.

4. GQA Qualifications Responsibilities

The Responsible Officer is accountable for implementing this policy. The Operations Manager is responsible for carrying out the requirements. Where either party is implicated in the appeal, the Responsible Officer will appoint suitable person(s) to undertake these activities.

GQA Qualifications will review this policy annually as part of self-evaluation arrangements and revise it as necessary in response to customer and learner feedback, regulatory authority requests, or good practice guidance to ensure alignment with established appeals and complaints processes.

5. Regulatory references

Regulator	Regulatory or guidance source	Regulatory condition, criteria or principle
OFQUAL	GCoR	I1 – Appeals Process
OFQUAL	GCoR	I2 – Compliance with Ofqual's appeals and complaints process
SQA	Regulatory Principles	RP17

6. Policy Reference Information

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