

Appeals Policy

April 2025

Family:	Quality
Reviewed and Updated:	August 2023
Issue Date:	April 2025
Next Review Date:	August 2026

Purpose

This policy is provided for all Learners undertaking qualifications or courses with The Skills Network (TSN), along with any Assessors, Tutors, Trainers, and Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) assessing, delivering or quality assuring qualifications, along with staff involved with the administration of exams or qualification delivery. It is also for use by non-delivery staff members, to ensure they deal with appeals in a consistent manner. This policy is applicable across all learning provisions provided by The Skills Network.

It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of qualifications and courses and learners undertaking these qualifications and courses at The Skills Network, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

This policy is available for all staff members, third parties and learners to access.

Review arrangements

We will review this policy annually and revise it as and when required in response to stakeholder feedback, changes in practices, actions required by our awarding organisations or changes in requirements. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

Contents

- Section 1: Learner appeals
- Section 2: Assessor, tutor, trainer and IQA appeals
- Section 3: Escalating an appeal outcome



Section 1: Learner appeals

All learners have the right to challenge the outcomes of their assessment decisions if they believe or consider the assessment has not been carried out properly. Learners might appeal on a variety of issues.

These issues may include the following (please note this list is not exhaustive):-

Results and outcomes, conduct of the assessment, adequacy of the range, nature and comprehensiveness of the evidence when set against the national standards and evidence requirements, the opportunities offered in order to demonstrate competence of attainment, access to assessment, administrative issues e.g. failure to register/apply for certification, malpractice outcomes and assessment outcomes where results from Turnitin have been used to make a judgement on assessment authenticity..

This policy is in place to enable learners at The Skills Network to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision. We will aim to reach an agreement with a learner at the earliest opportunity regarding any appeals that are made.

The Skills Network will ensure, that, for all learners:

- Internal assessments are conducted by qualified assessors, tutors, or trainers who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills in the qualification or course area.
- Assessment evidence provided by learners is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant awarding organisation for the subject concerned.
- The consistency of internal assessment will be maintained by internal verification and standardisation.

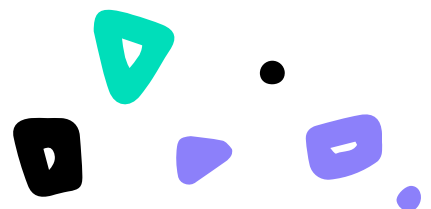
If a learner wishes to appeal, the appeal must be lodged in writing with the Quality Team (Quality.Team@theskillsnetwork.com) within 7 working days of the learner being notified of the assessment decision. The relevant centre staff member will then attempt to find a solution with the learner, assessor/tutor and internal verifier.

Any staff member undertaking an appeal investigation must be independent from any assessment decisions made as part of a learner's qualification.

- The Quality Team will acknowledge the appeal within 2 working days of receiving it and appoint an investigator at this time.
- An Internal Quality Assurer or appropriate member of the Quality Team will be appointed to investigate the appeal.
- Investigations may include a review of all assessed work and undertaking interviews with any relevant parties.

A learner will be informed in writing of the outcome of their appeal within 5 working days. Should the investigation be complex, an extension to this date may be applied, with the learner being informed at each stage.

All documents relating to an appeal will be saved and stored securely. Appeals documents will be presented to the External Quality Assurer from the Awarding Organisation at the next EQA visit to The Skills Network.



Upheld appeals:

If an appeal from a learner is upheld by the Quality Team, any lessons learned from the investigation will be reviewed by the Quality Team and relevant delivery departments.

Any individuals involved in the appeal will be offered suitable training, if appropriate. The outcome and action plan from all appeals will be dealt with on an individual basis.

The relevant procedures will be followed to ensure the learner's assessment decision is changed to show the correct mark and/or decision.

Not upheld appeals:

If an appeal is not upheld, the learner making the appeal will be given a written explanation detailing the reasons for the appeal not to be upheld.

The learner will be informed they can escalate the appeal if they disagree with the outcome.

Section 2: Assessor, tutor, trainer and IQA appeals

Assessors, Tutors, Trainers and Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) may disagree with feedback or outcomes linked to quality activity.

Where there is a disagreement, we expect that the individual has a discussion with the IQA or Curriculum and Quality Lead (CQL) that carried out the activity in the first instance to resolve informally.

Where an informal discussion does not resolve the disagreement, the assessor, tutor, trainer, or IQA has the right to formally appeal the decision. The appeal must be lodged in writing with the Quality Team (Quality.Team@theskillsnetwork.com) within 7 working days of being notified of the quality decision.

If the tutor/trainer/assessor or IQA has not sought to informally resolve the appeal at this stage, they will be directed to do so before a formal appeal is investigated.

Any staff member undertaking an appeal investigation must be independent from any assessment decisions made as part of a learner's qualification.

- The Quality Team will acknowledge the appeal within 2 working days of receiving it and appoint an investigator at this time.
- An Internal Quality Assurer will be appointed to investigate the appeal.
- Investigations may include a review of all assessed work and undertaking interviews with any relevant parties.

Individuals will be informed in writing of the outcome of their appeal within 10 working days. Should the investigation be complex, an extension to this date may be applied, with the learner being informed at each stage.

All documents relating to an appeal will be saved and stored securely. Appeals documents will be presented to the External Quality Assurer from the Awarding Organisation at the next EQA visit to The Skills Network.

Upheld appeals:

If an appeal is upheld by the Quality Team, any lessons learned from the investigation will be reviewed by the Quality Team and the Assessor Services team. Any individuals involved in the appeal will be offered suitable training, if appropriate. The outcome and action plan from all appeals will be dealt with on an individual basis.

The relevant procedures will be followed to ensure the learner's assessment decision is changed to show the correct mark and/or decision.

Not upheld appeals:

If an appeal is not upheld, the individual making the appeal will be given a written explanation detailing the reasons for the appeal not to be upheld.

Section 3: Escalating an appeal outcome

We recognise that there may be occasions where someone who has raised an appeal may not be satisfied with the outcome of an appeal.

Where an individual is not satisfied with the appeal decision made at centre level, they can instruct The Skills Network to contact the relevant awarding organisation in order to escalate the appeal. These appeals will be investigated in line with the relevant awarding organisation's appeals policy, a copy of which will be provided to the learner upon escalation.

In order to escalate an appeal, the escalation request must be made in writing to Quality.Team@theskillsnetwork.com within 5 days of the appeal decision being communicated. The Quality Manager or Quality Team Leader will escalate the appeal on behalf of the individual and act as the point of contact during the escalation process.

