

# Enquiries and Appeals Policy



## Introduction

This policy is aimed at

- OCN Eastern Region recognised centres delivering accredited qualifications or units.
- Learners, who are registered on or have taken OCN Eastern Region accredited qualifications or units.

It sets out the steps to follow when submitting enquiries and appeals about results, assessment methods and OCN Eastern Region's decisions (set out on page 2) and the steps we will follow when reviewing the cases.

Learners who wish to appeal about their assessment results or about a decision affecting their learning should either be supported by their centre or should have exhausted their centre's own appeals process before appealing to us. In the latter case, learners must provide us with evidence that they have first appealed to their centre. It is expected that learners will only appeal directly to us in exceptional circumstances.

## Centre's responsibility

It is important that your staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications and accredited courses, and your learners, are fully informed of the contents of the policy.

On their centre visits, our Quality Reviewers / Centre Moderators may check, from time to time, that centre staff and learners are aware of its contents and purpose.

## Review arrangements

We will review the policy annually and revise it as and when necessary in response to centre and learner feedback, changes in our practices, actions from the regulatory authorities or external agencies or changes in legislation. If you would like to feedback any views please contact us via the details provided at the end of this policy.

## Fees

We will **only** charge you or your learners a fee to cover the administrative and personnel costs in the following instances:

- If the enquiry or appeal about a result is not upheld.

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- In the case of group appeals, for those learners whose results do not change.

Centre Fee: £50 per group.

Learner Fee: £25 per enquiry.

## Areas covered by the policy

In addition to covering enquiries and appeals from learners in relation to results, our policy also covers enquiries and appeals from centres covering the following types of enquiries and appeals:

- OCN Eastern Region's decision concerning a centre's application to offer an OCN Eastern Region qualification.
- OCN Eastern Region's decision concerning a Centre Recognition application.
- The contents of a centre monitoring report.
- The contents of a centre external verification report.
- The contents of a centre moderation report.
- OCN Eastern Region's decision to decline a centre's request to make reasonable adjustments or give special considerations.
- An OCN Eastern Region sanction as a result of malpractice or maladministration.
- The outcome of an OCN Eastern Region investigation into a complaint raised by the centre.

## Enquiry / Appeals procedure

### Stage 1

- You (and your learners) have 4 weeks from the date we notified you of the outcome in which to lodge an appeal against our decision or an enquiry about an assessment result. Hence please advise your learners/staff to retain their course evidence until they receive their result.
- If you appeal on behalf of your learners please obtain the learners' permission in the first instance.
- Please complete the OCN Eastern Region Enquiries and Appeals Form, which is available from our website or on request from OCN Eastern Region (contact details shown below at the end of this policy along with an example of the form in Appendix 1). Alternatively, you may submit your own report accompanied with documents and supporting evidence. Reports must include:

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- Centre name, address and number.
  - Learner's name and OCN Eastern Region registration number.
  - Date(s) you or the learner received notification of OCN Eastern Region's decision.
  - Title and number of the OCN Eastern Region qualification affected or nature of service affected.
  - Full nature of the appeal or enquiry about a result.
  - Contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by you or the learner relating to the issue.
  - Date of the report and the appellant's name, position and signature.
- We will acknowledge your enquiry/appeal within 5 working days of receipt.
  - We will arrange for appropriate OCN Eastern Region personnel to review your enquiry/appeal – someone who has not had any previous involvement in the matter or linked with your Centre (we will record all investigations using the form in Appendix 2).
  - We aim to have reviewed the enquiry/appeal and respond to you within 20 working days of receipt of your report. Please note that in some cases the review and appeals processes may take longer, for example, if a centre visit is required. In such instances, we will contact all parties concerned to inform them of the likely revised timescale.

## **Stage 2**

- If you or your learners are dissatisfied with the outcome of our review of your enquiry/appeal, you may apply to our Appeals Panel. Appeals need to be lodged within four weeks of the outcome of the first review.
- The Appeals Panel will comprise:
  - Chair of Quality / Access to HE Committee or nominee;
  - A Quality Reviewer / Centre moderator (who previously has not been involved with the matter under appeal).
  - An OCN Eastern Region Senior Manager (who previously has not been involved with the matter under appeal).
  - Independent panel member<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Independent panel member will not be an employee of OCN Eastern Region, an Assessor or otherwise connected to it at any time during the last three years

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- We will arrange for the Appeals Panel to review the case and we aim to let you know the outcome within 20 working days of receipt of your notification. The review process may involve:
  - A discussion with you or the learner and OCN Eastern Region personnel.
  - A request for further information from you, the learner or OCN Eastern Region personnel.
  - A centre visit by authorised OCN Eastern Region personnel.

In cases where decisions are required, the majority vote will apply.

## **Stage 3**

If you are unhappy with the decisions of the Appeals Panel and the case is still unresolved, we will arrange for an independent review to be carried out. Further appeals need to be lodged within four weeks of the outcome of the Appeals Panel.

The Independent Reviewer<sup>2</sup> will review all the evidence which took place in the above stages and review if we've applied our procedures fairly, appropriately and consistently in line with our policy. We aim to let you know the outcome within 20 working days of receipt of your notification.

The independent review process may involve:

- A discussion with you or the learner and OCN Eastern Region personnel.
- A request for further information from you, the learner or OCN Eastern Region personnel.
- A centre visit by authorised OCN Eastern Region personnel.

The Independent Reviewer's decision will be final.

## **Successful appeals**

In situations where an appeal has been successful OCN Eastern Region will amend, as appropriate, the:

- profile record of the centre concerned.

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<sup>2</sup> The independent reviewer will not be or will not have been an employee of OCN Eastern Region, an Assessor or otherwise connected to it - at any time during the past three years.

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- the results for the learner(s) affected and carry out a review to assess the actual or possible impact on other learners at the centre or across centres that may be affected by a decision to change qualification results – and if required we will amend the records of other learners that may be affected and contact them and their centres accordingly.
- undertake a review of our internal processes and procedures, to ensure that the occurrence does not happen again.

## Monitoring

OCN Eastern Region's Quality and Standards and Access to HE Committee's will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of enquiries and appeals process. Summary reports will be submitted to enable the Committees to review the effectiveness of the process and where appropriate monitor changes to policies and procedures.

## Contact details

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this policy and/or have a related query please contact: contact our support team by:

Telephone: 01206 873023

Email: [enquiries@ocner.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ocner.org.uk)

Fax: 01206 873956

Post: OCN Eastern Region, John Tabor Building, University of Essex,  
Colchester, Essex, CO4 3SQ.

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Policy author Director of Quality

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## Appendix 1 – Enquiry/appeal form

<b>Centre No</b>		<b>Centre name</b>	
<b>Qualification Title or nature of the service that is the focus of the enquiry/appeal</b>			
<b>The learner(s)' affected by the enquiry or appeal about a result (please state learner(s)' registration number</b>			
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Learner No</b>		<b>Learner name</b>	
<b>Nature and detail of the enquiry/appeal</b>			
<b>Supporting evidence is attached</b>			<b>Yes / No</b>
<b>If so, please specify</b>			
<b>Declaration:</b> I am satisfied that the information provided is accurate and fully support the application.			
<b>Head of centre/Exams officer</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Name (Please print)</b>			
<b>Signature</b>			
<b>For office use</b>			

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## Appendix 2 – Internal enquiry/appeal investigation form

<b>Complainant</b>		
<b>Date received</b>		
<b>Recognised Centre</b>		
<b>Qualification / accredited course</b>		
<b>Summary of complaint/appeal</b> e.g. where?, when?, who?, what?, why?.		
<b>Details of investigation carried out</b>		
<b>Evidence gathered</b> e.g. correspondence, records of interviews, records of completed candidate questionnaires, records of assessment documentation, statistical evidence, IV reports, Centre Moderation and QR reports. (please attach all supporting evidence to this form)		
<b>Summary of findings</b>		
<b>Further actions required</b> e.g. corrective or preventative actions		
<b>Complaint closed</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Director of Quality signature</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Chief Executive signature</b>		<b>Date</b>
<b>Chairman of Appeals Committee signature</b> (if applicable)		<b>Date</b>