



Learn. To Change.

# Appeals Process

2026

## Version Control

Document Information			
V1	April 2022	David Hannah	First release

Revision History			
Version	Issue Date	Author	Description of Change
V1.2	13/8/24	Fiona Jarvis	Annual review of document. Amended "assessor" to "DLC" Included statement of endorsement
V1.3	13/1/25	Fiona Doak	Re-branded document
V1.3	21/7/25	Fiona Doak	Annual review of document
V1.4	21/1/26	Fiona Doak	Annual review of document. SQA changed to Qualifications Scotland

## Statement of Endorsement

The following document has been created by David Hannah (Senior Delivery Manager Apprenticeships), and endorsed by Louise Clark (VP Apprenticeships)

## FEEDBACK QUERIES & APPEALS PROCESS

What this guidance is for:

- Provides insight into the apprenticeship appeals process
- Clarifies the steps you should follow if you want to query your DLC assessment or feedback and decisions
- Sets out how to distinguish between a complaint and an appeal
- Sets out how QA will approach these two processes



## QUERYING FEEDBACK OR ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

### Before we get started...

Before reading on, it is important to keep this in mind:

There is an important distinction to make when considering what constitutes a **complaint**:

**I am not satisfied with the feedback I have received, and the apprenticeship team have not addressed my concerns**

...and what constitutes an **appeal**:

**I have identified a procedural irregularity in the assessment process which I can provide evidence for**

## APPRENTICESHIP SCRUTINY PROCESS

All assessments go through three stages of assessment scrutiny:

1. First assessment
  - o Undertaken by the DLC or tutor
2. Internal Moderation
  - o Randomly chosen sample of assessments across the range of units
    - o Undertaken by different member of the quality team
3. External Examiner Moderation
  - o Sample of QA internal moderated assessments
    - o Subject expert with appropriate academic and industry experience
      - o Completes a report during each academic year

## QUERYING FEEDBACK OR MARKS: KEEPING IT INFORMAL

- QA, like all training centers, places a lot of trust and faith in our DLC and tutors and the rigor of our assessment regimes, so we take formal complaints about these **very seriously**.
- We usually find that we can solve most apprenticeship issues **without** requiring a formal process.
- Quite often a **conversation with the DLC or tutor** or Programme IQA can go a long way to providing you with insight into how you were assessed.
- You should follow the steps we outline in the next section **before** triggering a formal complaint or appeal. Complaints and appeals can take a long time to resolve and are very methodical and are evidence-led processes.
- Should your query not be resolved, we have also outlined the **options available** to you.

## SCOTTISH APPRENTICESHIP APPEALS PROCESS

### Stage 1

Learner speaks to DLC about problem and logged with the IQA immediately

### Stage 2

If DLC cannot resolve problem, they will contact the IQA for advice on how to resolve assessment problem within 24 hours.

### Stage 3

Learner speaks to IQA to discuss problem and assessment decision taken.

### Stage 4

If the IQA cannot resolve the problem, the IQA will contact the Quality manager for advice on how to resolve the assessment problem within 8 hours

## Stage 5

The External Quality Assurer (EQA) is contacted for further guidance. The problem will be resolved at this stage. Based on appeal outcome the learner can resume with their qualification.

## Stage 6

Learners also have the right to complain to Ofqual or Qualifications Scotland Accreditation although they are unable to overturn any assessment decisions or academic judgments once they have exhausted their center's complaints procedure and the Qualifications Scotland Awarding Body's complaints procedure.

## COMPLAINT OR APPEAL?

If your issue remains unsolved, the **Quality Assurance Team** will consider a complaint if:

1. All the review stages have been completed
2. Evidence is available which makes clear why the review process was unsatisfactory

There will usually be **one of three outcomes** to a formal complaint:

1. Complaint **upheld** and recommendation made on resolution
2. Complaint **dismissed** and the decision stands
3. Learner advised to **appeal**, if:
  - The complaint meets the threshold for an appeal

## APPEALS:

**The process** - Evidence meets the policy requirements You can contact us on [gacomplaints@qa.com](mailto:gacomplaints@qa.com)

There are only three grounds on which a learner can appeal an assessment decision:

1. That a procedural irregularity or administrative error has occurred in the process of an assessment; Had the procedural irregularity or administrative error not taken place, the decision in question would have been different.
2. That the learner's performance was materially affected by

significant, relevant, and uncontrollable circumstances that were unknown to the decision maker; That the uncontrollable circumstances could not with reasonable diligence have been disclosed before the decision was made.

3. That there is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the decision maker, which is of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that, in the absence of any prejudice or bias, the decision in question would have been different.

## KEY POINTS

### Remember:

- You must be certain that you qualify for an appeal before starting the process.
- We may refer you back to the apprenticeship team or the complaints process if you do not meet the criteria.
- If issues are identified early, we may be able to rectify them without requiring a formal appeal- but this can only happen if the learner discusses the issue with the DLC/tutor.

## HOW TO GET STARTED

**Before you start an appeal application you must be sure you have explored all options:**

- Assessment Review
- Formal Complaint

**Write to [qaacomplaints@qa.com](mailto:qaacomplaints@qa.com) and make sure you are prepared with:**

- A full account of why you think you should appeal
- Evidence that supports your claim
- An understanding of the appeals policy and process set out in the programme launch.

**The Quality Assurance team will assess your appeal and advise you on the next steps.**

## TO SUMMARISE

- Always speak to your DLC/tutor **first**
- Remember the difference between an **appeal** and a **complaint**
- Appeals must be **evidence-based**

