

P800 - Academic Appeals Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the process by which a learner can enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision. For example this could be an appeal against a grade given for 'in-course' assignment work; an assessment decision on a NVQ programme; a final course or unit grade; or a decision not to allow progression to a subsequent year.

This policy will take account circumstances where special educational needs might be a mitigating factor.

The College will aim to:

- Attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the assessor at the earliest opportunity
- Standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness.
- Facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding body, where appropriate.
- Protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification.

In order to do this, the College will:

- Inform the learner at induction, of the Appeals Policy and procedure. (see Learners' Guide To Appealing An Assessment Decision)
- Record, track and validate any appeal.
- Forward the appeal to the awarding body when a learner considers that a decision continues to disadvantage her/him after the internal appeals process has been exhausted.
- Keep appeals records for inspection by the awarding body for a minimum of 18 months.
- Have a staged appeals procedure.
- Will take appropriate action to protect the interests of other learners and the integrity of the qualification, when the outcome of an appeal questions the validity of other results.
- Monitor appeals to inform quality improvement.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The procedure applies to all learner age groups who are on full time or part time courses and whose delivery and assessment is controlled by Peterborough Regional College.
- 2.2 For course validated at Peterborough Regional College by another institution, the Appeals Procedure established by that validating institution will take precedence and will apply in place of this policy. In the case of an appeal relating to progression 2.1 above applies in the first instance.

3. Definitions

- **Assessment** - means any formal process for the evaluation of learner's work.
- **Appeal** - means a process within the College whereby a learner may question an assessment decision.

4. Related Documents

- Appendix 1 Academic Appeals Checklist.
- Course/Qualification Specification
- Course/Qualification Assessment Schedule
- Course/Qualification Assessment Records/Tracking Documents
- Course/Qualification Internal Verification Records
- Validation Documents

5. Requirements

- 5.1 The learner must have observed the assessment policy for the course as detailed in the course specification before this procedure can be invoked.
- 5.2 In case of an appeal against a grade awarded for a piece of course work, the piece of course work must contribute a minimum of 10% towards the final grade awarded in that subject area.

6. Responsibilities

- 6.1 In the case of an appeal against a grade awarded for a piece of course work or an assessment decision on a NVQ programme.
- a) The Course coordinator/internal verifier is responsible for ensuring that the internal procedures in the course/qualification assessment policy are carried out.
 - b) The appointment of an adjudicator with relevant experience/expertise is the responsibility of the Vice Principal: Curriculum and Learner Experience.
- 6.2 In the case of an appeal against a decision of course final grade or unit grade(s), or award of a qualification and/or progression:
- a) The Principal is responsible for nominating an appropriate independent person to chair the Appeals Committee and this person should have a clear understanding of equality and diversity legislation and policies.
 - b) The nominate person in 6.2.a is responsible for establishing the committee membership and organising the date and time of its meeting in compliance with the time scales set out.
 - c) The nominated chairperson is responsible for notifying the appellant of the result of the appeal.

7. Risk Analysis

This policy is required to ensure that correct procedures are in place and documented by all involved in the handling of complaints, both formal and informal, for all students.

Analyse risks of non-adherence to this policy

Poor student satisfaction and impact on annual return from OIA. Poor external stakeholder perception and potential financial cost and compensation. Failure to demonstrate effective enhancement. Failure to achieve a positive outcome from a Further Education Review and the likelihood of additional scrutiny.

Staff training needed

Initial and refresher training to be made available to staff.

Compliance reduces the risks described above.

8. Impact Assessment

A Section One Impact Assessment has been conducted for this policy

9. Data Protection

PRC and UCP complies with the provisions of the United Kingdom's Data Protection Act, 1998. As such, applicants' and student data is treated as confidential by all staff involved in this process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately. However, the aforementioned Act requires UCP and PRC to release certain information to UK authorities upon request in order to assist those authorities with the prevention and detection of fraud or other crimes. We will release the requested information on receipt of an appropriate request from UK authorities such as (but limited to) the police, Home Office (for immigration and related matters), local authorities, and the Department for Work and Pensions. We may use anonymised data collected as part of an individual's application and enrolment for the purpose of fulfilling statistical and reporting requirements.

10. Procedure

- 10.1 In the case of an appeal against a grade awarded for a piece of course work or an assessment decision on a NVQ programme.
- a) When all options under the assessment policy of the course/programme have been exhausted a learner may then appeal in writing against the assessment decision. Such appeals should be addressed to the LE.
 - b) The Vice Principal: Curriculum will ask a person of proven academic competence to adjudicate.
 - c) The adjudication will be reported to the appellant, to the Lead IQA / Internal Verifier and to the appropriate Head of Faculty in writing within six working days of being made.
- 10.2 In the case of an appeal against a decision of course final grade or unit grade(s), or award of a qualification and/or progression:
- a) A learner may appeal in writing against the decision made by a Head of Faculty not to allow the learner to progress to the subsequent year of the course; or against the grade(s) awarded for a subject or qualification during the academic year. The appeal must be addressed to the Vice Principal. In order to progress to a subsequent year the course entry requirements must be met, academic performance must be satisfactory and the student must have complied with the College 'positive behaviour agreement'.
 - b) Upon receipt of an appeal by the Vice Principal an Appeals Committee shall be formed consisting of:
 - o An appropriate independent person nominated by the Vice Principal to chair the Committee meetings and this person should have a clear understanding of equality and diversity legislation and policies.
 - o The Head of Faculty of the Programme Area to which the course belongs, or the Curriculum Lead of the team to which the course belongs.
 - o The course tutor of the appellant, at the time of the appeal.
 - c) The Appeals Committee must consider any mitigating circumstances and will determine whether additional members are required in order to bring specific expertise to the panel.
 - d) Where learning disabilities or difficulties are irrelevant for the progress qualification outcome and where the learner has achieved the entry requirements for a progression qualification, the panel will ensure that learners with additional education needs will not be treated less favouring for a reason relating to their needs.

- e) Where considered appropriate by the Appeals Committee the appellant will be invited to attend a meeting with the Appeals Committee. The appellant should be invited to the Committee meeting where they can contribute additional information in support of their appeal. Where all applicable evidence is available to the Committee, the Committee can process to operate in camera. If invited to attend the Committee meeting the appellant may be accompanied by a friend /representative.
- f) If invited to attend the appellant must be notified in writing of the time and place of the meeting. The Appeals Committee will proceed with the meeting whether or not the appellant is in attendance.
- g) The appeal must be dealt with within fifteen working days.
- h) The decision of the Appeal Committee is final and will be notified to the appellant in writing within six working days of being made.
- i) In considering any appeal the College will recognise the rules and regulations of appropriate external awarding bodies.
- j) The Corporation Board, through its Curriculum and Quality sub-committee will be informed of all academic appeals received and the outcome for those appeals.
- k) Failure of the appellant to have their appeal upheld by the College Appeal Committee does not remove their right to take the case to the Awarding Body with which they are registered, for final adjudication.

Appendix 1

Academic Appeals Checklist

Is the appeal against:	Yes	No	Relevant Sections of P800
1. The grade awarded for a single piece of course work or an NVQ assessment decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.1; 7.1
2. An assessment decision for final unit or course grade(s) or the non-award of a qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.2; 7.2
3. Progression to the next year of a course or another course at College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6.2; 7.2

1. Appeal against the grade awarded for a single piece of course work or an NVQ assessment decision.

Name of person appointed as adjudicator:	
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- Confirm all course assessment procedures conducted correctly:
- Confirm all student assessment evidence relating to the appeal has been reviewed:
- Decision of adjudicator: Appeal upheld Not upheld
- Learner informed of the decision:
- Vice Principal, Head of Faculty; Curriculum Lead; MIS informed of decision:
- Director of Quality informed of decision:

2. Appeal against an assessment decision for final unit or course grade(s) or the non-award of a qualification.

Appeals Committee Membership	Name	Designation
Chairperson appointed by Principal		
Other appointed person		
Other appointed person		
Other appointed person		

- Confirm all course assessment procedures conducted correctly:
- Confirm all learner assessment evidence relating to the appeal has been reviewed:
- Decision of Appeals Committee: Appeal upheld Not upheld
- Learner informed of the decision:
- Vice Principal, Head of Faculty; Curriculum Lead; MIS informed of decision:
- Director of Quality informed of decision:

3. Appeal against a decision not to allow progression to the next year of a course or another course at College.

Appeals Committee Membership	Name
Chairperson appointed by Principal	
Head of Faculty	
Curriculum Lead	
Course Tutor	
Expert if appointed	

Confirm all course assessment procedures conducted correctly:

Confirm content learner tutorial records and personal file reviewed:

Confirm that any special educational needs have been considered and that the learner has not been treated less favourably as a result of these needs

Confirm evidence from staff involved with the learner is considered:

Confirm all learner assessment evidence relating to the appeal has been reviewed:

Decision of Appeals Committee: Appeal upheld Not upheld

Learner informed of the decision:

Head of Faculty; Curriculum Lead; MIS informed of decision:

Director of Quality informed of decision:

Appeals Policy Internally Assessed Marks and Enquiries About Results

Peterborough Regional College is committed to ensuring that whenever staff mark candidates' controlled assessment/coursework this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the awarding body's specification and subject-specific associated documents.

Candidates' work will be marked by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skill, and who have been trained in this activity. Peterborough Regional College is committed to ensuring that work produced by candidates is authenticated in line with the requirements of the awarding body. Where a number of subject teachers are involved in marking candidates' work, internal moderation and standardisation will ensure consistency of marking.

If a candidate believes that this may not have happened in relation to their work, they should discuss the matter with their tutor immediately. If the matter remains unresolved the formal appeals procedure may be used.

An appeal should be made in writing setting the details of the complaint and the reasons for the appeal. The appeal must be made within ten working days of the occurrence of the reason for the appeal to allow time for the process to be carried out and the Awarding body to be informed.

The head of centre will appoint a senior member of staff to conduct the investigation. The senior member of staff will not have had any involvement in the internal assessment process for that subject.

The purpose of the appeal will be to decide whether the process used for internal assessment conformed to the awarding body's specification and subject –specific associated documents.

The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including any relevant correspondence to the awarding body, and any changes made to internal assessment procedures.

The outcome of the appeal will be made known to the Head of Centre and logged as a complaint. A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body on request. Should the appeal bring any irregularity in procedures to light, the awarding body will be informed.

Malpractice

Tutors have the right to reject candidates' work on the grounds of malpractice if any awarding body regulations are contravened. Candidates have the right to appeal against any decisions to reject internally assessed work on the grounds of malpractice using the appeals procedure above.

NOTE

After candidate's work have been internally assessed, it is moderated by the Awarding Body to ensure consistency in marking between centres. The moderation process may lead to mark changes. This process is outside the control of Peterborough Regional College and not covered by this procedure.

Enquiries About Results

EARs may be requested by centre staff or candidates if there are reasonable grounds for believing there has been an error in marking. The consent of candidates must be obtained.

In the instance of a student wishing to request an EAR against the advice of centre staff, this should be referred to the tutor in the first instance and then follow the agreed appeal procedures above.

If, after the appeals process, the centre's decision is still not to support an enquiry about results request, the candidate would need to pay for the enquiry to be processed. This would be the standard fee charged by the Awarding Body.