

## **Fit4Training Assessment Appeals**

Fit4Training is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assesses candidates' work for an Active IQ, YMCA Awards or Ascentis qualification; this will be done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned.

Candidates' work should be produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the awarding body.

Assessments will be conducted by staff with appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills. Where work is divided between staff, consistency will be assured by internal verification and standardisation. If a candidate believes that this may not have happened in relation to his/her work, he/she may make use of this assessment appeals procedure.

Appeals may be made against the assessment processes and the assessment outcome.

Appeals should be made as soon as possible and within two weeks of the assessment.

In the first instance, the candidate should appeal informally to the assessor. The assessor should respond to the appeal within two weeks.

In the event that no satisfactory outcome is reached a written appeal should be made within four weeks of the initial appeal, to the Centre Contact who will investigate. A written acknowledgement of the appeal must be given.

If the Centre Contact was directly involved in the assessment in question, or is unable to conduct the investigation for any other reason, he/she will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation.

The person conducting the investigation will decide whether the process used for the internal assessment conformed with the requirements of the awarding organisation. This will be done within two weeks of the written appeal.

The result of the appeal will be made known in writing to the parties concerned, together with any correspondence with the awarding organisation, any changes made to the assessment of the piece of work in question and any changes made for the future.

A written record of the appeal will be kept and made available to the awarding body at their request. Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.

After work has been assessed and internally verified, it is externally verified by the awarding body to ensure consistency between approved centres. External verification may change the assessment decision made internally but that is outside the control of the approved centre and is not covered by this procedure.

## **Active IQ Appeals Procedure**

Described below is the complete procedure; please refer to the following sections for details on which stages of the procedure to follow in particular circumstances:

### **Stage 1**

All appeals are to be addressed to the centre, who will attempt to resolve the issue. If the candidate is unhappy with the outcome offered, stage 2 must be followed

### **Stage 2**

A formal appeal must be submitted in writing to Active IQ. The candidate must complete the Candidate Appeals Application Form giving the following details:

- name and contact details (address and telephone numbers)
- date appeal first reported to centre
- grounds for appeal
- factual details including dates, what was assessed and what action has been taken so far desired outcome

The form should be sent, together with all the written documentation from the assessment. Video evidence will significantly strengthen the appeal. Within 5 working days of receipt of the written appeal, the Lead Verifier must acknowledge receipt of the appeal by either:

- producing a written solution to the candidate, or
- producing a holding reply and a final reply within an additional 5 working days

In the event that the candidate is unhappy with the response from the Lead Verifier, the appeal will be passed on to stage 3 of the procedure.

### **Stage 3**

All the evidence and the written appeal will be referred to the Director of Active IQ and must reach them within 5 working days of receipt of the Lead Verifier's decision. The Director must acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 working days by offering a formal Appeals Hearing conducted by the Appeals Panel, comprising:

- The Director of Active IQ
- The Lead Verifier of Active IQ
- An Independent Member

The Independent Member of the panel must meet the following criteria:

- They are totally independent of Active IQ
- They have not been, at any time in the past 7 years, a member of Active IQ's board or committees or an employee of or examiner for Active IQ

The candidate will receive a written outcome within 10 working days of the hearing. In the event that the candidate is unhappy with the response from the Panel, the appeal will be passed on to stage 4 of the procedure

## **Stage 4**

All the evidence and the written appeal will be referred to an Independent Reviewer within 5 working days of receipt of the Panel's decision. The Independent Reviewer must acknowledge receipt of the appeal by responding within 5 working days. Their decision will be final. The Independent Reviewer is Chris Whitehouse, Director of QMA Ltd (Quality Management Consultant) The Independent Reviewer must meet the following criteria: They are totally independent of Active IQ and have no links with it They have not been, at any time in the past 7 years, a member of Active IQ's board or committees or an employee of or examiner for Active IQ

## **Fees**

A nominal fee will be charged for handling appeals which progress beyond stage 1 of the procedure; but will be waived if the appeal is upheld. A current list of all fees is available to all customers on our website: [www.ActiveIQ.co.uk](http://www.ActiveIQ.co.uk) In the case of group appeals, the fee per candidate will be reduced, depending on the number of candidates; and if the appeal is upheld, the fee waived. Where such appeals are partially upheld, the fee will be proportionately waived.

## **Monitoring**

All appeals will be monitored by the Director of Active IQ, who will check that Active IQ conducted the appeals in line with the procedure and consistent with the regulatory criteria. The Director will also check that the procedures have been applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

**Candidate Appeals Internal assessment decisions** If the candidate has grounds for appeal against an internal assessment decision i.e. a decision made by the centre, supported by evidence, the procedure above should be followed from stage 1. Should an appeal become successful and the accuracy of candidate results have been jeopardized, Active IQ will ensure that all related candidate results will be reviewed and altered accordingly.

## **External assessment decisions and other decisions affecting candidates**

If the candidate has grounds for appeal against a decision made by Active IQ, the procedure above, commencing at stage 2, should be followed e.g. decisions made on:

- external theory results
- accreditation for prior learning/achievement
- reasonable adjustments
- special consideration
- certification

## **Centre Appeals**

Centres may wish to appeal against a decision made by Active IQ in any of the following areas:

## **External assessment decisions and other decisions affecting**

**candidates** If the centre has grounds for appeal against a decision made by Active IQ affecting candidates, the procedure above, commencing at stage 2, should be followed e.g. decisions made on:

- external theory results
- accreditation for prior learning/achievement
- reasonable adjustments
- special consideration
- certification

## **Ascentis Appeals Procedure**

### **Procedure for Appeal against Assessment**

These procedures apply to all Ascentis qualifications:

- Ofqual accredited programmes
- Access to Higher Education Diploma
- Customised provision

This document sets out the procedures that centres and learners can follow to enquire about, or appeal to Ascentis about:

- 1 The results of assessments
- 2 Decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration
- 3 Decisions relating to any action to be taken against a Learner or Centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration

There may be other circumstances where a centre may appeal against a decision made by Ascentis. Please contact Ascentis for further information.

Ascentis procedures for enquiry and appeal decisions by Ascentis are informed by the following principles:

- the requirements of "natural justice" (e.g., no-one previously involved in confirming the marks should be involved in making a decision; the appellant should have the right to present a case);
- the appeal should come from the individual learner or the recognised centre (marking standards for a whole group must be taken up by the tutor(s))
- the need for the procedure not to deter genuinely mistreated learners from coming forward with an appeal; but
- the need to discourage frivolous or vexatious appeals;
- the need to keep the system simple, to operate on the basis of clear information, and to have time limits.

Centre staff and learners should note that for any potential appeals:

- i) appellants who complain of their treatment, or the provision made, (e.g. quality of tuition, quality of learner/learning support, access to learning resources, library facilities, etc) by a particular centre should be advised that they must present that complaint to the centre, not to Ascentis
- ii) appellants (and centre staff supporting the appellant) should be further advised that a learner's failure to appreciate the rigour of any end-assessment/external assessment does not constitute grounds for appeal on the basis that the learner's coursework was of a much higher standard.

Where the outcome of an appeal brings into question the accuracy of other results, the Appeals Panel will draw the attention of Ascentis Executive to the issue. The Ascentis Executive will consider and take appropriate steps to protect the interests of all relevant learners and the integrity of the qualification.

## **1 RESULTS OF ASSESSMENTS**

### **Stage one – Enquiry on results**

Centres who wish to make an enquiry regarding a candidate's result should complete the Post Enquiry About Results form (EAR) available by contacting Ascentis 01524 845 046. Any enquiries should be received no later than 2 working weeks after the publication of the results.

It is the centres responsibility to ensure candidate permission is sought using the Candidate Consent form as results could go up, down or remain the same.

Ascentis Quality Assurance Manager and subject experts will review the case and communicate the outcome to the centre within 10 to 30 days dependent on the level of review requested.

### **Stage two – Internal Review**

If centres or learners are dissatisfied with the outcome of stage one, then the centre may request an internal review. This should be done within one working week of the notification of the outcome of stage one.

The centre should supply the following information:

- Candidate and centre details
- The grounds of the request for the internal review
- The outcome of the stage one decision
- The endorsement from both candidate and centre (as results may go up, down or remain the same)

The case will be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Senior Manager and Deputy Chief Executive and the centre notified of the outcome within two working weeks.

### **Stage three – External Appeals**

If centres or learners are dissatisfied with the outcome of stage two, an external appeals panel may be convened. Centres should notify Ascentis within two working weeks of the outcome of stage two.

A learner or centre wishing to appeal against a decision made in regard to reasonable adjustments, special considerations must do so in writing within two weeks of the date of the outcome notified by Ascentis. The notification of appeal must be supported with evidence and a report consisting of:

- Centre name address and number
- Candidates name and Ascentis candidate ID number
- The date the centre received notification of Ascentis' decision
- The nature of the appeal
- Any supporting evidence included
- Date of report, appellants name, position and signature

The panel will consist of:

- i) one member whose academic and professional interest relate to a subject area under question
- ii) must include at least one independent member, who is not, and has not been at any time during the past seven years, a member of Ascentis's board or committees, or an employee or external associate of Ascentis
- iii) must include one officer of Ascentis
- iv) must include one member of the Awarding Organisation or Access Validating Agency Committee, who will chair the proceedings

The panel will review the case and centres will be notified following the convening of the panel.

This is usually within 5 working days of the panel being held.

The appeal will either be upheld or rejected. If it is upheld, any necessary further work on the candidates' evidence will be undertaken.

The remit of the External Appeals panel is published separately and is available to centres on request.

### **Stage four - Independent Review**

If the centre considers that the case remains unresolved following stage three, an independent review may be commissioned. The role of the independent review is to consider all evidence from the case including whether Ascentis process has been followed fairly.

The Independent review outcome is final and centres will be notified.

## **2 DECISIONS REGARDING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATION**

A learner or centre wishing to appeal against a decision made in regard to reasonable adjustments, special considerations must do so in writing within two working weeks of the date of the decision made by Ascentis.

The notification of appeal must be supported with evidence and a report consisting of:

- Centre name address and number
- Candidates name and Ascentis candidate ID number
- The date the centre received notification of Ascentis' decision
- The nature of the appeal
- Any supporting evidence included
- Date of report, appellants name, position and signature

### **Stage one – Internal Review**

The case will be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Manager in conjunction with appropriate subject experts. Further information may be requested from the centre and / or learner as a result of the review.

An outcome will be notified to the centre within two working weeks of notification of appeal request.

### **Stage two – External Appeals**

If centres or learners are dissatisfied with the outcome of stage one, an external appeals panel may be convened. Centres should notify Ascentis within two working weeks of the outcome of stage one within two weeks of the published outcome.

The panel will consist of:

- i) one member whose academic and professional interest relate to a subject area under question
- ii) must include at least one independent member, who is not, and has not been at any time during the past seven years, a member of Ascentis' board or committees, or an employee or external associate of Ascentis
- iii) must include one officer of Ascentis
- iv) must include one member of the Awarding Organisation or Access Validating Agency Committee, who will chair the proceedings

The panel will review the case and centres will be notified following the convening of the panel. This is usually within 5 working days of the panel being held.

The appeal will either be upheld or rejected. If it is upheld, any recommended reasonable adjustments will apply.

The remit of the External Appeals panel is published separately and is available to centres on request.

### **Stage three – Independent Review**

If the centre considers that the case remains unresolved following stage 2, an independent review may be commissioned. The role of the independent review is to consider all evidence from the case including whether Ascentis process has been followed fairly.

The Independent review outcome is final and centres will be notified.

### **3 DECISIONS RELATING TO ANY ACTION TO BE TAKEN AGAINST A LEARNER OR CENTRE FOLLOWING AN INVESTIGATION INTO MALPRACTICE OR MALADMINISTRATION**

A learner or centre wishing to appeal against a decision made in regard to an investigation into malpractice or maladministration must do so in writing within two calendar weeks of the date of the outcome notified by Ascentis.

The notification of appeal must be supported with evidence and a report consisting of:

- Centre name address and number
- Candidates name and Ascentis candidate ID number
- The date the centre received notification of Ascentis' decision
- The nature of the appeal
- Any supporting evidence included
- Date of report, appellants name, position and signature.

The following are accepted as reasonable grounds for appeal:

- The incident was not dealt with in accordance with Ascentis' published procedures
- Further evidence (including medical evidence) has come to light which changes the basis of the decision.

Ascentis reserves the right to refuse to accept an appeal application at this point if there is no further evidence to consider and if it considers the grounds for the appeal are weak or unjustified.

When an appeal is received, it is checked for validity. Ascentis will contact the centre to acknowledge receipt of the appeal and advise on the process to be followed.

If possible the appeal will be resolved without a move to a formal appeal hearing.

If an appeal hearing is required, it will be heard by the Ascentis Chief Executive and one independent member.

Ascentis will agree a date and time for the hearing with the appellant and whether the appellant will attend or not.

The hearing will decide on the appropriateness of the original penalty or sanction in light of all information available to it including the additional information provided by the appellant.

The Ascentis Chief Executive's decision upon conclusion of the hearing is final.

## **YMCA Awards Appeal Procedure**

Appeals procedures

Stage one:

Learners should make the first appeal through the centre's appeals system via the Internal Quality Assurer/Centre Contact. If the appeal is unresolved, the learner should be advised of the next stage for appeal.

Please note: The appeal should be made to the Assessor or IQA as soon as possible after the assessment, preferably on the same day, but within 5 working days is acceptable. All centres approved by YMCA Awards will have had their appeals policies and procedures formally approved, a copy of which should be made accessible to the learner at induction.

Stage two:

The centre should contact the External Quality Assurer (EQA). If the EQA is not present or is unable to resolve the appeal issue, the learner should be directed to the third stage of the appeals process.

Stage three:

A written appeal should be made by the learner directly to the YMCA Awards Lead Quality Assurer. The Lead Quality Assurer will investigate the matter thoroughly and respond in writing within 20 working days.

Please note: In extreme circumstances, when the learner feels that the IQA has been unable to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion, the matter may be referred directly to the Head of YMCA Awards, the fourth stage of appeal. Any evidence in writing, in person or by telephone may be requested from the learner during this time.

#### Stage four:

The learner may be offered a formal appeals hearing. This will be conducted within six weeks and will be conducted by the appeals panel comprising:

- an independent appeals board member
- the Head of YMCA Awards
- the Lead Quality Assurer of YMCA Awards
- a Senior Management representative from the centre
- a chairperson employed by YMCA Awards

Please note: Provision of an appeals hearing will incur a nominal fee. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. Please refer to the YMCA Awards website for information on fees. If the appeal is upheld learners may receive an opportunity to re-take the assessment free of charge.

#### Stage five:

In the event of stages 1-4 being exhausted without a satisfactory resolution, stage 5 of the appeals procedure can be invoked:

- in stage 5 the case will be put before an Independent reviewer
- this stage will be considered only if the YMCA Awards stage 4 appeal process has been exhausted
- the appeal must be submitted within 20 working days of receipt of the outcome of stage 4
- the Independent reviewer will check that YMCA Awards has followed correct procedures with regards to the appeals process, and if appropriate they will make recommendations back to the appeals panel
- this is the final stage of the appeal process where a final decision will be made with regards to the outcome of the initial appeal
- the Independent reviewer will inform all parties of the outcome of the review and a report of the hearing will be sent to all parties