

Appeals Policy – Candidate/Learner

1. Policy Statement

Skills Office Network, including its training division Momentous Learning, supports the right of candidates and learners to appeal against any assessment or malpractice decision made by the organisation or its employees.

Skills Office Network is committed to ensuring that all assessment decisions are made fairly, consistently and in accordance with the qualification specification and awarding organisation requirements. Assessment will be carried out by appropriately qualified staff, supported by robust internal quality assurance and standardisation processes. Learners who believe that this has not occurred may use this appeals procedure.

2. Purpose

- To enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment or malpractice decision.
- To resolve appeals at the earliest opportunity, ideally at informal level.
- To standardise and record appeals to ensure transparency and fairness.
- To support a learner's right of appeal to the awarding organisation, where applicable.
- To protect learner interests and uphold the integrity of qualifications.
- To cover appeals relating to assessment outcomes, access arrangements, procedural errors, or potential bias or discrimination.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all Skills Office Network employees and learners enrolled on a qualification or training programme. It outlines the process for appealing assessment or malpractice decisions and includes the right to escalate appeals to awarding organisations where necessary.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Centre Manager:

Leads the investigation and manages the appeals process, keeping the learner informed throughout.

4.2 Assessor/Trainer:

Supports the appeal process by providing relevant documentation to enable fair decision-making.

4.3 Candidate/Learner:

Provides necessary information and supporting evidence as part of the appeal.

5. Policy Implementation – Procedures

Skills Office Network will inform all learners of the Appeals Policy and Malpractice Policy at induction and provide access via the website and learner handbook.

5.1 Informal Appeal

Learners should first attempt to resolve the concern with the tutor or assessor. If the issue involves a final summative decision, learners may approach the Quality Manager or assessor's IQA. This step should be completed within one year of the assessment decision.

5.2 Reasons for Appeal

- Appeals may be raised for reasons including:
- Disagreement with marks or outcomes for coursework, observations, exams or tests
- Assessments not conducted in line with internal or awarding body regulations
- Administrative errors in the assessment process
- Extenuating circumstances unknown to the assessor
- Inappropriate or irregular behaviour by the assessor
- Concerns about bias, discrimination, access arrangements or other procedural issues

See also the Malpractice and Plagiarism Policy for further guidance.

5.3 Formal Appeal – Stage One

The learner should discuss the appeal with the assessor or IQA (if present) on the day of or soon after the assessment.

5.4 Formal Appeal – Stage Two

If unresolved, the learner should submit a written appeal to the assessor's IQA within 7 days, including the Learner Appeal Form and evidence. The IQA will conduct an investigation and provide findings to the Centre Manager or Lead IQA. A written response is issued within 5 working days. If the IQA was involved in the original decision or is unavailable, an alternative IQA will be appointed.

Skills Office Network will support escalation to the awarding organisation/EPAO if the learner remains dissatisfied or if any significant irregularity is identified.

5.5 Formal Appeal – Stage Three

If still unresolved, learners may submit a written appeal to the awarding organisation's External Quality Assurer (EQA). The EQA will investigate in line with awarding body procedures and timeframes (usually within 10–20 working days). If necessary, the EQA may escalate to the awarding body's Lead Verifier.

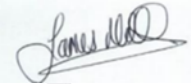
5.6 Additional Information

- Learners must notify the centre of any medical condition likely to affect assessment before it takes place. This allows for appropriate support to be put in place, such as reasonable adjustments or deferral, where appropriate. Requests for deferral of practical assessments or reasonable adjustments due to medical reasons must be supported by a doctor's note or other relevant evidence, in line with the awarding organisation's or EPAO's regulations.
- Functional Skills and other online tests follow awarding organisation regulations. Skills Office Network will support learners who wish to appeal decisions made externally.

- External verification may change assessment outcomes. Appeals related to external verification decisions should be made directly to the awarding body/EPAO.
- Records of appeals will be retained for a minimum of three years and monitored to support continuous improvement.

This policy is available in alternative formats upon request to support accessibility.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose, compliant with regulatory requirements, and reflective of current practice.

Approved by (Director Name)	James Neilands
Director Signature	
Date	April 2025