

Name of Policy

ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE

Purposes

To ensure fair and consistent academic assessment decisions and allow for appeals to be made where there is concern regarding such decisions.

Author / Job Title

Head of Quality and Professional Development

**Equality Assessment
By Whom**

Date

Version

6

**Date of next review
(month & year)**

11/2018

Approved by Date

Senior Manager

SMT

11/04/17

Corporation

**Related policies or
procedures or parent
policy if applicable**

**Groups/bodies
consulted in the
development of the
policy**

**To be published on
College website**

YES

ARRANGEMENTS FOR INTERNAL APPEALS ABOUT INTERNAL ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

Macclesfield College has a rigorous and transparent appeals process which includes:

- an appeals procedures relating to internal assessment decisions, which covers: ○ grading of assessed work ○ achievement or competence ○ referral or progression ○ accreditation of prior learning.
- a formal procedure for handling disputes when a candidate disagrees with a decision by the centre not to support an enquiry
- published procedures which are made widely available and accessible to all candidates.

Such a process will normally be required when all other mechanisms within the College (for example, discussion between candidates and the Assessor) have failed to resolve the matter. It will be the final stage in the normal process of considering and resolving disputes. It is expected that it will be used only in exceptional circumstances.

The Awarding Bodies will monitor the process in the following ways:

- centres will be required to produce documentation relating to their procedures for hearing appeals against internal assessment decisions or enquiries about results
- the written records of any appeals will also be required and relevant details of any appeal must be made available to the Awarding Body on request.

(An Awarding Body inspection would be ascertaining that an internal appeals procedure is in place and that records of any appeals are being kept but would not be judging either the appeals process or the decisions reached.)

Curriculum Managers and/or Team Leaders manage appeals within their curriculum area. They are responsible for disseminating information to all candidates about the appeals procedures and for informing the Principal about the existence and outcome of all such appeals. In the case of some Higher Education programmes, appeals procedures may be stipulated by a Higher Education Institution (HEI) (eg in the case of a Foundation Degree programme) or awarding bodies (eg Pearson/BTEC). Details of appeals procedures for Higher Education programmes must be included in all course handbooks and follow the direction of the HEI/awarding bodies.

Candidates (and assessors) on all courses must be made aware of the Appeals Policy. It is therefore suggested that the following statement be included in the Student Course Handbook and/or the Student Induction programmes where information by awarding bodies is not provided:

Internal Appeals Procedure

Assessors take every care to ensure that assessments are conducted in fair manner and accurately reflect the learning outcomes or performance criteria. However, if a candidate is unsure or unhappy about the assessment given, and they are not able to resolve assessment dispute informally with assessor, they should then ask their personal tutor for a candidate appeal form and take the following action:

- **Stage One:** Appeal in writing to the assessor who assessed the evidence within 5 working days of the assessment decision. A written reply, giving a clear explanation of the decision, must be given by the assessor within 10 working days. If the candidate is still not satisfied...
- **Stage Two:** Speak to their tutor who will contact, within 5 working days, an Internal Verifier/Moderator from the programme area, who has not been involved in the assessment decision. They will review the assessor's decision and the candidate evidence. They will give the candidate a written reply within 5 working days. If the candidate is still not satisfied.....
- **Stage Three:** Speak to their tutor who will contact an independent Internal Verifier, preferably with some subject knowledge, within 5 working days. An appeals hearing occurs within 5 working days. The following will be invited to provide evidence at the hearing (at least two of which should not have been previously involved in the appeal):
 - 1 The candidate
 - 2 A friend of the candidate (if the candidate wishes)
 - 3 The independent Internal Verifier or expert from Stage Two
 - 4 The original assessor
 - 5 Senior Manager
 - 6 Member of staff/governor.

A candidate will be given reasonable notice of the hearing date. They will have sight of all relevant documents (eg the marks given, the assessments made) to the case in advance of the hearing. The assessor(s) and candidate will have the opportunity to hear each other's submission to the panel at the hearing. The evidence will be reviewed and the candidate will be given an oral (and written) decision.

A written record of all appeals will be kept. This record will include the outcome of the appeal and reasons for that outcome. We will send a copy to the candidate within 5 days.

The College will inform the Awarding Body if there is any change to an internally assessed mark as a result of an appeal. Any internal dispute or appeal against an internal assessment decision will be resolved speedily, since Awarding Bodies' cannot change the dates on which certificates are printed and issued.

The candidate appeal form (Appendix 1 - available from the Personal Tutor/Internal Verifier) must be used for each of the above stages, with copies being given to the candidate, the original assessor and Internal Verifier as appropriate. The Internal Verifier is responsible for keeping a copy on their file, which is available to the External Verifier.

- **Stage Four:** Appeal directly to the awarding body e.g. Pearson or Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)

Awarding bodies expect most enquiries or appeals from individual learners to be resolved within the centre and will only consider an individual learner's enquiry or appeal after the centre's internal enquiries or appeals have been fully utilised. Most awarding body appeals focus on procedure and are not concerned with making judgements about learner work.

Where a learner considers the centre's internal enquiries or appeals policy to have failed to produce a satisfactory outcome, learners are advised to make an enquiry or appeal, in writing, to the awarding body and to provide evidence that they have exhausted the centre appeal procedure.

The following documents may provide useful information:-

- Enquiries and Appeals about Pearson Vocational Qualifications policy (September 2014)
- Manchester Metropolitan University Procedure for Academic Appeals and Review of Assessment Related Matters

- **Stage Five:** Appeal to the Regulator (OFQUAL)

For Higher Education appeals, once all stages of the College and awarding body procedures have been exhausted, students have the right to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education for further review. An application to the OIA must be made within 12 Months of the issue of a Completion of Procedures letter.

Awarding Body Appeals Procedure

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) awarding bodies are working towards a common set of procedures for the receipt and processing of appeals. These procedures are governed by the *Code of Practice* for GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project qualifications. Awarding bodies accept appeals in relation to three areas of their work. These are:-

- **Appeals against results** – when a centre is still dissatisfied with an examination result or results following enquiries about results processes.
- **Appeals against malpractice decisions** – following a decision to apply a penalty because of malpractice in an examination/assessment.
- **Appeals against decisions made in respect of access arrangements and special consideration.**

Reference should be made to the publication JCQ A Guide to The Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes (Effective from 1 September 2013) for details of who is eligible to appeal and the appeals process for each type of appeal.

In the case of appeals in relation to Higher Education provision, reference should be made to the relevant University appeals process(es).

Appendix 1

Assessment Decision Appeal Form

Candidate (print):

Assessor (print):

Course:

Assignment Title:

Why I think the decision is wrong? (completed by candidate):

Date:

Stage 1 Decision

Assessor print & sign:

Date:

I am/ am not happy with this decision

Candidate sign:

Date:

Stage 2 Decision

Independent IV or subject expert print & sign:
Date:

I am/ am not happy with this decision

Candidate sign:

Date:

Stage 3 Decision

**Independent Senior Manager on behalf of the panel. print & sign:
Date:**

I am/ am not happy with this decision

Candidate sign:

Date:

Stage 4 Appeal directly to awarding body yes/no Date:

Stage 5 Appeal directly to the Regulator yes/no Date: