



DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd

Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. PURPOSE

This document sets out the DistanceLearningCentre.com Ltd.'s policy and procedure for cases where a learner disputes and challenges assessment decisions of a tutor/assessor.

2. SCOPE

2.1 Appeals of internal assessment decisions apply to all externally moderated accredited programmes and pathways at the DistanceLearningCentre.com with the exception of appeals relating to the situation outlined in point 2.2 below.

2.2 If a learner undertaking a work-based placement is suspended from duty pending a disciplinary enquiry by the workplace; no further assessments will take place until the issues of concern have been resolved.

2.3 Learners have a right to approach the Awarding Body (through the Executive Director - Academic) for appeals related to external assessments.

2.4 Learners are assured that they will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal in good faith.

2.5 This policy and procedure is applicable to all Learners on externally moderated accredited learning programmes or pathways at the DistanceLearningCentre.com, specifically the access HE diploma pathways, full or partial achievements, as well as the progression awards qualifications.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 A **learner** is any person who is enrolled on a programme or pathway of study leading to a recognised qualification with the DistanceLearningCentre.com.

3.2 A **tutor** or **assessor** is a member of staff facilitating any assessment and/or grading activity.

3.3 **Lead internal verifiers** are nominated persons in the organisation who provide advice and guidance on assessment decisions and student appeals.

3.4 The **appeals panel** is a group consisting of a DistanceLearningCentre.com Executive Director (Chair), lead internal verifier for the relevant qualification and an independent assessor. The appeals panel will consider the learner's appeal.

4. DESCRIPTION

APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

4.1 In such cases where a learner disagrees with the grading decision of his/her work the learner can appeal against the decision of the tutor/assessor. Appeals will follow a number of stages as outlined below.

4.2 Stage 1

4.2.1 In the first instance the learner must lodge an appeal regarding the assessment decision to the relevant tutor/assessor. The appeal must be forwarded to the assessor within 5 working days on receipt of the assessment decision, except under exceptional or extenuating circumstances.

4.2.2 The tutor/assessor will respond within 5 working days of receiving the appeal. If a tutor/assessor is on leave this period may be longer as it must be the assessor who marked the work to whom stage 1 of the appeal is made. The response from the tutor/assessor will be one of the following:

- A further explanation of the assessment decision and a re-affirmation of the grade awarded
- A re-grading and amendment to the learner's assessment feedback sheet and assessment record
- If an administrative error has been made (for example, in the completion or calculation of the unit grade profile) the error will be corrected.
- If none of the above then the tutor/assessor will refer the learner to stage 2 below and the completion of the Learner Internal Assessment Appeal Form.

4.3 Stage 2

4.3.1 On receipt of a completed Learner Internal Assessment Appeal Form (Section 1 completed) the tutor/assessor will forward this appeal form to the relevant lead internal verifier. In addition, the tutor/assessor will also provide the original assessment feedback sheet and, if appropriate, the candidate's evidence for the appeal.

4.3.2 Upon receipt of the Learners Internal Assessment Appeal Form the lead verifier will review the original assessment decision by evaluating all the evidence presented. This activity will be completed within 10 working days (assuming the lead verifier is not on leave).

4.3.3 The lead internal verifier will then:

- Conclude there is no case for re-grading (that is the tutor/assessors original decision is confirmed), the grade indicators are included in the unit grade profile, and the decision is recorded.
- Recommend a change in the grade. If the lead internal verifier's evaluation concludes that there may be a case for re-grading, the work will be referred to the external verifier (also referred to as an external moderator or external quality

reviewer). In these circumstances, the external verifier will need to consider the assessed work directly and satisfy him/herself that an error of judgement has been made in order to approve a change to the grade. Any such changes will be formally recorded.

- No adjustment to tutor/assessor grades can be made without the written agreement of the external verifier.

The external verifier's judgement is final. (Section 3 of the Learner Internal Assessment Appeal Form is completed)

This appeals procedure complies with advice from QAA (2008)

LEARNER INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEAL FORM

<u>SECTION 1</u>	
Name of Learner:	
Name of Assessor:	
Name of Lead Internal Verifier:	
Date of Decision:	
Unit(s)/Subject(s) of Appeal:	
Assessor's comments on issue which is the subject of appeal is based:	
Learner's/employer's reasons for appeal:	
Learner signature and date:	
Assessor signature and date:	

<u>SECTION 2</u>	
Lead Internal Verifier's decision:	
Date appeal received:	
Date of reply to appeal:	
Name of Lead Internal Verifier:	
Signature of Lead Internal Verifier:	

<u>SECTION 3</u>	
External Verifier's decision:	
Date of external verification:	
Date of reply to appeal:	
External verifier's name:	
External verifier's signature:	

Entered in the Appeals Log: Yes/No

Date appeal logged: _____

Learner's Record Holder's Name: _____

Signature: _____

ACADEMIC APPEALS PANEL TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. The academic appeals panel will consider the learner's views as well as the information provided by the original tutor/assessor and the lead internal verifier.
2. Any supporting evidence provided by the learner's colleague/friend will then be heard or considered.
3. All information supplied by learners will be treated confidentially and will only be shared with those persons necessary. Representations will be treated fairly and without bias.
4. At this point the learner and his/her colleague/friend will leave the academic appeals panel meeting so that the panel members can discuss all the evidence presented to arrive at a decision.
5. This decision by the academic appeals panel will be final and will be conveyed to the learner and the tutor/assessor in writing within 5 (five) working days of the appeals panel meeting.
6. A copy of the letter sent to the learner and the tutor/assessor together with all written evidence presented to the appeals panel will be kept in the external verifier's file.

LEARNER EXTERNAL ACADEMIC APPEALS FORM

ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS

Candidate Consent Form

Information for candidates

The following information explains what may happen following an enquiry about the result of your qualification. If the Centre makes an enquiry about the decision of the external moderator after your subject grade has been issued, there are three possible outcomes:

- Your original mark is lowered, so your final grade may be lower than the original grade you received.
- Your original mark is confirmed as correct, and there is no change to your grade.
- Your original mark is raised, so your final grade may be higher than the original grade you received.

In order to proceed with the enquiry about results, you must sign the form below. By completing and signing this form you are informing the Executive Director (Academic) that you have understood what the outcome might be, and that you give your consent to the enquiry being made.

Candidate consent form

Candidate Name:	
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Details of enquiry (Awarding Body, Qualification level, Subject title, unit)

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I give my consent to the Executive Director (Academic) to make an enquiry about the result of the unit (s) listed above. In giving consent I understand that the final subject grade awarded to me may be lower than, higher than, or the same as the grade which was originally awarded for this subject.

Signed:

Date: