



ACADEMY
Online Learning Ltd

Appeals Policy

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Academy Online Learning Ltd

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1.0 Introduction

This purpose of this policy is to ensure that any appeals are dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively. AOLL aims to resolve a straightforward appeal within 10 working days of receipt of the written appeal. If an appeal is complex, for example, where extensive documentation requires to be scrutinised, then the timescale for AOLL to reach a final conclusion shall be within 30 working days of receiving the written appeal.

1.2 Scope

The appeals procedure covers all approved learning programmes. An appeal brought by learners, groups of learners or their representatives will be dealt primarily by following the AOLL internal stages of appeal. All learners are made aware of the Appeals Policy through the student handbook. Policies are available from the AOLL website.

2.0 Persons Affected

2.1 Learners or groups of learners or their representatives who wish to make an appeal.

2.2 AOLL tutors/assessors/quality review team.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Appeal: this is a process where learners can challenge a decision on the award of credits or assessment decisions.

3.2 Academic appeals are defined as appealing against specific assessment decisions arising from internal assessment processes. The appeals procedure

can be implemented by a learner or representative to challenge an assessment decision if they believe this to be unfair or an inaccurate assessment of his/her work.

3.3 Malpractice appeals are defined as appealing against specific decisions arising from investigations into malpractice.

3.4 Extenuating circumstance appeals are defined as appealing against specific decisions arising from requests for extenuating circumstances, such as extension requests.

3.5 Learner: includes any enrolled person whose work is being assessed resulting in a recognised qualification under the AOLL provision.

3.5 The Skills and Education Group (AVA): Awarding Organisation

3.6 Open Awards: Awarding Organisation

4.0 Responsibilities

4.1 Learners shall appeal using the specified process

4.2 The Quality Review Team will fully investigate all appeals brought to their attention.

4.2 The Quality Manager will provide awarding organisations with brief details of appeals AOLL have received from learners using their qualifications.

4.3 Awarding organisations will act upon appeals only if the AOLL appeals procedures have been followed first.

5.0 Policy

AOLL ensure that learners can appeal against:

- Assessment decisions and/or outcomes, including external assessment results.

- The outcome of an investigation into suspected malpractice.
- Decisions concerning requests for reasonable adjustment or special considerations, including extension requests.

5.1 Learners or their representatives, are invited to appeal directly to the Quality Manager within 5 working days of receiving any decision.

5.2 The appeal should be made on the appropriate Appeals Form, which can be downloaded from the VLE.

5.3 The appeal should be made on the basis that any decision was a result of procedures not being consistently applied or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly.

5.4 Learners must provide all the assistance necessary to enable the Quality Review Team to investigate the appeal fully. AOLL will not act upon appeals unless the appeals procedures have been followed first.

5.5 The Quality Manager will provide Skills and Education Group with brief details of appeals AOLL have received from Learners using Skills and Education Group qualifications, including timescales and information about the outcome of an appeal within 5 working days.

5.6 Learners using Skills and Education Group qualifications, or their representatives, who are not satisfied by the outcomes of an appeal made to AOLL, are invited to appeal directly to Skills and Education Group within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

To appeal to Skills and Education Group contact 01924 434600.

The appeal should be made on the basis that AOLL did not apply procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly.

Learners must provide all the assistance necessary to enable Skills and Education Group representatives to investigate the appeal fully. This includes providing a copy of AOLL response to the initial appeal.

Please note: Skills and Education Group will not act upon appeals unless the AOLL appeals procedures have been followed first. Learners or their representative who wish to make an appeal should first of all appeal directly to AOLL.

5.7 Learners using Open Awards qualifications, or their representatives, who wish to appeal, are invited to appeal directly to Open Awards within 10 working days of receiving the decision about which their appeal relates.

To appeal to Open Awards contact quality@openawards.org.uk.

6.0 Procedure to Appeal

6.1 Stage One

If a learner wishes to appeal against any AOLL decision, they should:

6.11 Contact their tutor by telephone or VLE message within 5 working days of receiving the decision to informally discuss the outcome and state why they feel it is unfair or incorrect.

6.12 Alternatively, contact the Quality Manager at amy.green@academyonlinelearning.com within 5 working days of receiving the assessment decision to informally discuss the outcome and state why they feel it is unfair or incorrect.

6.13 If an agreed outcome is not reached following contact by email or telephone, the learner is invited to complete the Appeals Form (available from the VLE) and submit this to the Quality Manager with any supporting evidence.

6.2 Stage Two

Upon receipt of an appeal form from a learner, the AOLL Quality manager will immediately:

6.21 E-mail receipt to the sender.

6.22 Forward a copy of the appeal to the Quality Review Team.

6.23 Enter a record of receipt and copies sent as appropriate and listed above, onto the appeals log.

6.3 The Quality Review Team will convene to consider whether the appeal falls within the scope of AOLL Appeal Policy.

6.31 If it does not fall within the scope, the Quality Review Team will write to the learner giving the reasons why the appeal cannot be acted upon. The Quality Review team will inform the learner if s/he should follow an alternative procedure, and will refer the matter to the relevant person as appropriate.

6.32 If the appeal falls within the scope of AOLL appeal policy the appeal arrangements will be started as soon as possible, to allow sufficient time to enable the thirty day response deadline to be met.

6.33 The Quality Review team will send an email acknowledgement within 5 working days to the learner; the email will confirm receipt of the appeal and inform the learner that AOLL will convene an Appeals Panel to consider the appeal, and convey the decision of the Appeals Panel to the learner within thirty working days.

The Appeals Panel will be serviced by the Quality Manager and may include a tutor who was not the assessor, along with members of senior management.

6.4 Stage Three

In preparation for the Appeals Panel meeting, the Quality Manager will seek relevant information and documentation from both the learner and the assessor.

6.41 The Quality Manager will circulate all information relating to the appeal, including a suggested agenda, to the members of the Appeals Panel at least 5 working days before the panel meeting.

6.42 The Appeals Panel will elect a Chair from within the panel, and at the meeting will consider the evidence and seek to agree a conclusion based on the evidence presented. The appeal will be judged according to the extent to which the assessor applied the relevant procedures consistently, properly and fairly.

6.5 Stage Four

The Chair of the Appeals Panel will write to the learner, providing a judgement on each point raised by the learner, referencing this judgement with relevant evidence. The initial conclusions will, if appropriate, identify any recommendation or implications of the outcome.

6.51 Learners will be notified about appeals decisions within 5 working days of conclusion of the appeal. Appeal outcomes may consist of:

6.511 Reassessment by another appropriate qualified member of staff.

6.512 Confirmation of the original grade.

6.513 Re-grading agreed in line with the new evidence presented.

6.52 The decision of the Appeals panel is final. If there is the potential for adverse effects following the outcome of an appeal:

6.521 The Quality Manager will complete a report and within 2 working days and forward this to the relevant awarding body. The Quality Manager, in collaboration with all appropriate parties, will investigate any incident of this nature using the relevant procedure.

6.62 Where the outcome of an appeal, e.g. against an assessment decision, brings into question the accuracy or results of other learners in the same assessment, AOLL will take appropriate step to identify any other learner who may have been affected, correct or mitigate as far as possible any affect, and ensure that the same situation does not recur in the future.

6.53 Throughout this process AOLL will work to protect the interests of all learners and the integrity of the qualification, and to comply with regulatory requirements.

6.54 The Quality Review team will update the appeals log with all actions at all stages, and with the outcomes once the appeal has been concluded.

6.55 The Quality Manager will review the appeals log biannually, which will:

6.551 Include trends and conclusions, and use these to make quality improvements as appropriate, including changes to Quality Assurance processes and procedures if necessary.

6.552 report back to the Senior Management Team to inform the self-assessment process.

6.553 Report on appeals at the two Final Awards Board (in July and December).

6.56 In the event of a learner making an appeal to the Skills and Education Group or Open Awards, AOLL will provide all the assistance necessary to enable appropriate representatives to investigate the appeal fully. This includes providing a copy of all documentation relating to the original decision that is the subject of the appeal.

Note: The Awards Board cannot receive any appeals based on academic judgements; such requests from students must have been resolved through the QAA process of representation before the Awards Board is convened.