

**FREQUENTLY ASKED
QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR
KEY POLICIES**



We want you and your candidates to enjoy our qualifications and awards and receive an exceptional level of customer service from us. That's why we like to help and support you however we can and make it easier for you to work with us.

So we've put together popular questions about 3 of our key policies:

- ◆ [Appeals and Enquiries about Results](#)
- ◆ [Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations](#)
- ◆ [Malpractice.](#)

Click on the relevant policy to see the questions and then click on a question to find out the answer – it's as simple as that!

If we haven't answered your question or you want more information about your responsibilities, have a look at the full policies on our website at www.ncfe.org.uk. Don't forget you can still contact us on 0191 239 8000 or your External Contractor¹ for guidance.

We'd love to hear from you....

We really hope you find this information helpful. Please let us know what you think and if there's anything you'd like us to add or make clearer. Just email feedback@ncfe.org.uk

¹ External Contractors include External Moderators, External Verifiers and Quality Advisors.



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APPEALS AND ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS

Question 1: What's the difference between an 'enquiry about a result' and an 'appeal'?

An enquiry about a result relates purely to a candidate's internal assessment (portfolio evidence) or external assessment result and is what we describe as the 'first' stage of a review of their result.

An appeal has 2 parts to it. Firstly, if a candidate is still unhappy with the outcome of the first stage of their enquiry about a result, then they can appeal against that decision. Secondly, you may be unhappy about the following aspects of our service and wish to appeal against our decisions about, for example:

- ◆ why we couldn't approve you to offer a product
- ◆ the contents of a visit report from one of our External Contractors
- ◆ why we've declined your request to make reasonable adjustments or give special considerations
- ◆ a sanction we've given you as a result of malpractice.

Question 2: How do I tell you about an enquiry about a result or an appeal?

It's simple! If you'd like us to review a result for either an internal or external assessment, complete our 'Enquiry about a Result form' and send it to us. For other appeals as set out in Section 2.1 of our 'Appeals and Enquiries about Results' policy, send us your own report together with any supporting evidence. You and your candidate have up to 30 working days from the date we told you about your candidate's result or our decision to submit your enquiry about a result or appeal. Don't worry if you need more time to submit your form or report – just give us a call to let us know when we're likely to expect it so we can look out for it.



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Question 3: What will you do when you receive my enquiry about a result or appeal?

We'll tell you we've received it and we'll conduct a thorough review of the details you've given us. Depending on the nature and stage of the enquiry about a result or appeal we'll either use our own staff, External Contractors or an independent person to carry out the review. We'll keep you updated about our progress and explain what we do at each stage.

Question 4: How long will it take you to review my enquiry about a result or appeal?

As a guide, we aim to complete the review of your enquiry about a result within 10 working days of you telling us about it. Please note that for other appeals the review could take up to 20 working days to complete eg if we need to arrange a panel. We'll keep in touch with you along the way to let you know what's happening and the timescales. We'll let you know the outcome of our review by phone and email within one working day of us finishing the review.

Question 5: Will I have to pay?

Not necessarily! You only pay if our original decision or your original result doesn't change or if we need to carry out a centre visit as part of our review. Have a look at our current [Fees and Pricing document](#) for details.

Question 6: What other guidance can you give me about your enquiries about results and appeals process?

Lots! Our full and detailed **Appeals and Enquiries about Results Policy** tells you more about:

- ◆ what you need to tell us when you submit your enquiry about a result or appeal
- ◆ what happens and who's involved at each stage of the enquiry about a result or appeal
- ◆ additional arrangements for specific qualifications.

Don't forget you can also contact us or your External Contractor – we'll all be happy to help you!



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REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Question 1: What are 'reasonable adjustments'?

Candidates who have a permanent or temporary disability, specific learning need or medical condition might need extra support to help them complete the qualification or award and to make sure that their result reflects their achievement in the assessment.

Reasonable adjustments are actions you can take to make sure that your candidates will have a fair and equal chance of achieving the assessment without changing the qualification and assessment requirements to suit their needs. The actions aren't designed to make the assessments easier or give the candidates an advantage.

When you complete your candidates' inductions onto the programme, you'll need to ask them if they've any disabilities, learning difficulties etc. If so, they must provide evidence of their condition so that you can make the appropriate reasonable adjustments to make sure that they have a fair and enjoyable learning experience.

Question 2: What kinds of reasonable adjustments can I make without your approval?

Quite a lot! We let you make a variety of reasonable adjustments without having to get our approval in the first place. The adjustments will obviously depend on the candidate's needs and the assessment requirements of the qualification or award. Examples are:

- ◆ using a reader or writer
- ◆ allowing extra time to complete an external assessment
- ◆ using coloured overlays
- ◆ making changes in the assessment room, eg sitting candidates who have a hearing impairment near the Tutor/Assessor.



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Question 3: How do you check what reasonable adjustments I've made?

Our External Contractors will discuss and review any arrangements you've made when they visit you. Don't forget you can always contact us or your External Contractor for help and guidance at any time.

For candidates who sit an external assessment, all your Invigilator needs to do is record on the Invigilator's Register what reasonable adjustments have been made for the candidate and return it to us when the candidate has completed the external assessment. Simple!

Question 4: What reasonable adjustments do you need to approve before we use them?

If any of your candidates need their workbooks or external assessment papers modified or in Braille, we'll do that for you – free of charge – but you'll need to let us know well in advance so we can make sure the workbooks or papers are ready in time. Just fill in our Request for Reasonable Adjustments form and send your request for modified workbooks or external assessment papers 15 working days before you need them and your request for them to be in Braille 30 working days before you need them.

Question 5: How long will it take you to review my application for reasonable adjustments?

We'll aim to complete the review of your completed form within 2 working days. We'll keep in touch along the way to let you know what's happening and phone you to let you know the outcome of the review. If we're unable to agree your request, we'll try to suggest a suitable alternative reasonable adjustment.

Question 6: What are 'special considerations'?

These are unforeseen circumstances which can affect a candidate's performance during or near the time of the assessment. Examples could be:

- ◆ recent personal illness, accident or bereavement
- ◆ serious disturbance during the assessment
- ◆ alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment were inappropriate or inadequate.



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Question 7: What do I do if I think my candidate may be eligible for special considerations?

Contact us straight away to tell us what's happened and we'll tell you what you need to send us so that we'll have all the relevant information to make our decision. This is because we need to make sure that any decisions we make don't give the candidate an advantage or compromise the integrity of the assessment. Examples of what we may be able to do are:

- ◆ extend the time/registration period for internal assessment
- ◆ offer a special award based on the achievement of the internal assessment and at least 50% achievement of the external assessment.

Question 8: How long will it take you to review my application for special considerations?

We'll acknowledge and review your request and let you know the outcome within 48 hours of receiving your request. If, for any reason, it's going to take longer, we'll keep in touch with you along the way to let you know what's happening.

Question 9: What other guidance can you give me about reasonable adjustments and special considerations?

Lots! Our full and detailed **Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy** tells you more about:

- ◆ what reasonable adjustments and special considerations are and why we need them
- ◆ other arrangements you can make without our approval beforehand
- ◆ details of what you need to tell us and what we do.

Don't forget you can also contact us or your External Contractor – we'll all be happy to help you!



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MALPRACTICE

Question 1: What's 'malpractice'?

We recognise that you and your candidates make every effort to follow our procedures, however, sometimes things don't go according to plan and mistakes and problems occur. It's our job to help you find out what went wrong and how we can work together to put it right.

Malpractice is any activity or practice which deliberately contravenes procedures and regulations. If it means that there are serious concerns about the integrity of the assessment or the validity of certificates then we'll take it very seriously.

You may also have heard the term 'Maladministration'. This is any activity or practice which results in non-compliance with regulations, however, it's normally because genuine mistakes have been made rather than any deliberate plan to gain any unfair advantage. If this happens, we'll work with you to rectify the problem because we want to help you understand our procedures.

Question 2: What kind of things can go wrong that may result in malpractice?

When qualifications and awards are delivered, there are a variety of things that could go wrong but we'll work with you to sort the problem out. Here are some examples of what could be classed as malpractice:

- ◆ not carrying out delivery, internal assessment, internal moderation/verification according to our requirements
- ◆ making fraudulent claims for certificates
- ◆ postponing visits by our External Contractors for more than 6 months
- ◆ cheating of any nature by candidates.

Question 3: What should I do if I think malpractice has happened?

Tell us straight away so that we can put the wheels in motion to carry out a thorough review of what's happened. You can either complete our Malpractice Report form and send it to us or you can send us your report of what's happened.



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Question 4: What will you do when we notify you of malpractice?

We'll tell you we've received your report and we'll review the details and discuss our plan of action with you as we may need your help to find out information from your colleagues or candidates. We'll then investigate the matter so that we can reach the right decision. We realise that investigations aren't always pleasant for everyone involved, however, we'll treat the matter sensitively and respect everyone's feelings. We'll keep you updated of progress and explain what we do at each stage.

Question 5: How long will it take you to carry out your investigation?

We're all keen to resolve the matter so, as a guide, we aim to resolve it within 30 working days of you telling us about it. We'll keep in touch with you along the way to let you know what's happening and the timescales.

Question 6: What happens if you find evidence of malpractice?

First and foremost, if we don't find evidence of malpractice we'll tell you straight away. If we do find evidence, then this is what usually happens:

We have to report any malpractice to the regulators (Ofqual in England, DCELLS in Wales and CCEA in Northern Ireland). They want to know why malpractice happened, what's been done to prevent it from happening again and how we can make sure that everyone involved understands the correct procedures.

We've a number of options (referred to as 'sanctions') and we'll make sure we apply the appropriate sanction after consultation with you.

If it's centre malpractice, sanctions could include:

- ◆ suspending your centre approval status for all of our programmes
- ◆ suspending your candidate's registration and/or certification service for one or more programmes
- ◆ increasing the level of external moderation/verification visits we make.

The sanction is usually temporary as we work with you to rectify the problem and reinstate the correct procedures. Once this has been achieved we can remove the sanction.



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If it's candidate malpractice, sanctions could include:

- ◆ disallowing all or part of the candidate's assessment evidence or marks
- ◆ not issuing the candidate's certificate(s)
- ◆ disqualifying the candidate from the programme.

If we find evidence that a candidate cheated then their result for that programme is void. Nevertheless they may have the opportunity to redo the assessment – we'll discuss this option with you in the first instance.

Question 7: Will I have to pay?

Not necessarily! The only time you may have to pay is if we visit you to review evidence or interview people as part of our investigation.

Question 8: What other guidance can you give me about malpractice?

Lots! Our full and detailed **Malpractice Policy** tells you more about:

- ◆ what you need to tell us when you submit your report of malpractice
- ◆ what happens and who's involved in the investigation
- ◆ the kinds of examples of malpractice and sanctions.
- ◆

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