Enquiries about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy

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Revisions		
Version Number	**Date**	**Changes**
V1.6	15-01-25	Annual review – section 3.2.3 added wording to state a review of moderation is an independent review. Section 3.2.4 timeframes for expedited review of moderation for T Level qualifications added to align to our webpage. Links checked. Document may enter an earlier review due to alignment with JCQ documentation Summer 25.
V1.7	28-02-25	Section 3.1 updated to include link to NCFE website.

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ADEL-006 V1.7 – 28-02-2025   **Visit** ncfe.org.uk   **Call** 0191 239 8000   Page **2** of **12**

Contents

1. Introduction

This policy sets out NCFE's framework for dealing with enquiries about results, by outlining the processes and procedures for our customers.

1.1. Purpose

The policy forms part of NCFE's quality assurance arrangements by allowing our customers, on behalf of a learner or a group of learners, to submit an enquiry regarding results awarded, in line with our processes, procedures and policies.

1.2. Scope

The policy relates to vocational and technical qualifications within and across NCFE. End-point assessment is not in scope of this policy – please refer to the specific EPA Enquiries and Appeals policy related to end-point assessment from the NCFE website here.

1.3. Responsibilities/duties

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring this policy is followed with support from teaching and exam staff as appropriate.

1.4. Definitions

Word/acronym	Definition
EPA	End-point assessment
MCQ	Multiple choice question
RoM	Review of marking

1.5. Location

Available on the NCFE website.

2. Process

2.1. Overview of Enquiries about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy

The purpose of an enquiry is to allow our centres, on behalf of a learner or a group of learners, to enquire about a result awarded, in line with our processes, procedures and policies.

2.1.1. Enquiry exclusions and restrictions

The enquiry procedure will not comprise:

- a change to a decision/sanction imposed
- a change to the centre's approval status
- a change to the outcome for reasonable adjustments and/or special consideration.

For these decisions, please refer to our Appeals Policy, which can be found on our website.

If you're dissatisfied with any other area, you can raise this through our complaints procedure.

2.1.2. Enquiry acceptance criteria

We'll accept the following types of enquiries:

- results of an assessment marked by us (external assessment)
- outcome of an assessment externally quality assured, or moderated, by us (internal assessment).

2.1.3. Who can submit an enquiry?

A centre can submit an enquiry on behalf of a learner or a group of learners, with the explicit written permission of that learner or group of learners. For each enquiry, written permission should be obtained. Learners and/or their parents or legal guardians are not permitted to submit an enquiry directly to NCFE.

You must retain evidence of written learner authorisation for at least six months following the outcome of an enquiry and in compliance with relevant data protection legislation. We reserve the right to inspect such evidence. Failure to retain such evidence will be considered centre malpractice and will be dealt with in accordance with the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policy.

2.2. Enquiry options

2.2.1. Clerical check and/or review of marking

An enquiry about results allows our centres, on behalf of a learner or group of learners, the opportunity to raise a concern over the result of an external assessment marked by us, if you reasonably believe it is erroneous. We'll appoint an examiner or sector expert who wasn't involved in the original assessment decision to conduct the enquiry.

2.2.2. Enquiry about assessment decisions

An enquiry about the decisions of an internally marked assessment allows you, on behalf of a learner or group of learners, the opportunity to question if the assessment criteria were fairly, reliably, and consistently applied during the external quality assurance process. We'll appoint a member of staff who was not involved in the original assessment decision to conduct the enquiry.

2.2.3. Review of moderation

An independent review of moderation is a check on the original moderation to make sure the assessment criteria has been applied fairly, reliably, and consistently.

2.2.4. Timescales for submissions

Enquiry about results timescales

The following timescales apply when submitting an enquiry about results request (excluding T Levels):

- clerical check – within **20** working days from receipt of the initial result/outcome
- review of marking – within **20** working days from receipt of the initial result/outcome or, if a clerical check has been previously requested, within **five** working days of receiving the result of that clerical check
- expedited review of marking (T Level qualifications only) – within **five** calendar weeks from receipt of initial result/outcome, or if a clerical check has been previously requested, within **five working days of receiving the result of that clerical check.**

Enquiries about assessment decisions (internal)

Enquiries about assessment decisions must be made within **20 working days** of receipt of the initial decision.

Review of moderation timescales

This must be submitted within **25 working days** from receipt of initial results/outcome.

Expedited review of moderation (T Level qualifications only) – within **five** working days from receipt of initial result/outcome.

For T Level Technical Qualification dates, please refer to the Key Dates Schedule, which will supersede other deadlines within this document.

T Level Technical Qualification specific timescales

For T Level Technical Qualification timescales, please refer to the Key Dates Schedule on the NCFE website which will supersede other deadlines within section 2.2 of this document.

2.2.5. Fees

A fee to cover the administrative costs of an enquiry will be charged in line with our Fees and Pricing guide.

The relevant fee will be raised for each individual enquiry wherein the external assessment grade or assessment decision outcome has not changed.

The fee will be waived if the external assessment grade/component changes.

3. Section One – clerical check and review of marking

Enquiries about results

3.1. Submitting an enquiry about results

Submitting an enquiry about results For details on how to submit post results requests please see the NCFE website for further information.

If your centre has concerns about one of your components/subject cohorts, then you should submit requests for all learners you believe to be affected.

3.2. Clerical check

This service involves a full check of all clerical procedures to ensure that all parts of the learner's assessment have been marked and the totalling of the marks/grades awarded has been correctly recorded and processed.

This includes:

- a full check of all clerical procedures to ensure that the marks or grades awarded to the learner(s) have been correctly recorded and processed

- ensuring all parts of the assessment have been marked, all marks have been recorded and added up correctly, and grade boundaries have been applied accurately.

The outcome of the clerical check will be communicated to the centre within five working days from the centre's request. A learner's scores and grade may increase, decrease, or remain the same.

3.3. Review of marking

This service includes a clerical check, plus a full review of the learner's assessment, to ensure that the agreed mark scheme/standard has been applied correctly by the original examiner.

This service involves the Chief Examiner or a Senior Examiner who did not originally mark that learner's paper reviewing the original marking and ensuring that all marking is in line with the standards set and appropriate mark scheme. A review of marking will not involve the re-marking of the learner's assessment unless errors are identified.

A review of marking is not available for multiple choice question (MCQ) assessments.

3.4. Enquiry about results acceptance

The decision of whether to accept the enquiry application will be considered within **five** working days of receipt of the form and is based on:

- whether the enquiry submitted falls within our acceptance criteria
- whether we have confirmation of learner authorisation.
- The timescale of the enquiry as outlined in section 2.2.4.

When an application request is accepted or rejected, we'll communicate this to the centre contact that requested the enquiry within **five** working days.

If we accept an enquiry application, we'll send an acknowledgement once a decision has been made, and we may request further information or evidence where required. If further information is required, the enquiry may take longer than our published timescales. In such instances, we'll advise you of the revised timescales and the reason(s) why.

If a request is rejected the reason(s) for this will be provided to you once a decision has been made.

3.4.1. Timescales following the acceptance of an enquiry about results application

We aim to action and complete an enquiry about results within:

- clerical check – **five** working days from receipt
- review of marking (RoM) – **25** working days from receipt
- expedited review of marking (T Level qualifications only) – **10** working days from receipt.

Please note that in some cases, particularly where the enquiry may be complex, the enquiry may take longer than our published timescales. In such instances, we'll advise you of the revised timescales and the reason(s) why.

3.4.2 Timescales following the acceptance of a review of moderation

We aim to action and complete an enquiry about results within:
- review of moderation – 25 working days from receipt
- expedited review of moderation (T Level qualifications only) – **10** working days from receipt.

Please note that in some cases, particularly where the enquiry may be complex, the enquiry may take longer than our published timescales. In such instances, we'll advise you of the revised timescales and the reason(s) why.

3.5. Enquiry about results outcome

The outcome of the enquiry will be sent to the centre contact who submitted the original request, giving the outcome.

There are only three potential outcomes of an enquiry:

- the result or mark/grade is confirmed as correct
- the result or mark/grade is increased
- the result or mark/grade is decreased.

A change in mark will not always result in a change in grade for an assessment. Qualifications which use a uniform mark scale (UMS) may see a change in UMS where a raw mark changes. Feedback on learner performance is not provided as part of a clerical check or as part of the RoM.

As a result of all enquiries, we will, where required:

- amend our centre or learner records accordingly
- action any changes to our processes or systems where issues are identified
- communicate outcomes with centres within the specified timescales above.

3.5.1 Further investigative action

Following the outcome of an enquiry, we're required to take further investigative action should we believe there is evidence to support a significant trend in over or under marking.

Where we initiate investigative action, learners' marks are not automatically protected. Marks and subject grades may therefore be increased, decreased, or confirmed as correct.

4. Section Two - Enquiries about assessment decisions

4.1. Submitting an enquiry about assessment decisions

The centre must submit a written request for an enquiry about assessment decisions via email to externalqualityassurance@ncfe.org.uk to enable us to consider the enquiry in accordance with the enquiry acceptance criteria, as outlined in Section 2.1.2.

4.1.1. Review of external quality assurance decisions

This service includes a full review of the learner assessments sampled during the external quality assurance process to ensure that the correct assessment criteria were fairly, reliably, and consistently applied. This service will not comprise a reassessment of an internally marked assessment unless errors are identified.

This service is only available once a centre's internal enquiries and appeals procedures have been exhausted. It's not available if the original assessment decisions of the Internal Quality Assurer were accepted by an External Quality Assurer without any adjustments, or for individual learners.

4.1.2 Review of moderation

A review of moderation is a check on the original moderation to make sure the assessment criteria has been applied fairly, reliably, and consistently. It is not a re-moderation of learner's work.

This service is not available for individual learners. Requests must be made by unit/component, for all learners on a cohort.

If provider marks were taken forward as final marks, this process is not available. Permission is not required from the learners prior to submitting a review of moderator marks.

Requests for a review of marks awarded during moderation can be submitted through the review of moderation request form on our website.

Changes to learners' results arising from a review of moderation cannot lead to a subsequent late request for a review of marking of a written examination component.

4.1.3. Enquiry acceptance for review of moderator marks

The decision of whether to accept the enquiry application is based on:

- whether the enquiry submitted falls within our acceptance criteria

- the timescale of the enquiry as outlined in section 3.4.2.

If we reject an enquiry application, the reason(s) for this will be provided to you in writing once a decision has been made.

If we accept an enquiry application, we'll send an acknowledgement in writing once a decision has been made and request any further information or evidence where required.

4.1.4. Timescales following the acceptance of an enquiry about assessment decision request

We aim to action and complete an enquiry about assessment decisions within **25 working days** from the enquiry acceptance.

Please note that in some cases, particularly where the enquiry may be complex, the enquiry may take longer than our published timescales. In such instances, we'll advise you of the revised timescales and the reason(s) why.

4.2. Enquiry about assessment decisions outcome

The outcome of the enquiry will be sent to the centre contact who submitted the original request, stating one of the following outcomes:

- no change to the original moderation/quality assurance decision
- a correction to the original moderation/quality assurance decision
- reinstatement of centre marks.

As a result of all enquiries, we will:

- amend our centre or learner records accordingly
- action any changes to our processes or systems as appropriate.

5. Appeals and complaints

5.1 Appeals

You have the right to appeal the outcome of an enquiry about results and assessment decisions. Please refer to the Appeals Policy on our [website](#) for more information in line with [JCQ Appeals.](#)

5.2 Complaints

You have the right to express your dissatisfaction regarding our actions, products, or services. Please refer to our complaints [procedure](#) for more information.

6. Initial Equality Impact Assessment

An Initial Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for this policy, and no concerns were raised.

7. References to associated documents

- [Appeals Policy](#)

8. Implementation and dissemination

Implementation	NCFE website to be updated following approval.
Dissemination	Document and relevant supporting documentation communicated to all relevant stakeholders for visibility.

9. Monitoring arrangements

This document is valid as of the latest approval date, and prior to the review date.

10. Data retention

NCFE will securely store the information provided as part of your enquiry about your result and/or assessment decision.

NCFE will not keep personal data for longer than required. Once the retention period is over and it is no longer justifiable to hold personal data any longer, data will be securely destroyed or anonymised.

11. Contact information

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact the Customer Support Team.

Email: customersupport@ncfe.org.uk

Address:
NCFE
Q6, Quorum Business Park
Benton Lane
Newcastle upon Tyne
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