

Policy Name:	COMPLAINTS POLICY (EXAMS)
Policy Type:	Statutory
Issue Date:	7th March 2025
To be reviewed:	Annually – 7th March 2026
Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Policy Owner:	Steph Brown

Glossary of abbreviations

JCQ	Joint Council of Qualifications
JCQ GR	Joint Council of Qualifications : General Regulations

1. Aims

- a. The purpose of this policy is to confirm the arrangements for complaints at the centre and confirms compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres (JCQ GR 5.3, 5.8) in drawing to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers our written complaints policy which covers general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification and our internal appeals procedure.
- b. A candidate (or their/parent/carer) at the centre may make a complaint on the grounds below (This is not an exhaustive list).
 - 1) Teaching and Learning
 - 2) Access arrangements and special consideration
 - 3) Entries
 - 4) Conducting examinations
 - 5) Results and Post-Results

2. Grounds for complaint

- a. Teaching and Learning
 - 1) Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject expertise utilised on a long-term basis
 - 2) Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
 - 3) Core content not adequately covered
 - 4) Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
 - 5) Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time
 - 6) The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
 - 7) Candidate not informed of their centre assessed mark prior to marks being submitted
 - 8) Candidate not informed of their centre assessed mark in sufficient time to request/appeal a review of marking prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body

- 9) Candidate not given time to review materials to decide to request a review of the centre assessed mark
- 10) Candidate unhappy with internal assessment decision (referred to the internal appeals procedure)
- 11) Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

b. Access arrangements and special consideration

- 1) Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- 2) Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding their access arrangements
- 3) Candidate did not consent to record their personal data online (by the non-acquisition of a completed candidate personal data consent form)
- 4) Candidate not informed/adequately informed of the arrangement(s) in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangement(s) would not apply
- 5) Examination information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- 6) Adapted equipment/assistive technology put in place failed during examination/assessment
- 7) Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an examination/assessment
- 8) Appropriate arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an examination/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment
- 9) Candidate unhappy with centre decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration (complainant to refer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- 10) Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

c. Entries

- 1) Failure to clearly explain a decision of early entry for a qualification to candidate (or parent/carer)
- 2) Candidate not entered/entered late (incurring a late entry fee) for a required examination/assessment
- 3) Candidate entered for a wrong examination/assessment
- 4) Candidate entered for a wrong tier of entry

d. Conducting examinations

- 1) Failure to adequately brief candidate on examination timetable/regulations prior to examination/assessment taking place
- 2) Room in which assessment held did not provide candidate with appropriate conditions for the examination
- 3) Inadequate invigilation in examination room
- 4) Failure to conduct the examination according to the regulations
- 5) Online system failed during (on-screen) examination/assessment
- 6) Disruption during the examination/assessment
- 7) Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice incident not investigated/reported
- 8) Failure to inform/update candidate on the accepted/rejected outcome of a special consideration application if provided by awarding body

e. Results and Post-Results

- 1) Before examinations, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the availability of senior members of centre staff after the publication of results
- 2) Candidate not having access to a member of senior staff after the publication of results to discuss/make a decision on the submission of a results review/enquiry

- 3) Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- 4) Candidate unhappy with a result (complainant to refer to awarding body post-results services)
- 5) Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal (complainant to refer to the internal appeals procedure)
- 6) Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure
- 7) Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong script for a candidate
- 8) Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- 9) Centre applied for a post-results service without gaining required candidate consent/permission

2. Raising a concern/complaint

- a. If a candidate (or parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification, the centre encourages an informal resolution in the first instance. This can be undertaken by Raising the concern or complaint in person, by telephone or in writing to the head of centre.
- b. If a concern or complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.
- c. All documentation relating to the submission of a formal complaint is available from, and should be returned to the exam officer upon request and should be returned to the exam officer for escalation and tracking.
- d. Formal complaints will be logged and acknowledged within 5 working days
- e. To make a formal complaint, candidates (or parents/carers) must submit the complaint in writing.

3. How a formal complaint is investigated

- a. The head of centre will further investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings and conclusion.

4. Internal appeals procedure

- a. Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.
- b. To submit an appeal, candidates (or parents/carers) must follow the centre's internal appeals procedure and complete and return an internal appeals form
- c. The appeal will be referred to the Head of Centre and it will be their responsibility to inform the appellant of the final conclusion