

Complaints Policy and Procedure

APRIL 2020

Introduction

Qualifi is an Awarding Organisation regulated by Ofqual, The CCEA and QiW the qualification regulators for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Awarding Organisation is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias. Qualifi, as an Awarding Organisation seeks to support learners and study centres to comply with our policies and procedures.

Overview

Qualifi are committed to offering a high standard of service to all customers, including learners and study centres. We aim to provide a service that is:

- consultative and responsive;
- open and informative;
- prompt and efficient;
- streamlined and manageable;
- cost-effective.

Qualifi ensure complaints are dealt with quickly and efficiently avoiding the need for a formal written complaint wherever possible. However, should the matter necessitate a formal complaint, the procedures detailed in this document will be followed.

Individuals should not be discouraged from making a complaint, on financial or any other grounds, unless it is vexatious, malicious or frivolous. All complaints will be dealt with fairly and in a timely manner, and will be recorded so that analysis is facilitated.

Formal complaints should be sent in writing (by letter or email) and should state clearly the form of redress or recompense (if any) or change in operations (if any) that are sought. All complaints will be acknowledged speedily, recorded clearly, and resolved as quickly as possible and as practicable.

No-one who was involved in the actions or behaviours complained against will be involved in determining the outcome of the complaint.

NOTE: if you are dissatisfied with a decision made by Qualifi, including decisions made about reasonable adjustments, special consideration, malpractice or assessment results, this cannot be dealt with as a complaint, and you must follow the relevant Review and Appeals procedure, available on request from Qualifi – support@qualifi.net. If you have a comment about the quality of service you have received from us we welcome your feedback and see this as an opportunity to improve our service.

How to complain

If you have a complaint about our service, please contact us in order that we can investigate this using our complaints procedure. When making a complaint, please give us the following information if you have it:

- what the complaint is about;
- your full name and learner reference number (if you have one);
- your college, centre or training provider's name and the Qualifi approval reference number;
- the qualification or unit title and qualification reference number;
- copies of any relevant supporting documents.

We promise to:

- acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two working days of receiving it;
- give you a full response within 30 working days. If this is not possible, we will let you know after 15 working days.

Procedure

1. Complaint relating to a Qualifi approved centre

If you have a complaint which concerns an issue within the control of a study centre, you should complain to that study centre in the first instance, and copy any correspondence relating to the matter to Robert Smart, Quality Assurance and Operations Manager, by writing (see contact details in Section 4) or by email.

Having been through the college, centre or training provider's complaints or grievance procedure, the matter may remain unresolved. In these circumstances we may consider, if it is appropriate, intervening on your behalf. You should write to us with full details of the steps taken to date to try to resolve your complaint with the study centre, and their responses.

2. Complaint relating to Customer Service

If you wish to complain about any aspect of Qualifi's Customer Service, the Quality Assurance and Operations Manager should be contacted (see contact details in Section 4).

All complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days and the complaint will be investigated by the Quality Assurance and Operations Manager. The outcome will be communicated in writing within ten working days of the acknowledgement where reasonably practicable. The Quality Assurance and Operations Manager will be responsible for collating all complaints and identifying any quality improvements where necessary.

3. Complaint relating to Qualifi

If you wish to raise a complaint relating to Qualifi that is not included in the Appeals Policy, you should notify the Chief Executive of Qualifi, in writing within two weeks of the alleged incident. Correspondence should be sent to the Chief Executive Officer at the address below. Alternatively, you may wish to email: support@qualifi-international.com and mark it for the attention of the Chief Executive Officer.

You will be sent an acknowledgement letter within ten working days and we will investigate the complaint, and communicate findings to you in writing. Wherever possible, this will be completed within one month of the date the complaint was received.

If the matter is not resolved we may undertake further investigations, including where necessary arranging for an independent review of the case.

4. Contact details

To access a copy of our complaints policy and procedure write to The Quality Assurance and Compliance Director at:

Qualifi Limited, Synergy House, 7 Acorn Business Park, Commercial Gate, Mansfield NG18 1EX

Telephone: +44 (0)115 888 2323

Email: support@qualifi.net

5. Complaints about us, as a UK recognised awarding organisation

If you have complained to us and are still unhappy with the outcome, you can take your complaint to Ofqual who will look into it. You can make Ofqual aware of your complaint by letter, phone or email.

Ofqual, Spring Place, Herald Avenue, Coventry CV5 6UB

Telephone: 0300 303 3346

info@ofqual.gov.uk

Appeals and Complaints in Higher Education (HE)

Quality Statement 1

Higher education providers have procedures for handling appeals and complaints about recruitment, selection and admission that are fair and accessible. Appeals and complaints procedures are conducted expeditiously and in accordance with a published timescale.

Qualifi recognises that sometimes things may go wrong for a learner, who then wishes to make a complaint or an appeal. This procedure explains how to do this. An appeal is specifically related to a matter of academic decision, for example where a learner does not agree with the marks awarded for a piece of assessed work. The procedure for that is detailed separately below.

Other matters of concern, which are not related to marks, can be raised as a complaint, for example, against a member of staff, a learner, or about facilities.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

The QAA has had a procedure in place for handling 'causes for concern' in English higher and further education institutions since 1 March 2007. A similar protocol was introduced in relation to the higher education institutions in Wales on 1 August 2008. During 2007-08, at the request of the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), QAA Scotland developed and consulted on a protocol with the intention of ensuring that there would be broadly equivalent arrangements in place in Scotland and has been in place since October 2008.

The difference between a concern and a complaint in higher education

QAA use the term concerns to mean concerns about how higher education providers manage their academic standards, the quality of learning opportunities, and the information that they make available about their provision.

The aim of an investigation by QAA under the Concerns Scheme is to safeguard and improve the overall quality of UK higher education by addressing weaknesses within a particular higher education provider.

Those seeking redress or compensation should contact the [Office for the Independent Adjudicator](#).

Concerns about programmes delivered with others

Where a submission to the QAA Concerns Scheme relates to a programme delivered by a third party (for example, through a collaborative arrangement with a degree-awarding organisation that subscribes to us) QAA will normally direct the initial inquiry at the provider but may involve the awarding organisation, with all correspondence copied to the awarding organisation.

Investigating concerns in Wales

The Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015 makes provision for the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) to assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the quality of education provided in Wales by, or on behalf of, each regulated institution.

In order to carry out this function, the Act requires the governing body of a regulated institution and/or an external provider must ensure that authorised persons, including those investigating concerns under QAA's Concerns scheme, are provided with information, assistance and access to the provider's facilities as reasonably required. Further information is provided at Annex B.

Source: www.qaa.ac.uk/concerns

Source: QAA Quality Code B - Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality