

Guidance on Internal Assessment Appeals

Internal verification applies to qualifications, or elements of qualifications, which are internally assessed. The fact that they are internally assessed means that the centre delivering them must have a documented procedure for dealing with appeals from candidates about their results in assessments, if they feel that they have been treated unfairly in the assessment. Internal verifiers have a role in this (see Stage 2 below).

The procedure should have three stages, as follows:

Stage 1 — Informal

The appeals process begins with a preliminary informal stage where the candidate raises their concerns with their teacher (assessor).

Stage 2 — Informal

If the matter is not resolved with the teacher (assessor), the advice of the internal verifier for the Unit should be sought on the validity of the result awarded.

Stage 3 — Formal

If the matter is not resolved through the informal stages, a formal appeal should be submitted in writing to a senior member of staff, who will investigate the matter and respond. This could be eg head of department, depute head, head teacher, or the SQA Coordinator. You may want to include in your procedure that an Appeals Panel will be convened at this stage, comprised of staff who have not previously been involved to the appeal in question.

The outcome of Stage 3 should be communicated in writing to the candidate and records should be retained.

Each stage should have appropriate timescales set for acknowledging receipt of the appeal and responding. There should also be defined timescales for being able to raise an appeal (eg within a month of the assessment in question).

All the candidates must be made aware of the appeals procedure, and given support in submitting and providing evidence for their appeal, if they require it (eg from a guidance teacher, support for learning teacher).

Candidates on National Qualifications cannot appeal to SQA against internal assessment results but they could submit a complaint to SQA if the school does not handle the appeal correctly. The SQA can also deal with complaints about assessment in the broadest sense, including the conduct of and environment for assessment — but only if the candidate has already exhausted the centre's complaints procedure.