



RLSS Qualifications Complaints and Appeals Policy

Applicable to:	✓	Astley Community High School
		Seaton Sluice Middle School
		Whytrig Middle School
Approval body:	Executive Headteacher	

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Agreed to publish on school website	Yes

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Changed by	Revision Date		
Business Manager (BW)	17 September 2019	1.0	Final approved version for publication
Business Manager (BW)	9 December 2020	1.1	Annual review; change to review frequency only as no updates to IQL UK model policies
Business Manager (BW)	9 December 2020	2.0	Final approved version for publication

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the school's RLSS Qualifications Complaints and Appeals policy and procedure and is aimed at all staff, learners and all interested parties who encounter a direct or indirect service.
- 1.2 IQL UK require us to provide a high-quality service to staff, learners and others involved in the delivery, assessment and awarding of IQL qualifications. IQL UK consider a high-quality service of paramount importance and if individuals or organisations consider they are receiving a level of service that is below both theirs and IQL UK expectations, they should raise any concerns immediately in order that these may be addressed efficiently.

2 Policy aims

- To provide a clear and robust framework to support those not satisfied with IQL UK services for raising concerns
- To ensure IQL UK has systems in place to implement improvements because of a complaint (lessons learned)
- To affect a prompt resolution
- To ensure all complaints are treated seriously, equitably and without prejudice
- To raise awareness of policy and procedures and ensure all those responsible for the delivery, training, assessment of IQL qualifications understand appropriate processes.
- To provide protection and resolution for learners, customers and stakeholders and any others who seek to complain or appeal against an action taken by IQL UK

3 Scope

- 3.1 This policy contains information for those who wish to formally complain about our services, including staff, learners, other stakeholders and subcontractors. It also sets out the process to be followed when submitting appeals to us and the process we will follow to ensure we responding to enquiries and appeals in a consistent manner.
- 3.2 Where there is a question about the way an assessment was delivered and/or conducted, and malpractice or maladministration is suspected, concerns should be directed to us in the first instance. In exceptional circumstances, concerns may be raised directly with IQL UK via compliance@iql.org.uk.

4 Definitions

- 4.1 A complaint is a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable by an organisation or individual, whether verbal or written, and requires a response. Disciplinary appeals are not considered as complaints and therefore do not fall under this process.

5 Our responsibilities

- 5.1 We will take all reasonable steps to ensure that any staff involved in the management, assessment and quality assurance of IQL qualifications, including learners, are aware of the contents of this policy.
- 5.2 If an individual is unhappy about a service or activity being delivered by us, they should follow our complaints process before bringing the matter to IQL UK.

- 5.3 If an individual wishes to appeal against a decision taken by us, they must, in the first instance go through our internal appeals process before bringing the matter to IQL UK.

6 Raising concerns and making complaints

- 6.1 It is important that learners and/or members of the public who wish to complain about the level of service provided by us in the first instance follow our own complaints process before bringing any complaints to the attention of IQL UK.
- 6.2 In exceptional circumstances learners can make complaints directly to IQL UK where they feel there is a significant breach by us of IQL UK policies and procedures. All complaints must be sent to IQL UK preferably in writing through email via compliance@iql.org.uk or by letter addressed to the Head of Compliance, IQL UK, Red Hill House, 227 London Road, Worcester, WR5 2JG and include a completed Complaints form (Appendix 1) within one calendar month of the event you have issues with.
- 6.3 Complaints should detail:
- a full description of the complaint (including dates, times, context where appropriate)
 - names of others involved
 - copies of any evidence e.g. letters, completed forms, witness testimony
 - contact details (in accordance with Data Protection legislation e.g. name and contact email/phone number)

7 Complaints brought to our attention by IQL UK and/or regulators

- 7.1 Where we are notified about failures that have been discovered in the assessment process or other activities of another awarding organisation, these will be reviewed in the same manner as other external complaints, in accordance with the procedures below, to ascertain if the same issue could affect IQL qualifications.

8 Confidentiality and whistleblowing

- 8.1 To enable a full investigation to take place it will be necessary for complainants to provide their names. However, in some instances a complainant will wish to remain anonymous e.g. where there are concerns over possible adverse consequences should their identity be revealed to another party. If a complainant wishes to remain anonymous they should tick the relevant box on the Complaints Form (see Appendix 1).
- 8.2 We will always aim to keep a whistleblower's identity confidential where asked to do so although cannot guarantee this. There may be situations where we have a duty to disclose identity, for example to:
- the police, fraud prevention agencies or other law enforcement agencies (to investigate or prevent crime, including fraud)
 - the courts (court proceedings)
 - relevant authorities where there are safeguarding concerns
 - IQL UK or RLSS UK as part of any investigations into issues around qualification delivery
 - other third parties e.g. regulators

9 What will happen to my complaint?

9.1 We will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two working days and aim to investigate complaints within five working days thereafter. For more complex cases, or those involving people who are not available at the time, we may extend this period to carry out thorough investigations. We may contact you within this period to seek further information or clarification, and in some instances we may recommend a meeting. At the end of the investigation we shall write/email to inform you of our decision.

10 Successful complaints and/or issues brought to our attention by IQL UK and/or regulators

10.1 If any part of your complaint is upheld we will respond to you accordingly and where appropriate give due consideration to how we can improve our service and arrangements. In situations where a complaint has been successful, or where an investigation following notification from IQL UK and/or regulators indicates a failure in our processes, we will give due consideration to the outcome and will take appropriate actions such as:

- identify any other learner/s and/or organisations who have been or may be affected by that failure
- correct, or where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure
- review and amend our arrangements, where appropriate, to reduce the likelihood that the failure will reoccur in the future

11 What if I am not happy with the reply?

11.1 If you are still unhappy with the decision we have taken in reviewing the complaint you can, where relevant, take the matter through our appeals process.

12 Fees

12.1 We will not charge learners a fee to cover the administrative and personnel costs involved in dealing with appeals.

13 Process for raising an appeal

13.1 Applications for appeals must be made within seven working days of notification of the decision an individual is appealing against.

13.2 Written permission of learners must be obtained when appealing on their behalf.

13.3 Learners who wish to appeal about their assessment results or about a related decision should be supported by us or should have exhausted our own appeals process before appealing to IQL UK. Learners must provide IQL UK with evidence that they have first appealed to us. It is expected that learners will only appeal directly to IQL UK in exceptional circumstances.

13.4 Learners wishing to submit a complaint about an assessment decision or other matter relating to IQL UK qualifications should follow the process outlined above.

13.5 To submit an appeal you will need to send us written correspondence which includes relevant supporting information such as the:

- individual's name and IQL UK registration number
- date(s) notification of any decision received (if appropriate)
- title and number of the IQL UK qualification affected or nature of service affected (if appropriate)
- full nature of the appeal
- contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by us relating to the issue
- any supporting evidence e.g. witness statements, records etc.

14 Initial review of the appeal details

14.1 Upon receipt of all appeals we will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within two working days and aim to respond fully to the initial review of the potential appeal within ten working days. Please note that in some cases the review processes may take longer, for example, if we need to conduct further investigations. In such instances, we will contact all parties concerned to inform them of the likely revised timescale.

14.2 The first stage will be for us to undertake an initial, informal assessment of all potential appeals to ensure the application is complete and to ascertain if the issue can be resolved before it goes to a formal appeal. In all instances we will ensure that the person carrying out this initial check will not have a personal interest in the decision being appealed.

14.3 Following the initial review of the potential appeal we will write to the appellant with details of our decision to either:

- amend our original decision considering the rationale/evidence being put forward
- confirm we uphold our original decision providing rationale for this decision.

15 Successful appeals and/or issues brought to our attention by IQL UK and/or regulators

15.1 In situations where an appeal has been successful, or where an investigation following notification from one of our regulators indicates a failure in our processes, we will take actions as appropriate - for example:

- identify any other learners who have been affected and correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure
- review our associated processes and policies to ensure that the 'failure' does not occur again, or mitigate the situation as far as possible if the failure that occurred cannot be corrected
- share 'lessons learned' with all those responsible e.g. through ongoing training, newsletters, standardisation etc.

15.2 We will cooperate with any follow-up investigations required by IQL UK and/or regulators and others with a vested interest, and if appropriate agree any remedial action with them.

Appendix 1: Complaints form

Name	
ATC/P TA/ Candidate No	
Contact details (email)	

Please indicate if you wish to remain anonymous	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Details of complaint

Name of individual/organisation you are complaining about	
ATC/P TA, Candidate Number if Known	
Centre Name/Number if known	
Address	

Please give details of the complaint. Please include dates, times where possible and details of others involved	
Evidence Attached with this Form to support Claim	
Signed	Dated

Appendix 2: Appeals form

Name	
ATC/P TA/ Candidate No	
Contact details:	
Do you wish to remain anonymous?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Details of Person/Organisation’s decision you are appealing against

Name of ATC/P/Candidate/TA/Mentor	
ATC/P TA, Candidate Number if Known	
Centre Name/Number if known	
Address	
Where appeal against IQL decision tick this box	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please give details of decision you are appealing against (dates, times, details of others involved)	
Supporting evidence where appropriate	
Desired Outcome State how you would like IQL UK to remedy this appeal if we find in your favour	
Signed	Dated