



Complaints Policy (Exams) 2023-24

Unity Academy Blackpool

Centre Name	Unity Academy Blackpool
Centre Number	46427
Date policy first created	Autumn 2022
Current policy approved by	Stephen Cooke
Current policy reviewed by	Ellie Baron
Date of next review	Autumn 2024

Key Staff involved in the policy

Role	Name
Head of Centre	Stephen Cooke
Senior Leader	Rebecca Lemar
Exams Officer	Ellie Baron

This procedure is reviewed and updated annually to ensure that the complaints at Unity Academy Blackpool are managed in accordance with current requirements and regulations.

Reference in this procedure to GR refers to the JCQ publication **General Regulations for Approved Centres**.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is to confirm the arrangements for complaints at Unity Academy Blackpool and confirms compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (sections 5.3, 5.8) in drawing to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers its written complaints and appeals procedure which covers general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification.

Grounds for complaint

A candidate (or his/her/parent/carer) at Unity Academy Blackpool may make a complaint on the grounds below (This is not an exhaustive list).

Teaching and Learning

- Quality of teaching and learning, for example:
- Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
- Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
- Core content not adequately covered
- Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
- Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time to an examination candidate
- The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
- Candidate not informed of their centre assessed mark prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- 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
- Candidate not given sufficient time to review materials to make a decision whether to request a review of the centre assessed mark
- Candidate unhappy with internal assessment decision (complainant to refer to the centre's **internal appeals procedure**)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

Access arrangements and special consideration

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding their access arrangements
- Candidate did not consent to record their personal data online (by the non-acquisition of a completed **candidate personal data consent form**)
- 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
- Examination information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment/assistive technology put in place failed during examination/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an examination/assessment

- Appropriate arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an examination/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment
- Candidate unhappy with centre decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration (complainant to refer to the centre's **internal appeals procedure**)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure

Entries

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

Conducting examinations

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

Results and Post-Results

- 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
- 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
- Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result (complainant to refer via exams officer to awarding body **post-results services**)
- 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 centre's **internal appeals procedure**)

- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong script for a candidate
- Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- Centre applied for a post-results service for a candidate without gaining required candidate consent/permission

Raising a concern/complaint

If a candidate (or parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification, Unity Academy Blackpool encourages an informal resolution in the first instance. This can be undertaken by Concerns should be raised with either the class teacher, head of year/head of department or head teacher.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the appropriate person investigating the complaint will provide an informal written response within 5 school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.

If a concern or complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

How to make a formal complaint

All documentation relating to the submission of a formal complaint is available from, and should be returned to Stephen Cooke (Headteacher/Head of Centre). Formal complaints will be logged and acknowledged within 5 school days.

To make a formal complaint, candidates (or parents/carers) must log this in person, in writing (preferably on the Complain Form) or by telephone.

How a formal complaint is investigated

The responsible person will seek to clarify the nature of the complaint, ask what remains unresolved and what outcome the complainant would like to see. Consideration will be given as to whether a face to face meeting will be the most appropriate way of doing this. Please note, the responsible person may delegate the investigation to another appropriate senior member of staff, but not the decision to be taken.

During the investigation, we will:

- If necessary, interview those involved in the matter and/or those complained of, allowing them to be accompanied if they wish
- Keep a written record of any meetings/interviews in relation to their investigation

The findings and conclusion of any investigation will be provided to the complainant within 15 school days.

Internal appeals procedure

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

To submit an appeal, candidates (or parents/carers) must submit a request to escalate the complaint to the Governance Lead, FCAT Offices, Mereside Primary Academy, Langdale Road, Blackpool, FY4 4RR, via the school office within 15 school days of the formal complaint response.

Appeals will be logged and acknowledged within 2 school days.

The appeal will be referred to the Governance Lead.

It will be the responsibility of the Governance Lead to inform the appellant of the final conclusion in accordance with the internal appeals procedure.

Additional details on the internal appeals process:

Additional information is available via the FCAT Complaints Policy.

Changes 2023/24

(Changed) All references to complaints and appeals procedure (To) complaints policy

(Changed) Heading - **Complaints and appeals procedure** (To) **Raising a concern/complaint**

(Changed) Sub-heading - **Appeals** (To) Heading - **Internal appeals procedure** and updated the process

Centre-specific changes

Upon review in Autumn 2023, no centre-specific updates or changes were applicable to this document