

**Further Education (FE) and
Work Based Learning (WBL)
Appeals against Assessment
Decisions Procedure**



Further Education (FE) and Work Based Learning (WBL) Appeals against Assessment Decisions Procedure

Date approved: 1 December 2020
Approved by: AMT
Responsible Manager (s): Director of Quality and Standards
Executive Lead: Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum

Applicable to Staff: No
Applicable to Students: Yes
Accessible to Student: Yes
Accessible to general public:
(including clients) Yes

Consultation		
Consultation undertaken with:		Date:
SMT	NA	
AMT	Yes	13 October 2020
CCMT	NA	
Students	Yes	1 December 2020
Employee representatives (<i>HR procedures only</i>)	NA	
Other	NA	

Policy review frequency, normally: every 2 years

(Please delete as appropriate)

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1. Scope and Purpose

1.1 Scope

This Procedure applies to all students at Blackpool and The Fylde College (B&FC) undertaking further education (FE) programmes and work based learning (WBL) apprenticeships. For the purpose of this document, assessment is taken to include all college-assessed work, which contributes towards external awarding body decisions. The academic appeals procedure does not cover outside public examinations where the examining boards' own procedures will apply.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that assessments awarded to students are fair and that B&FC meets its obligation to assure assessment practice is in accordance with national standards and awarding body requirements.

It is B&FC's policy that all appeals against assessment decisions are considered in an equitable, open and expedient manner and are resolved as early in the procedure as possible.

Appeals against assessment decisions are considered on the following grounds:

- a. The assessment/examination procedures have not been conducted in accordance with approved regulations
- b. There has been some material administrative error or irregularity
- c. The Assessor/Assessment Board has been unaware of extenuating circumstances which might have adversely affected the student's performance. Such grounds would normally be endorsed through learning support services.
- d. Unfair discrimination is alleged

If there are reasonable grounds for an appeal to an external awarding body, then B&FC will meet the cost.

If having exhausted the three stages of the B&FC procedure, and reasonable grounds for an appeal are not found by B&FC, the student may still decide to go ahead with the appeal, but in this case, they will be charged.

Following stage 3 if students are not satisfied with the outcome they have the right to refer the matter directly to the appropriate awarding body.

2. Procedure Statement

The appeals procedure involves three stages:

1. Early Resolution stage;
2. Formal Stage, *and*;
3. Review stage.

2.1 Stage 1 (Early resolution)

2.1.1 If a student wishes to make an appeal relating to an assessment, the matter should be raised initially with the relevant Assessor. The appeal should be raised orally in the first instance. This must be done within five working days of notification of the assessment decision.

2.1.2 The Assessor will attempt to resolve the appeal informally. He/she shall enquire into the appeal and will discuss it with the complainant, consider the information provided and advise the complainant of the decision. The decision will normally be communicated to the complainant orally, within five working days of the appeal being raised.

2.1.3 If, upon receipt of the decision, the complainant is still dissatisfied with the decision, he/she may progress the appeal to Stage 2 of the procedure.

2.2 Stage 2 (Formal)

2.2.1 If the student remains dissatisfied with the response from the assessor, they should complete the Assessment Appeal form (Appendix 1) within 10 working days of receipt the outcome at Stage 1. The completed form can either be emailed to the relevant Head of Curriculum via appeals@blackpool.ac.uk or submitted via Reception for their attention.

2.2.2 On receipt of the Assessment Appeal form, the Head of Curriculum will undertake an initial evaluation to check that the assessment appeal is submitted under the correct procedures, falls within the grounds upon which an appeal may be made, is submitted within any deadline, and is in the required format. This process may result in:

- The student being referred to a different procedure
- The assessment appeal proceeding to formal consideration
- The assessment appeal being rejected because it is not made under the permissible grounds outlined in section 1.2. Where some parts of the student's assessment appeal fall outside the permissible grounds, this will be explained to the student

2.2.3 Where the Head of Curriculum finds there are no grounds for an assessment appeal, they will provide the justification for this decision in writing within 5 working days and will advise as to whether it falls within scope of other B&FC policies or procedures, such as the complaints procedure.

2.2.4 If the appeal satisfies the criteria as set out in section 1.2, the Director of Quality and Standards will convene a Curriculum Area Appeals Board hearing, normally within 7 days of receiving the Appeal. The composition of the Curriculum Area Appeals Board will be made up of three independent members, including two at Head of Curriculum level or above.

- 2.2.5 This panel will not include staff who have considered the appeal at an earlier stage. The student will be notified of the panel's membership in advance of the hearing and may bring a friend or student representative with them to the hearing.
- 2.2.6 If the student or representative does not attend the Curriculum Area Appeals Board, the board may continue to consider the appeal in the student's absence. The board may, if it wishes, adjourn the meeting if reasonable grounds for non-attendance have been provided (e.g. sickness absence)
- 2.2.7 The decision of the Curriculum Area Appeals Boards will be communicated in writing, via a formal report, to the student and Quality and Standards normally within 7 days.

2.3 Stage 3 (Review)

- 2.3.1 If the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal at stage 2, they can request a review. A request for review may be on limited grounds, including but not confined to:
- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage
 - a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable in all the circumstances
 - new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process
- 2.3.2 Curriculum area appeals progressing to Stage 3 should be made within 7 working days of the Curriculum Area Appeals Board meeting and submitted to Quality and Standards, stating the grounds of the appeal together with supporting documentation.
- 2.3.3 The review stage will not usually consider the issues afresh or involve a further investigation.
- 2.3.4 An academic appeal must have been considered at the formal stage before it can be escalated for a formal review at Stage 3
- 2.3.5 The Director of Quality and Standards will allocate the request for review to a designated senior member of staff, not involved at any previous stage.
- 2.3.6 The reviewer will consider whether:
- the relevant procedures were followed during the formal stage
 - the outcome was reasonable in all the circumstances
 - the student received clear reasons as to why the academic appeal was rejected at the formal stage
 - new material evidence has been provided, for which the student has given valid reasons for not supplying earlier

- 2.3.7 At the end of the review a senior manager will make a final decision and the student will be informed of the outcome through the issue of a decision letter. The reviewer may overturn the outcome of the formal stage, refer the appeal back to the formal stage for reconsideration or decide that the appeal is not upheld.
- 2.3.8 If the academic appeal is not upheld, the outcome of the review stage will be communicated to the student in writing by issuing a Completion of Procedures letter as soon as possible and within 15 working days. This will include a clear explanation and will outline the reasons for the decision.
- 2.3.9 Where an academic appeal is upheld, the student will be provided with a written outcome within 15 days, outlining how and when any remedy will be implemented. A Completion of Procedures letters will also be issued if requested.

3. Accountability

- 3..1 All curriculum staff are responsible for adhering to and ensuring the requirements set out in this procedure are followed, if a dispute arises.
- 3..2 The Director of Quality and Standards, is responsible for ensuring this procedure is implemented, regularly reviewed and updated.
- 3..3 Heads of Curriculum are responsible for ensuring that all assessment processes are carried out in their Curriculum area and that this appeal process, when conducted, is carried out fairly.

4. Student Involvement

Students will be the main users of this procedure and thus involved throughout its implementation. The procedure will be made known to students via the B&FC website www.blackpool.ac.uk/college-policies Canvas and the Student Charter. Where a student invokes the appeals process they may have a nominated representative to help them present their case.

5. Linked Policies

- Further Education (FE) and Worked Based Learning (WBL) Appeals against Assessment Decisions Policy
- Awarding body specific guidance
- Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy



Blackpool and the Fylde College

Further Education (FE) and Work Based Learning (WBL) Appeals against Assessment Decisions

APPEALS FORM

Submission of this form initiates the formal stage of Blackpool and the Fylde College (B&FC) Further Education (FE) and Work Based Learning (WBL) Appeals against Assessment Decisions procedure.

Before submitting a formal appeal you should have attempted to resolve the appeal informally by discussing the matter with your assessor to better understand the reason for the result or decision against which you wish to appeal. If the informal discussions have not resolved your concerns, you may invoke the procedure.

You may also seek advice and guidance from your Progress Tutor.

Note:

- You are responsible for submitting your own appeal. An appeal submitted by a third party will not be accepted unless B&FC has received your written permission to do so
- The Appeal Form must be submitted to appeals@blackpool.ac.uk or handed in at any campus reception (ideally at the campus at which you are studying) within 10 working days of receiving notification of the outcome of the appeal at Stage 1
- The Appeal document should be completed in full
- Any evidence in support of the appeal should also be included

Your details

Full Name		
Student Number		
Curriculum area		
Study Programme		
Year of Study		
Address for Correspondence		
Contact Tel No:		Mobile:
*Student email address		

* We will normally contact you through your student email address

About your Appeal

(A) Please state clearly the assessment decision you are appealing against	
(B) Please tick the box(es) below to indicate the grounds for your appeal	
1. The assessment/examination procedures have not been conducted in accordance with the approved regulations	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A material administrative error or irregularity has occurred	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The Assessor/Assessment Board has been unaware of extenuating circumstances which may have adversely affected my academic performance	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Unfair discrimination is alleged	<input type="checkbox"/>
(C) Please indicate the supporting evidence you are submitting in support of your appeal (e.g. medical certificate, emails and other correspondence)	
(D) Please indicate without prejudice, what outcome you are expecting to see as a result of your appeal (e.g. "I would like the opportunity to re-take my assignment/examination")	

Declaration:

I declare that the information given in this form is true. I confirm that I have completed the informal appeal stage and have consulted the Procedure before completing the form.

Signed:

Date:

Note:

- B&FC will endeavour to maintain confidentiality in relation to your appeal, but in order for this to be considered fully, the content will need to be disclosed to members of B&FC staff who are involved in enacting the procedure as well as B&FC staff whose involvement may be required to respond to the issues you have raised
- By signing the declaration above you are consenting to the sharing of information relevant to the appeal within B&FC at all stages of the procedure