

Apprenticeship Assessment Appeals Policy



Policy Date: August 2026

Reviews

Date	Key changes (if any)	Next review
		August 2027

Purpose

Community Matters is committed to ensuring that all assessment decisions are fair, consistent, transparent and based on the relevant assessment criteria and qualification requirements.

This policy sets out the process learners must follow if they wish to appeal an assessment decision made by Community Matters. It also explains the timescales for raising and responding to an appeal and the routes available if a learner remains dissatisfied following the completion of the centre's internal appeals process.

Community Matters will ensure that learners are not disadvantaged for raising an appeal in good faith.

Scope

This policy applies to learners undertaking qualifications delivered by Community Matters where assessment decisions are made internally by the centre. It covers appeals relating to assessment decisions, including decisions that evidence submitted by a learner has not met the required assessment criteria.

Where an assessment decision has been made directly by an external assessment organisation, including an Apprenticeship Assessment decision, the learner must follow the appeals arrangements of the organisation responsible for that assessment decision rather than the Community Matters internal appeals process.

Grounds for Appeal

A learner may appeal an assessment decision where they believe, for example, that:

- The assessment decision was not based correctly on the published assessment criteria.
- The assessment process was not followed correctly.
- The assessment decision was inconsistent with the requirements of the qualification.
- Relevant evidence was not considered.
- There was a procedural error that may have affected the assessment decision.
- The assessment decision was affected by circumstances that the learner believes were not appropriately considered.

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An appeal should explain clearly why the learner believes the assessment decision was incorrect and provide any relevant supporting evidence.

An appeal should not be based solely on disagreement with an assessor's professional judgement where the assessment decision has been made correctly against the relevant assessment criteria and procedures.

Stage 1 – Raising an Appeal

A learner who wishes to appeal an assessment decision should first discuss the decision with their Assessor, where appropriate, to seek clarification and resolve the matter informally. If the learner remains dissatisfied, they may submit a formal appeal in writing to the Head of Apprenticeship Delivery (HoAD).

The appeal should include:

- The learner's name and programme/qualification.
- The assessment or component being appealed.
- The date of the assessment decision.
- The assessment decision being challenged.
- The reason for the appeal.
- Any relevant supporting evidence.
- The outcome the learner is seeking.

The appeal should be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the assessment decision.

Where a learner is unable to meet this timescale due to exceptional circumstances, they should contact the HoAD as soon as possible. Community Matters may accept a late appeal where there is a reasonable explanation for the delay.

Investigation and Response

The HoAD will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 3 working days.

The HoAD will oversee the Stage 1 review and will ensure that the appeal is considered by an appropriately qualified and impartial member of staff who was not directly responsible for the original assessment decision.

The review may include:

- Reviewing the learner's submitted evidence.
- Reviewing the assessment decision and assessor feedback.
- Reviewing the relevant assessment criteria and qualification requirements.
- Reviewing relevant assessment and quality assurance records.
- Obtaining information from the assessor or other relevant staff members.

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The learner will normally receive a written outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the formal appeal.

Where an appeal is particularly complex and more time is required, the learner will be informed of the reason for the delay and provided with an expected response date.

The outcome will explain whether the appeal is:

- **Upheld** – the assessment decision will be reconsidered and any necessary corrective action taken.
- **Partially upheld** – some aspects of the appeal are accepted and appropriate action will be taken.
- **Not upheld** – the original assessment decision remains unchanged.

The learner will be informed of any action arising from the appeal.

Stage 2 – Final Internal Review

If the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they may request a further review by the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA).

The request must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome and should explain why the learner remains dissatisfied.

The Stage 2 reviewer will be independent of the original assessment decision and, where possible, independent of the Stage 1 review.

The Stage 2 review will normally be completed within 10 working days of receiving the escalation.

The learner will receive a written final internal outcome explaining the decision and any further action to be taken.

External Escalation to the Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation

If the learner remains dissatisfied after completing Community Matters' internal appeals process, they may escalate the matter to the relevant Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation.

Learners should be provided with information about the relevant Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation's procedure and how to submit an appeal.

Community Matters will not prevent or discourage a learner from exercising their right to use Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation's appeals process.

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Independence and Impartiality

Community Matters will ensure that appeals are handled fairly and impartially.

Where reasonably practicable:

- The person reviewing an appeal will not have made the original assessment decision.
- The person conducting an appeal review will have appropriate knowledge and competence.
- Conflicts of interest will be identified and managed.
- All decisions will be based on evidence and the relevant qualification and assessment requirements.

Records

Community Matters will maintain an appropriate record of all formal appeals, including:

- The original assessment decision.
- The learner's appeal and supporting evidence.
- Investigation and review records.
- The outcome and reasons for the decision.
- Any corrective or remedial action.
- Any subsequent escalations.

Appeal records will be retained in accordance with Community Matters' document retention requirements.

Learner Support

Learners will be informed of their right to appeal and will have access to this policy.

Learners may request reasonable support to understand the appeals process. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be considered to ensure that a learner is not disadvantaged when exercising their right to appeal.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through quality assurance activities, review of appeals and any feedback received from learners, staff, or relevant Apprenticeship Assessment Organisation.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually, or sooner where there are changes to relevant external apprenticeship assessment organisation requirements, regulatory requirements or Community Matters' assessment arrangements.