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Owner and version control

Appeals Policy

1. Purpose

Best Practice Network (BPN) is committed to ensuring fairness, transparency, and consistency in all decisions affecting applicants, learners, and apprentices.

This policy sets out the process by which individuals may request a formal reconsideration of a decision (an appeal), ensuring that no individual is disadvantaged.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Applicants, candidates, trainees, and apprentices
- Employers (in relation to apprentices)
- Parents, guardians, or carers acting on behalf of individuals under 18 or vulnerable adults

3. Definitions

Appeal

A formal request for the reconsideration of a decision made by BPN.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction about service delivery, which is handled under the Feedback Policy.

4. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Feedback Policy
- Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Issues relating to service dissatisfaction, safeguarding, or malpractice may be redirected to the appropriate process.

5. Grounds for Appeal

Appeals will only be considered where there is evidence that:

5.1 Programme or Application Decisions

- BPN has not followed its own policies or procedures
- Relevant legal or regulatory requirements have not been met
- There is evidence of bias, prejudice, or unfair treatment

5.2 Assessment Decisions (“Not Met” outcomes)

- The assessment or marking process was not conducted in line with policy
 - The mark scheme or assessment criteria were incorrectly applied
 - There is evidence of bias, prejudice, or procedural irregularity
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6. Informal Resolution (Stage 1)

Before submitting a formal appeal, individuals are encouraged to seek informal resolution:

- Apprentices/employers: via the tutor or Apprenticeships Director
- Applicants/candidates: via their main BPN contact

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, a formal appeal may be submitted.

7. Submitting an Appeal (Stage 2 – Formal Appeal)

Appeals must be submitted in writing to:

feedback@bestpracticenetwork.co.uk

7.1 Submission Requirements

The appeal must include:

- Name of the appellant
- The decision being appealed
- Date the decision was communicated
- Grounds for appeal
- Supporting evidence (where available)
- The outcome sought

Appeals will only be accepted from the individual concerned unless:

- The individual is under 18
 - The individual is a vulnerable adult
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8. Timescales

- Appeals must be submitted within **21 calendar days** of the decision
- Appeals will be acknowledged within **2 working days**
- Appeals will normally be resolved within **20 working days of receipt**

Where delays occur, the appellant will be informed of the reason and given a revised timeframe.

9. Investigation Process

- The appeal will be logged in the BPN Appeals Log
 - An investigating officer (normally the Programme Director or nominee) will be appointed
 - Investigators will not have been directly involved in the original decision wherever possible
 - The appellant will receive updates throughout the process
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10. Outcomes of Appeals

Following investigation, one of the following outcomes will be issued in writing:

- **Appeal upheld**
 - The original decision will be reconsidered
 - Appropriate corrective action will be taken
 - Where relevant, an alternative opportunity or entry point will be offered
 - **Appeal not upheld**
 - A clear explanation will be provided, including evidence considered
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11. Final Internal Review (Stage 3)

If the appellant remains dissatisfied, they may request a final internal review by writing to the **Director of Quality & Compliance**, outlining:

- Reasons for dissatisfaction
- Desired outcome

The Director will review the case and issue a final decision.

This decision concludes BPN's internal appeals process.

12. External Escalation

If the matter remains unresolved, appellants may escalate to an appropriate external body. Internal processes must normally be completed first.

12.1 Awarding Organisations

- Highfield Qualifications – <https://www.highfieldqualifications.com>
- NCFE – <https://www.ncfe.org.uk>
- ilm - <https://www.i-l-m.com/>

12.2 End Point Assessment Organisations

- NQual – <https://www.nqual.co.uk>
- Academy 4 Project Management – <https://www.academy4pm.com/>
- Highfield Assessments - <https://www.highfieldassessment.com/>

12.3 Regulators and Government Bodies

- Department for Education – https://form.education.gov.uk/service/Contact_the_Department_for_Education
- Ofqual – complaints@ofqual.gov.uk

12.4 Inspection Body

- Ofsted – <https://www.ofsted.gov.uk>

Appellants should contact the appropriate body depending on the nature of the appeal.

13. Reasonable Adjustments and Support

BPN will ensure the appeals process is accessible to all.

Support will be provided where required, including:

- Alternative submission formats
 - Assistance for individuals with additional needs, disabilities, or language barriers
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14. Record Keeping and Monitoring

- All appeals will be recorded in the Appeals Log
- Appeals will be reviewed through monthly reporting and senior management review
- Trends and learning points will inform continuous improvement and staff training

- Data will be handled in accordance with BPN's Data Protection Policy
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