



**Accelerate
People**

Enquiries and Appeals Policy

Version History		
Version	Date Amended	Changes Made
1	Jan 2020	Document created.
1.1	Sept 2020	Amended for logo.
2.1	Oct 2020	All types of enquiries and appeals included with the stages for each detailed. Flow chart of process added.
3.1	June 2021	Removal of Stage 3 Independent Review.
4	Dec 2021	Addition of Stage 3 Independent Review.
5	March 2024	Content revised and restructured for clarity.
6	Sept 2024	Annual review, added document classification and rebranding
6.1	Jan 2025	Minor update to include revised Enquiries & Appeals form

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1. Introduction

This policy is aimed at any organisation that enrolls learners to undertake end-point assessment (EPA) with Accelerate People. It specifies the process to follow when submitting enquiries and appeals, and the process we will follow. Please read this policy in conjunction with Accelerate People's other related policies; Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy; Malpractice and Maladministration Policy; Conflict of Interest Policy; and Employee Equality and Diversity Policy.

2. When Should I make an Enquiry or Appeal

An Enquiry or Appeal can be made for the following reasons:

- If you believe any process or procedure was not followed properly and fairly in relation to the EPA
- If you disagree with any part of the EPA grading decision
- Where we have declined applications for reasonable adjustment or special consideration
- Decisions relating to any action taken against a learner or training provider / FE college / employer following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration
- (for Appeals), if you disagree with the outcome of an Enquiry.

All enquiries must be submitted within 10 working days of the learner's assessment grade or decision being issued. Enquiries should be submitted using the Enquiries & Appeals form, which can be found [here](#).

There are three stages in the enquiries and appeals process:

Stage 1: Informal Enquiry

Stage 2: Formal Appeal

Stage 3: Independent Review Panel (if the result from Stage 2 is contested)

Before submitting an Enquiry or Appeal, employers and training providers must have the learner's informed consent and ensure that the learner is aware of the potential outcomes and timeframes.

3. The Enquiries and Appeals process

The process consists of the three stages listed above; these are.

Stage 1: Informal Enquiry

Enquiries give employers and training providers the opportunity to ask about the EPA decisions if they think they are incorrect. Enquiries should be submitted using the Enquiries & Appeals form, which can be found [here](#).

An Enquiry can be used for clarification regarding assessment decisions, reasonable adjustments, special considerations, and malpractice and maladministration decisions.

On receipt of the Enquiry form, Accelerate People will review it for clarity, errors and, if appropriate, technical checks, and respond to the individual recorded as the main point of contact on the submitted form.

Acknowledgement of an Enquiry will be sent to the main point of contact within one working day, with a response to the enquiry sent within 10 working days.

Submitting your Enquiry:

Complete the Enquiry form with relevant information and evidence listed; for:

Assessment Decisions:

- The learner's name and ULN
- The date you received the grade
- Your details and a main point of contact
- Details of the enquiry.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations:

- The learner's name and ULN
- The date you received the decision
- The basis for the Enquiry
- All relevant supporting information, which must present a clear rationale for the dispute.

Malpractice and Maladministration:

- The learner's name and ULN
- The date you received the decision
- The basis for the Enquiry
- All relevant supporting information, which must present a clear rationale for the dispute.

If the Enquiry is regarding an action that has been applied following the outcome of an investigation into suspected or alleged malpractice and/or maladministration, or if you believe any processes or procedures were not followed properly and fairly in relation to the EPA, the investigation findings, report, and evidence will be reviewed. The training provider or employer is required to submit reasons, with evidence, describing why there is disagreement with the action.

Enquiry outcomes will result in one of the following; for:

Assessment Decisions

- Clarification on the assessment decision, provided within 10 working days.

Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations

- Clarification on the adjustment decision, provided within 10 working days.

Malpractice and Maladministration

- Clarification provided on the investigation decision, provided within 10 working days.

Stage 2: Formal Appeal

Formal appeal requests cannot be accepted unless Stage 1 (Informal Enquiry) has first been exhausted.

Submitting an Appeal Hearing request

If you disagree with the outcome of the Informal Enquiry decision (Stage 1), you have ten working days in which to request that an Appeal Hearing (Stage 2) is undertaken, by completing the Enquiries & Appeals form, which can be found [here](#), with additional supporting evidence, if required.

Accelerate People will acknowledge your application for an Appeal Hearing within one working day and respond with an outcome within 10 working days).

Please refer to Appendix 1 for Appeal fees.

When submitting an Appeal Hearing application, you should provide as much supporting evidence as possible, and keep all evidence relating to the case.

Please note that no new evidence relating to the End-point Assessment will be considered.

Appeal Hearing Internal Process, for:

Assessment Decisions:

Accelerate People will review the application, supporting documentation and any records relating to the original decision. The Appeal submission, along with the supporting material, will be passed to an independent subject matter expert (SME) who is qualified to conduct a review of all evidence. They will compile a report and grade based on their own, independent findings; they will not have any conflict of interest in the case. Their recommendation (findings and grade) will be communicated to the members of the Appeal Panel.

The Appeal Panel will review the grade against the original decision and, if they remain the same, will communicate this back to the appellant.

The Appeals Panel will consist of (as a minimum) of a member of the Quality Team, a Lead Subject Matter Expert and a Senior Officer.

All Other Submissions:

(reasonable adjustments, special considerations, malpractice, maladministration, etc)

In the case of appeals from these areas (assessments, reasonable adjustments, etc), in order to determine if our policies and procedures have been properly followed, the Appeal Panel will consider all the facts in the case.

Appeal Hearings Outcomes:

The possible outcomes of the hearing, as relevant to the circumstance, are as follows:

- The assessment decision will either remain the same or the grade will be changed.
- The decision regarding reasonable adjustment and special consideration requests will either be changed or remain as the original decision.
- Any actions may be amended in the instance of malpractice and maladministration.

If the appeal identifies any errors within Accelerate People's procedures, we will:

- Correct any errors
- Produce and implement an action plan to alleviate any further risks or issues
- Provide feedback / further training and development to the relevant people within Accelerate People
- Review assessment documentation
- Identify any other learner who has been affected by that failure.

Stage 3: Independent Review Panel (Final Appeal)

There is a right to a final Independent Review if you do not agree with Accelerate People's decision. This must be requested within 10 working days of receipt of the Appeal Hearing decision and submitted via the Enquiries & Appeals form, which can be found [here](#).

Accelerate People will acknowledge your application for an Appeal Hearing within one working day and respond with an outcome within 10 working days.

In all circumstances an independent reviewer will be allocated to carry out the review, to ensure there is no conflict of interest, in line with our Conflict-of-Interest Policy. The impartial reviewer will be a person with the qualifications necessary to make an appeal decision and will not have a vested interest in the results of the appeal.

The aim of the independent review is to determine if Accelerate People has applied its appeals procedures in a fair and reasonable manner and in accordance with its policies. The independent review will be conducted as a desk-based review and may include the independent reviewer gaining clarification on any points made from the appeal feedback.

The Independent Appeal Panel will consist of (as a minimum) of an independent external reviewer, a member of the Product Team or a Lead Subject Matter Expert (as appropriate) and a Senior Officer.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for Appeal fees.

The independent review will be the final decision.

4. Confidentiality

Accelerate People will take the appropriate measures to ensure compliance with data protection laws where any content may be deemed confidential.

5. Further Action

If you are not satisfied with the final outcome, you have the opportunity to escalate to Ofqual.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual/about/complaints-procedure>

**Please note that Ofqual will not overturn a decision or grade.

6. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and, where appropriate, results from internal and external monitoring arrangements, amendments in internal procedures, IfATE, Department for Education (DfE), and Ofqual actions or where developments in legislation occur.

Appendix 1: Fees

Stage 1	Informal Enquiry	Reasonable adjustments and special considerations and malpractice and maladministration	No fee
		Assessment decisions	No fee
Stage 2	Formal Appeal	Appeal against decision regarding application for reasonable adjustments and special considerations and malpractice and maladministration	No fee
		Assessment decisions	£300
Stage 3	Independent Appeal Panel	All decisions	£600

In the event that an appeal is upheld, the fee will not be applied. If an appeal is unsuccessful, the fee will be invoiced at the point of the outcome being communicated to the training provider.



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