

**Appeal and Complaints**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Responsible** | Karen Shopland |
| **Accountable Author** | Nikki Blake |

**Version History**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Revision Date** | **Author** | **Approved by**  | **Description of Revision** |
| August 2015 | SCIL | SCIL SMT | Annual review |
| August 2016 | SCIL | SCIL SMT | Annual review |
| April 2020 | SCIL | SCIL SMT | Annual review |
| April 2021 | SCIL | IQA panel | Annual review |
| April 2022 | SCIL | IQA panel | Annual review |
| January 2023  | SCIL | IQA panel | Added appeals ref EPA |
| February 2024 | SCIL | IQA panel | Annual review |

This Policy has been developed by Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL), part of Somerset Council. All training programmes have a commitment to providing a supportive learning environment which enables all Students, Apprentices, Learners and Trainees (SALTs) who have chosen to study with SCIL to achieve their full potential.

**Examples of Appeals and Complaints**

**Appeal -** An appeal is a request from a SALT or an employer that a decision of a Board of Examiners/IQA should be reviewed because it is believed that an injustice has occurred.

**Complaint –** A complaint may be made by a SALT or an employer if they are unhappy with the services they receive from SCIL.

**1. Policy Statement**

SALTs or an employer may want to appeal/complain because they believe that SCIL have not:

1. Provided the training/service that SCIL said we would.
2. Followed policy, rules or procedures including on-line testing.
3. Been courteous in our contact with you.
4. Followed partner university/awarding organisation marking criteria.
5. Acted fairly or without bias, or
6. SALTs or an employer may have other reasons to complain.

**2. Project Manager/Programme Leaders**

1. Respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way.
2. Ensure you are satisfied that we have taken your complaint seriously and dealt with it properly.
3. Learn from complaints and take appropriate measures to improve the programme.
4. Apologise where complaints are found to be justified, take steps to put right what went wrong if practicable, and aim to prevent a similar problem arising in the future.

**3. If a SALT or an employer considers that they have grounds for appeal/complaint they should**:

1. Contact their Tutor/Module Lead/Assessor explaining the reasons for the appeal/complaint.
2. The tutor/module lead should inform the Project Manager and Programme Manager within 2 working days.
3. The SALT should confirm in writing within 7 working days.
4. A meeting with the SALT and tutor/module lead will take place within 14 working days.
5. Minutes should be taken, signed and dated by both the SALT and Assessor/IQA/Tutor/Module Lead.
6. The SALT should receive a copy of the completed minutes within 5 working days. A copy should be stored securely as per centre guidelines.
7. The SALT is entitled to be accompanied by an impartial supporter at this meeting.

**Appeals/Complaints regarding assessment decisions**

**Study Centre and Apprenticeships**

1. The SALT **or an employer** will make a written appeal/complaint to the Programme Manager.
2. Programme Manager will contact the relevant IQA and assessor
3. IQA and assessor will meet to re look at the assessment decisions
4. Feedback to Programme Manager who will respond to the SALT **or employer**

NB. If the appeal is upheld the assessor will be provided additional support as per the SCIL IQA strategy as well as the assessor RAG rating be adjusted accordingly.

Appeals/complaints in relation to assessment decisions and grades must be received within 2 weeks after their release date. Following that, appeals/complaints **will not** be considered. Appeals/complaints in relation to any other aspect of your training must be received within three months of the incident, event or matter over which the appeal/complaint is being raised. Following that, appeals/complaints **will not** be considered.

Appeals/complaints in relation to on-line testing- the centre will contact the awarding organisation and request an enquiry. This enquiry allows centres to question examination results for multiple choice examinations. The request must be submitted within 30 days and there will be a charge to the candidate per script. No special consideration can be applied as part of the enquiry, even if the candidate experiences a disruption during the exam that was beyond their control.

**Appeals/complaints regarding End Point Assessment (Apprenticeships only)**

If an apprentice wishes to make an appeal to an End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), regarding any element of the EPA there will be a charge to the employer. This charge will vary depending on the depth of the appeal. Appeals need to be made within 20 working days of the results date, the apprentice/employer should contact the Apprenticeship Project Manager for guidance on the appeals process for the relevant EPAO.

**4. Appeal/complaint cannot be resolved**

If the appeal/complaint cannot be resolved at this meeting and the SALT/employer wishes to escalate it further, they should:

1. Inform the appropriate Project Manager and Programme Manager within 7 working days.
2. The manager will arrange a meeting with the SALT and tutor/module lead (if appropriate) within 14 days.
3. Minutes should be taken, signed and dated by all parties.
4. The SALT is entitled to be accompanied by an impartial supporter at this meeting.
5. If the appeal cannot be resolved at this meeting, the Project Manager/Programme Manager shall refer to the HEI Manager/QA Co-ordinator.
6. After reviewing all written/verbal evidence from the SALT, IQA/tutor/module lead and Project Manager the HEI Manager/QA Co-ordinator will contact the learner, in writing, within 21 days to inform them of the decision(s) reached.
7. The SALT can request a meeting with the HE Manager/QA Co-ordinator to discuss the decision made.
8. This request must be made within 10 days of receiving written correspondence about the decision(s) made.
9. Minutes should be taken, signed and dated by all parties.
10. The SALT is entitled to be accompanied by an impartial supporter at this meeting.

**5. Upheld Appeal**

The tutor/assessor shall meet with the Project Manager and Programme Manager to discuss the outcome.

1. If required, provision shall be made for the SALTs work to be re-assessed.
2. If the SALT remains unhappy about the decision(s) made and wishes to escalate it to the partner university/awarding organisation. This must be done within 14 working days following the receipt of the appeal/complaints decision letter. The SCIL appeals and complaints process must be followed before a SALT can contact the Awarding Organisation.
3. The SALT must also inform the SCIL Service Manager in writing of their intention to escalate it to the partner university/awarding organisation within that 14-working day period.

**6. Appeal/complaint is resolved**

At any stage of the process the Assessor/IQA/Tutor/Programme Manager must ensure that information is sent to the Project Manager to store securely.

Please note, that records relating to Appeals and Complaints will be retained for three academic years.

**7. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)**

A SALT who is not satisfied with the outcome of the procedure and has exhausted all the stages of the procedure may request that the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) reviews the case. This may be done by completing the OIA scheme application form within twelve months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter.

**Who to contact if you have a concern**

|  |
| --- |
| In the first instance contact your Tutor/Module Leader/Cohort Leader/Assessor/Placement Moderator/Programme Manager |
| If you do not feel you can raise you concern with any of the following you can contact the following personnel |
| **SCIL Project Managers**Claudine Leoni – HEI ProgrammesSteph Dingle – Apprenticeships, ILM programmes, NCFE programmes | 0300 123 1967Claudine.Leoni@somerset.gov.uk Stephanie.Dingle@somerset.gov.uk |
| **SCIL Service Manager**Karen Shopland | 0300 123 1967Karen.Shopland@somerset.gov.uk  |