

# **Elysian School**

## **Appeals Policy**



**Date adopted: December 2019**

**Date of next Review: December 2020**

## **1. Policy statement**

This policy sets out Elysian School's framework for dealing with appeals to ensure that we are outlining and applying our processes, procedures and policies in a fair and consistent way for our customers.

## **2. Applicability of policy**

This policy applies to:

All qualifications that we deliver across all awarding bodies

## **3. Scope and purpose of policy**

The policy relates to all operations within Elysian School. The policy forms part of Elysian's Quality Assurance arrangements by allowing you (the appellant) to outline your views/grievances in relation to a decision or action we have taken, as outlined during Section 1 of this policy.

## **4. Linked policies**

- Enquiries about Results and Assessment Decisions Policy
- Maladministration and Malpractice Policy
- Sanctions Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration Policy
- Complaints Policy.

## **5. Location and access to the policy**

The Appeals Policy is located on our website

## **6. Persons responsible for the policy**

Head of Education

### **Section 1 Overview of appeals**

The purpose of an appeal is to ascertain if we have applied the correct processes, procedures and policies in a fair and consistent way.

#### **1.1 Appeal exclusions and restrictions**

The appeals procedure will not comprise:

- a reassessment of external assessments
- a review of assessment decisions
- a review of the content of External Quality Assurance visit reports
- a change to a decision/sanction imposed

## **1.2 Appeal acceptance criteria**

The list below details what types of appeals we will accept:

### **Type of appeal**

- Outcome of an enquiry about results and assessment decisions
- Outcome of an application for reasonable adjustments or special consideration
- Outcome of a maladministration or malpractice investigation
- Outcome of a decision to impose a sanction resulting from a malpractice or maladministration investigation
- Outcome of a review of an appeal (stage 1) decision
- Termination of product and/or centre approval status for maladministration or malpractice, or termination for breach of Centre Agreement.

You must submit an appeal application within **30 working days** of receiving the original decision, the outcome of an enquiry or the outcome of a review of an appeal (stage 1).

Any other area, which has resulted in your dissatisfaction, may be addressed via our Complaints Policy, which can be found on our website.

## **1.3 Who can appeal?**

A pupil or parent/carer can submit an appeal. A third party may submit an appeal with the express permission of the pupil or parent/carer.

If you or any other relevant party wish to be legally represented in relation to any aspect of the appeal, we must be informed in writing; this must include details of who, what their credentials are and what interest they have in the appeal case. We reserve the right to also be legally represented.

## **1.4 Stages of an appeal**

There are two stages of an appeal, which we make available; these are:

### **1.4.1 Review of appeal – Stage 1**

The first stage of appeal is a desk-based procedure that is completed by Elysian staff who are independent and were not involved in the original process or procedure. The appointed member of staff or committee of staff, under normal circumstances, will not have been involved in delivering the specific qualification. However, they will be experienced on all applicable processes, procedures and policies.

### **1.4.2 Independent Appeals Committee – Stage 2**

The Independent Appeals Committee will consist of, as a minimum, 1 independent Elysian member of senior management who was not involved in the original process or stage 1 of the appeal, and an independent person<sup>2</sup> who will be appointed by the Management Committee.

## **Section 2 Review of appeal – stage 1**

### **2.1 Submitting an appeal**

You must submit a written request for an appeal via email or in writing to enable us to consider the appeal application in accordance with the appeal acceptance criteria as outlined in Section 1.

Your request should include a clear rationale as to why you believe that we did not properly or fairly apply our relevant processes, procedures or policies and must include supporting evidence.

Evidence of learner authorisation must be retained and kept for at least six months following the outcome of an appeal and in compliance with relevant legislation. We reserve the right to inspect such evidence.

If your application does not include sufficient information or evidence, we will inform you in writing, and include a final deadline for the submission of any further information and evidence to support your appeal application.

### **2.2 Appeal acceptance**

The decision of whether or not to accept the application for an appeal is based on:

- whether the appeal submitted falls within our acceptance criteria
- whether any other relevant/required process, procedure or policy has first been completed (eg enquiry about results/assessment decisions)
- whether there is sufficient evidence that our relevant processes, procedures and policies have not been consistently and fairly applied
- whether learner or centre maladministration or malpractice has occurred in relation to the process or appeal
- the timescale of the application.

If we reject an appeal application, the reason(s) for this will be provided to you in writing within **5 working days** of the decision being made; this will include information about appealing to the Independent Appeals Committee where this is permitted.

If we accept an appeal application, we will appoint an independent member of staff who will send an acknowledgement letter or email within **5 working days**.

### **2.3 Timescales following the acceptance of an appeal application**

We aim to action and resolve a review of an appeal within **20 working days** of acceptance.

Please note that in some cases; particularly where the case may be complex and/or an independent person is not available within this timescale, the appeal may take longer than **20 working days**. In such instances, we will advise you of the revised timescale and the reason(s) why.

## **2.4 Appeal review**

This stage will comprise an objective, factually based review of:

- whether we have properly and fairly applied our relevant policies processes and procedures in light of the evidence presented, including any records available relating to the original decision
- any readily available Regulators' advice on similar matters, if applicable
- any readily available Awarding Organisation precedents, if applicable.

## **2.5 Appeal outcome**

An Appeal Outcome Report will be sent via letter or email to you, which will detail the outcome of stage 1 within **5 working days** of the decision being made. This will be either 'appeal upheld' or 'appeal rejected' (see 2.5.1 and 2.5.2) and will include any remedial action or details of how to appeal to the next stage.

### **2.5.1 Appeal upheld**

If the stage 1 review found that we had not correctly applied our processes, procedures or policies fairly or consistently, we will send you an appeal outcome letter or email, which will include remedial actions to be completed (eg remark of assessment), including appropriate timescales.

### **2.5.2 Appeal rejected**

If the stage 1 review found that all processes, procedures and policies were applied correctly and in a fair and consistent way, we will send you an appeal outcome letter or email, which will include information on how to submit an appeal to the next stage, where applicable.

## **Section 3 Independent Appeals Committee (NCFE) – stage 2**

The Independent Appeals Committee has been established to ensure that there is an additional level of independence if you are not satisfied with the decision/outcome of stage 1 of the appeals procedure.

### **3.1 Submitting an appeal to the Independent Appeals Committee**

You have the right to submit an appeal to the Independent Appeals Committee following completion of the stage 1 appeals procedure if you are not satisfied with our decision/outcome.

You must submit a written request to the Independent Appeals Committee, which should include a clear rationale as to why you believe that we did not properly or fairly apply our relevant processes, procedures or policies, and must include supporting evidence using the web form available on our website ([www.qualhub.co.uk](http://www.qualhub.co.uk)).

If your application does not include sufficient information or evidence, we will inform you in writing, and include a final deadline for the submission of any further information and evidence to support your appeal application to the Independent Appeals Committee.

### **3.2 Appeal acceptance**

The decision of whether or not to accept the application for an appeal is based on:

- whether a stage 1 appeal has been completed
- whether the appeal is submitted as required and falls within our acceptance criteria
- whether you have supplied sufficient evidence that our relevant processes, procedures and policies have not been consistently and fairly applied
- the timescale of the application in accordance with Section 1.2.

If an application for a stage 2 appeal is rejected, the reason(s) for this will be provided in writing within **5 working days** of the decision being made.

If the application for a stage 2 appeal is accepted, the Independent Appeals Committee will send an acknowledgement letter or email within **5 working days** of the decision being made, and request all information and supporting evidence from both parties. All new evidence must be submitted **5 working days** prior to an appeal hearing.

You must not communicate with any member of NCFE staff regarding the appeal once you receive the appeal acceptance letter from the committee.

### **3.3 Appeal hearing**

The purpose of the Independent Appeals Committee meeting is to consider your appeal application and supporting evidence from both parties to determine, beyond reasonable doubt, whether we have properly and fairly applied our relevant processes, procedures and policies in light of the evidence presented. The Committee will consider any readily available Regulators' advice on similar matters and any readily available Awarding Organisation precedents.

The Independent Appeals Committee will consider all evidence from the stage 1 appeal, and will request further information and evidence from both parties where required.

The Committee will aim to make a unanimous decision when determining the outcome of the appeal.

#### **3.3.1 During the appeal hearing**

The Independent Appeals Committee may require representation from both parties to attend the appeal hearing, either in person or via telephone. This will enable the members of the Committee to question representatives from both parties.

### **3.4 Appeal outcome**

An Appeal Outcome Report will be sent via letter or email to you, which will detail the outcome of the Independent Appeals Committee within **5 working days** of the decision being made. This will be either 'appeal upheld' or 'appeal rejected' and will include any remedial action.

**Under no circumstance should the appellant contact members of the Independent Appeals Committee regarding the outcome of the appeal once it has been shared with relevant parties.**

### **3.4.1 Appeal upheld**

If the stage 2 review found that we had not correctly applied our processes, procedures or policies fairly or consistently, we will send you an appeal outcome letter or email, which will include remedial actions to be completed, including appropriate timescales.

### **3.4.2 Appeal rejected**

If the stage 2 review found all processes, procedures and policies to have been applied correctly and in a fair and consistent way the appeal will be rejected.

The decision of the Independent Appeals Committee is final and will complete our appeals procedure. We will not accept any further appeal. Should you disagree with the decision, you have the right to express your dissatisfaction regarding our actions, products or services through our Complaints Policy, which is available on our website ([www.qualhub.co.uk](http://www.qualhub.co.uk)).

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Education and the Management Committee.