

Complaints and Appeals Policy

Document reference	UKSEQ-POL-006
Policy area	Learner Rights
Version	0.1 — Draft
Status	In development — not approved for operational use
Policy owner	UKSEQ Quality & Compliance Lead (proposed)
Approval authority	UKSEQ Board (proposed)
Effective date	To be confirmed upon approval
Review frequency	Annually and following material change
Next review	12 months after approval

1. Purpose and scope

This policy establishes the proposed UKSEQ approach to complaints and appeals. It applies to UKSEQ directors, employees, contractors, centres and learners as relevant to their roles. It will take effect only when formally approved and implemented. UKSEQ is not currently recognised by Ofqual or Qualifications Wales and does not currently award regulated qualifications.

2. Responsibilities

The Board is accountable for approving the policy and ensuring sufficient resources and independent oversight. The designated Quality & Compliance Lead is responsible for implementation, monitoring and escalation. Centres and authorised personnel must comply with applicable requirements, cooperate with reviews and maintain accurate records. Specific appointments and delegated authorities must be confirmed before the policy takes effect.

3. Distinction

A complaint concerns service, conduct or administration; an appeal challenges an assessment, reasonable adjustment, sanction or other formal decision. A complaint cannot substitute for an assessment appeal.

4. Access and support

Learners and centres must be told how to raise issues, receive reasonable assistance and be protected from retaliation. Accessible channels and alternative formats will be available.

5. Initial handling

Concerns should normally first be raised with the relevant centre where appropriate, but serious allegations, conflicts or centre-level failures may be referred directly to UKSEQ.

6. Acknowledgement and review

UKSEQ will acknowledge submissions within five working days as a proposed service target, identify an independent reviewer and explain the process, evidence needed and expected timescale.

7. Investigation and decision

The reviewer will examine relevant evidence, obtain representations and provide a reasoned written outcome, normally targeted within 20 working days unless complexity requires an explained extension.

8. Appeal stages

Formal appeals will be considered by a person not involved in the original decision; a further independent review mechanism will be available where required by applicable rules. Fees, if any, must be disclosed and fair.

9. Learning and external escalation

UKSEQ will record themes, corrective actions and outcomes. External escalation information, including regulator routes where applicable, must be accurate for UKSEQ's recognition status.

10. Monitoring, records and review

Compliance will be monitored through management review, sampling, incident analysis and internal audit as appropriate. Records of decisions, exceptions, approvals and corrective actions must be maintained in approved secure systems. This policy will be reviewed annually, and sooner following relevant legal or regulatory change, material incident or identified weakness.

11. Related documents

This policy should be read alongside the UKSEQ policy suite, applicable qualification specifications, approved centre agreements and relevant statutory or regulatory requirements. In any conflict, applicable law and binding regulatory conditions take precedence.

Document control and approval

Prepared for consultation and Board review. Before issue, UKSEQ must confirm named accountable officers, contact routes, delegated decision rights, service standards, implementation evidence and any necessary regulatory cross-references.

Approved by	Pending
Approval date	Pending
Next scheduled review	12 months after approval