

RSL VQ Enquiries About Results and Appeals Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is aimed at centres which are involved in the delivery and assessment of RSL Vocational Qualifications.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures that centres should follow if they wish to enquire about or appeal the result of a learning outcome, unit or qualification. It supersedes all previous RSL VQ appeals policies.

Separate policies are available for graded examinations and professional diplomas:

<https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

- 1.3 We treat all enquiries about results and appeals in confidence and will not make details available to any other parties.
- 1.4 For any advice or clarification about this policy and the procedures outlined, please contact vqappeals@rslawards.com

2. Issue and review

- 2.1 The date of issue of this policy is May 2023. This policy will be reviewed annually.
- 2.2 This policy will be subject to review and monitoring by RSL (at a minimum annually, although more frequently if necessary) and will be amended and updated accordingly. As part of this monitoring process, feedback from centres will be taken into account. All revisions of this policy will be posted on our website.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 An *enquiry about result* is applicable for controlled external assessment only.

- 3.2 It questions, on whatever grounds, the result(s) awarded to a learner. It gives a learner, or their representative, the opportunity to have results reviewed.
- 3.3 There are two types of enquiries about results: (i) clerical check and (ii) re-mark.
- 3.4 Customers who are dissatisfied with the outcome of an *enquiry about a result* may lodge an *appeal*. Appeals may also be made against decisions in respect of moderation of internal assessment, special consideration or malpractice investigations.
- 3.5 Enquiries about results are not available in respect of decisions related to internal assessment, special considerations, complaints or malpractice.
- 3.6 For details about submitting an application for an enquiry about result, see section 4. For details about submitting an appeal, see section 5.

4. Enquiries About Results

- 4.1 An enquiry about a result can only be made once the result of controlled external assessment has been received. Enquiries about results are applicable only to controlled external assessment and cannot be used for internal assessment decisions.
- 4.2 If a centre wishes to make an *enquiry about a result* on behalf of a learner, please submit a 'RSL VQ Enquiries About Results Application Form' to vgappeals@rslawards.com, no later than **10 working days*** from the issue of results. Please include 'Enquiries About Results Application' in the subject line of the email.
- 4.3 There are two types of Enquiries About Results: (i) clerical check; (ii) re-mark.
- 4.4 A clerical check may be requested for the following scenarios:
 - 4.4.1 The assessment report does not align with the grades shown on the RSL cloud site
 - 4.4.2 Feedback from the external assessor does not indicate what evidence was missing from the submission.
- 4.5 There is no fee for a clerical check.
- 4.6 On receipt of a clerical check request, the matter raised will be looked into and any corrective action undertaken.
- 4.7 Should a centre be dissatisfied with the result awarded to a learner for their controlled external assessment, they may request a re-mark on their behalf.

- 4.8 Re-remarks will only be considered on a learning outcome basis, not for individual assessment criteria.
- 4.9 The fee for a re-mark is £40 per learner (up to a maximum of £240).
- 4.10 **An invoice will be generated for the fee and will need to be paid before the timescales for releasing results.**
- 4.11 Fees will be refunded or waived if a re-mark results in a change to the learner's grade for the overall unit.
- 4.12 Only one enquiry per learner will be accepted. Centres should make all enquiries about results on behalf of learners. Applications will not be accepted directly from learners.
- 4.13 If a centre has contacted RSL by telephone, they should follow this up by contacting the VQ Team via the e-mail inbox referred to above.
- 4.14 RSL will not enter into discussion about an active enquiry with either the appellant or any other interested party.
- 4.15 An initial individual review of the application, and the relevant learner evidence and assessment decisions, will be undertaken by an external assessor who did not complete the original assessment for the learner. The external assessor will re-mark externally assessed evidence by learning outcome.
- 4.16 The re-mark will be subject to a checking process overseen by the Senior Quality Assurers and the revised results submitted by the RSL Operations team.
- 4.17 Once this process for a clerical check or re-mark is completed, the centre will receive written confirmation of the outcome from the RSL operations team within **10 working days** of the application.
- 4.18 In cases where a re-mark results in a change to the learning outcome grades awarded, the learner will be issued with revised results. (A change to a learning outcome grade may not change the overall unit grade.) This will terminate the enquiry process and the revised result will stand in all cases.
- 4.19 In cases where a re-mark results in no change to the learning outcome grades awarded, the original result will stand.
- 4.20 Centres should be aware that grades awarded following a re-mark could be higher or lower than initial grades awarded, and are responsible for providing this guidance to learners prior to submission of an application. If a unit grade changes following a re-mark, this is the grade

that will count towards the learner's overall qualification.

- 4.21 Following the termination of the enquiry about a result process, should one or more learning outcomes be an unclassified grade, learners will be allowed one resit opportunity within the published resit window.
- 4.22 Centres should apply to RSL within **4 working days** of receipt of the outcome of the enquiry should the learner wish to resit.
- 4.23 Please be aware that due to the tight timescales associated with controlled external assessment and the resit window within the academic year, any application for an enquiry about a result will delay the opportunity to apply for a resit and hence reduce the size of the resit window. It is the responsibility of the centre and the learner to acknowledge this and ensure appropriate planning.
- 4.24 For more details regarding resits and the application process, please refer to the 'VQ Resit and Retake Policy' available here: <https://www.rslawards.com/about-us/policies-regulations/>

5. Appeals

- 5.1 For externally assessed units, an appeal can only be made once the results of an enquiry about a result have been received.
- 5.2 For moderation of internally assessed units, an appeal can only be made once a moderation report has been received.
- 5.3 If a centre wishes to make an appeal on behalf of a learner, please submit a 'RSL VQ Appeal Application Form' to vgappeals@rslawards.com, no later than **10 working days** from the issue of results (where the appeal is in relation to controlled external assessment). Please include 'Appeal Application' in the subject line of the email. Please provide as much information as possible to enable a thorough investigation to be carried out.
- 5.4 Only one appeal per learner will be accepted. Centres should submit all appeals on behalf of learners. Applications will not be accepted directly from learners.
- 5.5 If a centre has contacted RSL by telephone, they should follow this up by contacting the VQ Team via the e-mail inbox referred to above.
- 5.6 RSL will not enter into discussion about an active appeal with either the appellant or any other interested party.

Grounds for appeal

5.7 Centres should have their own internal appeals procedure for dealing with any appeals made by learners about internal assessment, verification or standardisation. Should an appeal be made to RSL about internal assessment, verification or standardisation, this will be referred by RSL back to the centre unless the appeal process has been concluded within the centre.

5.8 Below are examples of matters which will and will not be considered in relation to an appeal:

5.8.1 Examples of matters which will be considered:

- An action plan or related sanctions where External Quality Assurers have not followed procedure during centre visits
- Where certification has been delayed due to RSL failing to deliver External Quality Assurer reports, or other significant correspondence with centres, by published deadlines
- Where RSL has not followed policies or procedures relating to the re-marking of learner evidence presented as part of an enquiry about a result
- Where a moderated grade given by an External Quality Assurer in a moderation report is disputed

5.8.2 Examples of matters which will not be considered:

- External Quality Assurers' decisions in cases where insufficient evidence was provided. It is the centre's responsibility to have sufficient evidence available at the time requested
- Where the centre has an insufficient audit trail for assessment or internal verification decisions
- Where centres have not followed RSL procedures for the assessment and verification of learner evidence

5.9 A centre may appeal if RSL has declined a request for a special consideration. Centres should submit their appeal including any additional evidence that should be taken into account by RSL. The Appeals Panel will then review the evidence provided and the submission and make a judgement about whether the decision should be upheld or changed.

5.10 A centre may make an appeal against decisions or judgements made by RSL on the outcome of a malpractice investigation. Centres may appeal at the stage at which they are issued with formal sanctions and an action plan by RSL, or where RSL has failed to deliver the outcomes of a malpractice investigation or information about sanctions in accordance with published timescales. In these cases, the Appeals Panel will review the investigation and make a final decision about whether the decision was justified in terms of the malpractice policy.

- 5.11 For all appeals, the centre will be informed of an outcome within **30 working days** of the Appeal being lodged.

First level appeal

- 5.12 The first stage appeal involves a review of the evidence by the Appeals Panel.
- 5.13 The Panel will make a judgement about whether the appeal should be upheld or rejected. In the case that an appeal is upheld, this may involve a change to the grade awarded to an individual or group of learners.
- 5.14 **Please note that a re-sit will not be available to any learners who have appealed the result of an externally assessed unit.**
- 5.15 The centre will receive written confirmation of the outcome within **30 working days** of the Appeal being lodged.
- 5.16 Appeals are subject to a fee of **£40** per learner (up to a maximum of £240). If the appeal is successful, these fees will be refunded.

Second level appeal

- 5.17 If the appellant is unhappy with the decision reached in the first level appeal, they may take their appeal to the second level. The second level appeal is a review of the appeals process by an independent representative who has no direct involvement with RSL. The decision of the independent representative will be reviewed by the Qualifications and Compliance Committee and a final decision taken.
- 5.18 Please note, this stage of the appeal process will not revisit the appeal itself but reviews the process by which decisions were reached to ensure that these were carried out in a fair and compliant way.
- 5.19 Please submit a 'RSL VQ Appeal Application Form' to vqappeals@rslawards.com, no later than **14 working days** from the date of receipt of the previous decision. Please include 'Second Level Appeal Application' in the subject line of the email. Please provide as much information as possible to enable a thorough investigation to be carried out, including why you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the first level appeal.
- 5.20 The decision of the Qualifications and Compliance Committee is final.
- 5.21 The centre will receive written confirmation of the outcome within **30 working days** of the second level appeal being lodged.

- 5.22 Second level appeals are subject to a fee of **£40** per learner (up to a maximum of **£240**). If the appeal is successful, these fees will be refunded.
- 5.23 If no response to the appeal decision is received within 30 working days of the decision being communicated to the appellant, RSL will close the appeal and no further correspondence will be entered into.

Final level appeal

- 5.24 If a learner is unhappy with the decisions reached in the Second Level Appeal, they may take their appeal to the relevant regulator. For England and Northern Ireland, this is Ofqual www.ofqual.gov.uk, for Wales Qualifications Wales www.qualificationswales.org, for Northern Ireland CCEA Accreditation www.ccea.org.uk; and for Scotland SQA Accreditation www.accreditation.sqa.org.uk.

