

# DSW APPEALS POLICY

## 1. PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures and responsibilities involved when a candidate, centre, or employer submits an appeal relating to decisions made during or following an Assessment.

This policy ensures that all appeals are managed fairly, transparently, and in accordance with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition, the DfE Apprenticeship Assessment Principles, and DSW's commitment to integrity, consistency, and high-quality assessment practice.

## 2. SCOPE

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This policy applies to:

- All candidates undertaking Assessments with DSW
- All training providers, centres and employers involved in supporting candidates
- All DSW staff, contractors, assessors, and panel members involved in the appeals process

It covers appeals relating to:

- Decisions regarding malpractice or maladministration
- Decisions arising from administrative processes (e.g., ID checks, score recalculations, grade mapping)
- Decisions made in relation to Reasonable Adjustments or Special Considerations
- Marking or grading outcomes of any assessment

This policy does not cover requests for additional feedback, clarification, or learning guidance. Appeals must relate strictly to a decision that has been made.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

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**Appeal:** A formal request for the review of a decision made by DSW related to an assessment outcome, administrative action or procedural judgement.

**Candidate:** An individual registered for assessment with DSW.

**Stage 1 Appeal (Internal):** A review by a qualified assessor or quality specialist who was not involved in the original assessment decision.

**Stage 2 Appeal (Panel):** A review by a panel comprising individuals independent of previous decision-making.

**Independent Subject Matter Expert (SME):** An individual with appropriate and current sector experience who was not involved with the apprentice assessment, or any related decisions, and who has no conflict of interest in the case.

## 4. POLICY STATEMENT

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DSW is committed to providing a transparent, robust process for reviewing appeal requests. All appeals will be handled fairly, objectively, and within defined timelines.

## 5. PROCEDURES

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### 5.1 HOW TO APPEAL

- Appeals must be submitted within 15 working days of results being published.
- Late appeals will only be accepted where proven extenuating circumstances exist.
- Appeals must be submitted via Proficient using the DSW Appeal Form.
- Appeals must be submitted by the training provider or centre on behalf of the candidate.

### 5.2 STAGE 1 APPEAL

- Conducted by a qualified assessor or a member of the DSW Quality Team with appropriate sector expertise.
- The reviewer must not have been involved in the apprentice's assessment or any associated decisions.
- Based solely on the evidence originally submitted for the assessment.
- Clarification may be requested from the training provider or centre if required.
- The outcome will be communicated in writing.
- No dialogue will be entered into following the outcome.
- Apprentices may escalate to Stage 2 if dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome.

### 5.3 STAGE 2 APPEAL

- Conducted by a panel consisting of:
  - A qualified assessor independent of the original assessment and stage 1
  - A member of DSW not involved with the case
  - An independent subject matter expert (SME)
- Based solely on original assessment evidence; no new evidence permitted.
- Clarification may be requested from the training provider or centre if required.
- The panel's decision is final
- The outcome will be communicated in writing and no dialogue will be entered into thereafter.

## 6. RESPONSE TIMES

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DSW will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 2 working days.
- Provide outcomes within the following maximum timeframes:
  - Stage 1: 10 working days from receipt of a completed appeal form
  - Stage 2: 20 working days from receipt of a completed appeal form

## 7. FEES

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- Stage 1 – £100 per assessment component appealed
- Stage 2 – £400 per assessment component appealed

If an appeal is upheld and results in the grade being amended, all associated fees will be waived.

## 8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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### Candidate

- Submit appeal request and supporting rationale through their training provider or centre

### Training Provider or Centre

- Ensure accurate completion and timely submission of appeals
- Support communication between DSW and the candidate

### DSW Appeals Reviewers / Panel

- Conduct appeals objectively and maintains full documentation
- Ensure compliance with this policy and regulatory requirements

## 9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

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This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where required due to:

- Regulatory updates
- Changes to apprenticeship assessment principles
- Internal quality assurance findings

Outcomes of appeals will be monitored to identify trends and support continuous improvement.

## 10. POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

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- DSW Malpractice and Maladministration Policy
- DSW Complaints Policy
- DSW Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy
- DSW Data Protection Policy
- Guidance for Submitting Appeals

## 11. REGULATORY REFERENCES

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- Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition (particularly A1, C2, H2, I1)
- DfE Apprenticeship Assessment Principles (2025)
- DfE Funding Rules (where applicable)
- Data Protection Act 2018 / UK GDPR

## 12. CONTACT INFORMATION

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Accessible versions of this policy (e.g., large print) are available upon request. Please contact the Quality Team for support.

For questions or further information about this policy, please contact:

DSW Quality Team

Email: [quality@dswlearning.co.uk](mailto:quality@dswlearning.co.uk)

## APPEAL FORM

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Should you wish to appeal against a decision made as a result of an assessment, an appeal form should be completed and submitted via the Proficient platform.