



## **E04**

# **Complaints Policy (exams)**

Every school within Cumbria Futures Federation aims to provide a safe and hardworking environment where every child can be successful, whatever their abilities.

### **Our Values**

- Courage and Compassion
- Inclusion and Equality
- Respect and Courtesy
- Optimism and Perseverance
- Forgiveness and Tolerance
- Ambition and Achievement

<b>Version No</b>	<b>Author/Owner</b>	<b>Date Written</b>	<b>Note of amendments made</b>
2025-01	JR	January 2025	New policy from Exams Office template

**This policy covers examination arrangements for both Solway Community School and Beacon Hill Community School and references to 'school' or 'centre' refers to both Solway and Beacon Hill Schools.**

**Key staff involved in the policy**

Role	Name(s)
Head of centre	Tom Hailwood
Exams officers	Jennifer Rowlands & Amy Wise
Senior leader(s)	Jennifer Rowlands, Steph Thorp and Adam Young

## Purpose of the policy

This policy confirms Solway Community School and Beacon Hill Community School's compliance with JCQ's **General Regulations for Approved Centres** (5.3, 5.8) in drawing to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers to our written complaints policy (exams) which covers general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification and our internal appeals procedure. This is separate from our general Complaints Policy which is available on our school websites.

## Grounds for complaint

A candidate (or their parent/carer) may make a complaint on the grounds below (this is not an exhaustive list).

### Teaching and learning

- Quality of teaching and learning, for example
  - Non-subject specialist teacher without adequate training/subject matter expertise utilised on a long-term basis
  - Teacher lacking knowledge of new specification/incorrect core content studied/taught
  - Core content not adequately covered
  - Inadequate feedback for a candidate following assessment(s)
- Pre-release/advance material/set task issued by the awarding body not provided on time to an exam candidate
- The taking of an assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not conducted according to the JCQ/awarding body instructions
- Candidate not informed of their centre assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not informed of their centre assessed marks in sufficient time to request/appeal a review of marking prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body
- Candidate not given sufficient time to review materials to make a decision whether to request a review of centre assessed marks
- Candidate unhappy with internal assessment decision (complainant to refer via exams officer to the centre's *internal appeals procedure*)
- Centre fails to adhere to its *internal appeals procedure*

### Access arrangements and special consideration

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding their access arrangements
- Candidate did not consent to record their personal data online (by the non-acquisition of a completed candidate personal data consent form)
- Candidate not informed/adequately informed of the arrangements in place and the subjects or components of subjects where the arrangements would not apply
- Exam information not appropriately adapted for a disabled candidate to access it
- Adapted equipment/assistive technology put in place failed during exam/assessment
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment
- Appropriate arrangements not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment as a consequence of a temporary injury or impairment
- Candidate unhappy with centre decision relating to access arrangements or special consideration (complainant to refer via exams officer to the centre's *internal appeals procedure*)
- Centre fails to adhere to its *internal appeals procedure*

### Entries

- Failure to clearly explain a decision of early entry for a qualification to candidate (or parent/carer)
- Candidate not entered/entered late (incurring a late entry fee) for a required exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong exam/assessment
- Candidate entered for a wrong tier of entry

## Conducting examinations

- Failure to adequately brief candidate on exam timetable/exam regulations prior to exam/assessment taking place
- Room in which exam held did not provide candidate with appropriate conditions for taking the exam
- Inadequate invigilation in exam room
- Failure to conduct exam according to the regulations
- Online system failed during (on-screen) exam/assessment
- Disruption during exam/assessment
- Alleged, suspected or actual malpractice incident not investigated/reported
- Eligible application for special consideration for a candidate not submitted/not submitted to timescale
- Failure to inform/update candidate on the accepted/rejected outcome of a special consideration application if provided by awarding body

## Results and Post-results

- Before exams, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the availability of senior members of centre staff after the publication of results
- Candidate not having access to a member of senior staff after the publication of results to discuss/make decision on the submission of a review/enquiry
- Candidate request for return of work after moderation and work not available/disposed of earlier than allowed in the regulations
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a result (complainant to refer via exams officer to awarding body *post-results services*)
- Candidate (or parent/carer) unhappy with a centre decision not to support a clerical re-check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal (complainant to refer via [insert who] to the centre's *internal appeals procedure*)
- Centre fails to adhere to its *internal appeals procedure*
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong script for a candidate
- Centre missed awarding body deadline to apply for a post-results service
- Centre applied for a post-results service for candidate without gaining required candidate consent/permission

## Raising a concern/complaint

If a candidate (or their parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification they are following, Solway Community School and Beacon Hill Community School encourages the candidate to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. This should be done by contacting the school's exams officer who will endeavour to facilitate an informal resolution with senior leaders as appropriate.

If a complaint fails to be resolved informally, the candidate (or their parent/carer) is then at liberty to make a formal complaint.

### How to make a formal complaint

- A complaint about issues relating to exams should follow the same process as any complaint.
- A formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Head of Centre.
- The complaint should clearly state that you are making a complaint related to exams
- You should give specific details of your complaint
- You should say what you want the school to do to put it right.
- The school will acknowledge receipt of your complaint

### How a formal complaint is investigated

- The Head of Centre or nominated individual will contact you and arrange to meet to discuss the complaint and confirm with you what will be investigated
- They will review any documents and meet with relevant staff and/or witnesses
- Seek and consider independent advice, such as from the local authority
- Write a response letter with a decision and explain how to make any appeal.

- This process should take no longer than 20 school days from the date that the school acknowledges receipt of your complaint. If there is likely to be a delay, the investigator will contact you to explain why and indicate a new timescale.

### **Internal appeals procedure**

- Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted in line with our normal Complaints Policy.