

Awarding Organisation Enquiries and Appeals Policy

May 2026



Introduction

As a recognised Awarding Organisation (AO), the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) is subject to external regulation and must meet the requirements set by education regulation. The AO is committed to providing a quality service. As part of our commitment, the AO will listen and respond to the views of our customers.

We recognise though that there may be occasions where the Study Centre or a learner may wish to question a decision. This policy sets out our approach if that happens.

Purpose

Everyone has the right to appeal if they believe a decision is incorrect. This policy describes the stages and procedures that will need to be followed if: -

- The Study Centre disagrees with the outcome(s) from our external quality assurance activities in relation to assessment sampling.
- The Study Centre disagrees with a decision, penalty or sanction following a malpractice or maladministration investigation.
- The Study Centre disagrees with a decision concerning applications for reasonable adjustment or special considerations.
- The Study Centre disagrees with a decision or sanction applied to a Study Centre in relation to adherence to the IOSH Study Centre Agreement.
- A learner disagrees with the outcome of the Study Centre's internal appeals procedure in relation to assessment outcomes.
- A learner wishes to make an enquiry about an examination result, if they believe the marking was inaccurate.
- A learner wishes to appeal against a decision to void an assessment.

This policy does not cover appeals against decisions about Centre approval applications and qualification approval applications.

The policy

Our review and appeals process will examine whether:

- The Study Centre's procedures are consistent with our requirements.
- The Study Centre's procedures were applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.
- Our external quality assurance activities were applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.
- Our external quality assurance activities were consistent with regulatory requirements.
- The IOSH 'Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy' was followed consistently and applied correctly and fairly in arriving at a judgement.
- Assessments were marked accurately and in accordance with our mark schemes.
- Incidences of suspected Malpractice where correctly investigated.

There are three stages of enquiry or appeal depending on the particular decision in question. These are:

- Stage 1 Enquiry
- Stage 2 Appeal Investigation
- Stage 3 Appeal Review

A Stage 1 Enquiry is only available where:

- The Study Centre disagrees with the outcome(s) from our external quality assurance activities in relation to assessment sampling.
- A learner disagrees with the outcome of the Study Centre's internal appeals procedure in relation to assessment outcomes.
- A learner wishes to make an enquiry about an examination result, if they believe the marking was inaccurate.
- A learner disagrees with the decision to void an assessment.

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IOSH requires all Study Centres to have an accessible appeals policy and procedure to enable expressions of dissatisfaction about results or decisions. It is important that all Study Centre staff and learners know about the policy and that it is followed. If an enquiry or appeal is raised, we will ask to see evidence that the internal Study Centre appeals procedure has been fully exhausted.

Stage 1 – Enquiry

Any enquiry about a decision affecting the Study Centre or their learners, should be communicated within **14 working days** of receiving the decision. Usually, Study Centres will make an application on behalf of the learner with their consent. However, learners may also apply directly to us if they have exhausted the Study Centre's internal appeals process. Full details relevant to the enquiry, must be provided including the reason for raising the enquiry.

The enquiry should be submitted in accordance with the following steps:

- 1) The enquiry should be made in writing and sent either via email to admin@ioshao.com or as a hard copy addressed to:

The Operations and Quality Manager
IOSH Awarding Organisation
The Grange
Highfield Drive
Wigston
Leicestershire
LE18 1NN
UK

- 2) We will provide an acknowledgement within **3 working days**.
- 3)
 - a. Where the Study Centre disagrees with the outcome(s) from our external quality assurance activities, the application and all supporting evidence will be reviewed by an IOSH EQA, in cases where the assessment evidence was sampled as part of an external quality assurance activity, a different EQA will conduct the review. The EQA will have the relevant competence to make a decision in relation to the review and will not have a personal interest in the decision being questioned. The assessment evidence presented for review must include the original work of the learner and the evidence and outcome of the initial assessment and internal quality assurance activity. The evidence may be reviewed remotely or during a visit to the Study Centre.
 - b. For multiple choice examinations a clerical check will be undertaken. The IOSH team will manually check the candidate's completed answers against the responses held in the system. This will ensure that the candidate's answers have been correctly recorded, and the system has calculated the awarded grade correctly.
 - c. For written examinations, IOSH will first complete a clerical check as described above. The Principal Examiner will then review the marking of the script to ensure the original marking is accurate.
 - d. Where the outcome of a review brings into question the accuracy of other results for other learners, the IOSH will ensure that the interests of learners are protected, and that the integrity of the qualification is maintained. This may involve remarking or reassessment for a whole cohort, convening an extraordinary meeting of the IOSH Assessment Panel and notification to the IOSH Awarding Organisation Committee.
- 4) We will respond to the enquiry within **30 working days** of receiving it.
- 5) If the enquiry is upheld, records will be adjusted and if applicable, replacement documentation will be issued.

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- 6) If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the enquiry, they have **14 working days** in which to request that a Stage 2 Appeal Investigation is undertaken.

Stage 2 – Appeal Investigation

An appeal should be made based only on whether IOSH used procedures that were consistent with the regulatory requirements and applied our own procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgements. IOSH may refuse to accept the appeal if no procedural ground is given.

The appeal should be submitted in accordance with the following steps:

- 1) The appeal should be made in writing and sent either via email to admin@ioshao.com or as a hard copy addressed as per Stage 1 – Enquiries.
- 2) We will acknowledge the appeal within three working days and within **14 working days** we will confirm whether the application has been accepted or not.
- 3) We will raise an invoice for the relevant fee, please refer to the **IOSH AO Statement of Fees** for details of the fee payable for appeals.
- 4) The application and all supporting evidence will be reviewed by an IOSH AO team member. The team member will have the relevant competence to make a decision in relation to the review and will not have a personal interest in the decision being questioned. The team member will check all the information against policies and procedures to confirm if correct procedures have been followed. The team members decision will be reviewed and agreed by the Head of the Awarding Organisation before it is communicated to the applicant.
- 5) We will communicate the outcome of the appeal investigation in writing within **30 working days** of confirming our acceptance of the case.
- 6) If the appeal is upheld, the fee paid will be refunded, records will be adjusted as applicable, and replacement documentation will be issued without further charge (where appropriate).
- 7) If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they have **14 working days** in which to request that a Stage 3 Appeal Review is undertaken.

Stage 3 – Appeal Review

The Independent Appeals Board is to identify if IOSH followed and used procedures that were consistent with the regulatory requirements and applied our own procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgements. The Board evaluates the evidence to see whether IOSH followed the correct procedures and processes.

The Board exists to ensure that there is an independent avenue of appeal for when a Study Centre or Learner is not satisfied with the outcome following the Stage 2 Appeals Investigation.

It is comprised of three external representatives from the IOSH Awarding Organisation Committee (AOC) who have had no previous involvement in the original decision or subsequent investigation). The Independent Appeals Board is the final stage of appeals for a Study Centre and/or Learner and its decisions are final.

The appeal review should be submitted in accordance with the following steps:

- 1) The application should be made in writing and sent either via email to admin@ioshao.com or as a hard copy addressed as per Stage 1 – Enquiries.
 - The application must contain clear reasoning as to the reasons for which the applicant considers that IOSH did not follow the required procedures, and their rationale for escalating to this stage of the appeal process.

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If the application does not include the required information, it will be returned, with details of what information is missing. The applicant must respond with the required information within **5 working days**, or the appeal review will not be heard.

- 2) We will raise an invoice for the relevant fee, please refer to the **IOSH AO Statement of Fees** for details of the fee payable for appeals.
- 3) We will acknowledge the application for an appeals review within **3 working days**. We have up to **50 working days** to hold the Independent Appeals Board hearing.
- 4) The Appeals Board will request full documentation of any actions taken in the case and any additional evidence from both parties. The Independent Appeals Board will draw upon the evidence from the Stage 2 Appeal Investigation and will request any further information from the Study Centre, Learner or IOSH staff as required. Once the confirmation of the appeal is received, there must be no further communication or correspondence between the applicant and IOSH regarding the appeal.
- 5) The Independent Appeals Board may, dependent upon the nature of the appeal, require personal representation from both parties in order to hear the appeal. In such circumstances it will require the name, status and/or the interest of the representatives and witnesses, who will attend the hearing. This is normally not more than three in all, per party. No additional information or evidence may be submitted at such a hearing.
- 6) There are two possible outcomes of the hearing:
 - a. The Independent Appeals Board confirms the decision of the appeal; the appeal will be rejected and IOSH will notify the applicant.
 - b. The Independent Appeals Board upholds the appeal. The Independent Appeals Board will recommend appropriate actions, for example regarding policies or processes, to IOSH for its consideration where this may be relevant. IOSH will notify the applicant.
- 8) If the appeal is upheld, any fees paid will be refunded, records will be adjusted and if applicable, replacement documentation will be issued without further charge.
- 9) The decision of the Independent Appeals Board is the final stage of the IOSH appeals process. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal review, they may contact the relevant regulator, information on how to do this will be included in the outcome letter.

Monitoring

Following an appeal decision that is upheld due to a failure in the IOSH assessment processes, or notification of failure in the assessment processes of other awarding organisations, assessment policies and procedures will be reviewed and amended as necessary to ensure the failure does not recur in the future.

The Head of Awarding Organisation will review the implementation of this policy as part of self-assessment arrangements, considering its suitability, adequacy, and effectiveness.

Review

IOSH will review this policy and its content annually or on revision as necessary.

The Head of Awarding Organisation will continuously review and revise this policy, as necessary to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and continues to be compliant with all relevant legislation and accepted best practice. Any feedback from stakeholders or guidance from the regulators will be also considered as part of that process (e.g. to align with any complaints process established by the regulator such as Ofqual).

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