



Cheshire College
South & West

Academic Appeals Policy

Key Information	
Policy Reference Number	CCSW - AAP
ELT Post Responsible for Updating and Monitoring	Vice Principal – Innovation, Curriculum & Quality
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(1) Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is designed to provide information to learners and staff on academic appeal procedures. It recognises that learners seeking qualifications that are either internally or externally assessed, have a right to seek a review of decisions that affect them.
- 1.2 Assessment may take a variety of forms including examination, assignment including project work, essay, presentation, practical work or any other exercise which is designed to enable learners to demonstrate achievement.
- 1.3 Prior to submitting an appeal, learners should raise issues informally with members of the delivery team and attempt to resolve any concerns. Impartial advice on how best to raise issues is available from 'The Hub', from Personal Development Tutors (PDTs) or Faculty Co-ordinators at all Campuses. All staff involved in an appeal will maintain confidentiality.
- 1.4 Please note that this policy covers all FE and non-prescribed HE courses. The appeals procedure for prescribed HE courses will be available from the Dean of Higher Education and is also available on the College HE website. HE learners are to be directed to Part J academic appeals in CCSW HE Academic Regulations.
- 1.5 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic exceptional arrangements for the awarding of grades summer 2021 have been introduced. Details of how to appeal Teacher Assessed Grades summer 2021 can be found at *Appendix A*.

(2) Appeals against Marks/Grades Awarded by External Bodies including Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Organisations

- 2.1 Where a learner is appealing against a grade or a result of an external test/examination, to include Apprenticeship end point assessments and is an approved entry of the College, the learner must lodge the appeal through the College Examination Office. Learners will be required to sign to say that they are seeking an appeal.
- 2.2 Before processing, the appeal will require the signed support of the appropriate Assistant Director. The College will register the appeal with the appropriate Awarding Body/HEI and will provide the learner with details of the appeals procedure, indicating appropriate timescales, by which the College and the learner are bound.
- 2.3 The College will monitor the response of the awarding body/HEI and advise the learner of the outcome.
- 2.4 Where an awarding body has an appeals procedure covering aspects of internal assessment, the appropriate colleague will inform the learner of their rights.
- 2.5 Where a learner is appealing the Teacher Assessed Grade awarded summer 2021 they should follow the procedure at *Appendix A*.

(3) Appeals Against an Internal Assessment Grade or Decision

- 3.1 All appeals against an internal assessment or grading decision will be subject to the following staged procedure:
 - 3.1.1 **Stage 1 - Personal Development Tutor/Assessor**
 - 3.1.1.1 The learner must lodge notice of an appeal, in writing or via email, to their Personal Development Tutor (PDT)/Assessor within 3 College working days of receiving the assessment/examination result, stating the grounds for the appeal. In extenuating circumstances, such as authorised illness, holiday or absence from the country, an appeal after this time would be considered.
 - 3.1.1.2 Within the College appeals procedure, the PDT/Assessor will investigate the circumstances of the appeal.
 - 3.1.1.3 Dependent upon the outcome on the investigation the PDT may request that the assessment decision is reviewed by the member of staff who made the grading/assessment decision and

the internal verifier.

- 3.1.4. If an appeal is lodged in relation to a grading/assessment decision made in the last two weeks of the summer term, the PDT will forward to the relevant Assistant Director to carry out the above process.
- 3.1.5. The Personal Development Tutor/Assessor will notify the learner in writing of the outcome within 5 normal College working days from the conclusion of the investigation.
- 3.1.6. In cases where the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 1, they may progress the appeal to stage 2.

3.1.2 **Stage 2 - Assistant Principal Curriculum/Assistant Principal Apprenticeships & Employer Engagement**

- 3.1.2.1 The learner must appeal in writing or via email, to the Assistant Principal Curriculum/Assistant Principal Apprenticeships & Employer Engagement within 5 normal College working days of receiving notification the outcome of from stage 1.
- 3.1.2.2 After investigating all the circumstances of the appeal, including if an NVQ, consultation with the internal & external verifiers, the Assistant Principal Curriculum/Assistant Principal Apprenticeships & Employer Engagement will notify the learner of the outcome, in writing, within 5 normal College working days from the conclusion of the investigation.
- 3.1.2.3 In the case of an appeal against an NVQ assessment decision the external verifiers ruling will be final.
- 3.1.2.4 In cases where the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 2, they may progress the appeal to stage 3.

3.1.3 **Stage 3 - Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum and Quality**

- 3.1.3.1 The learner must appeal in writing or via email, to the Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum and Quality within 5 normal College working days of receipt of the outcome from stage 2, stating the grounds for appeal.
- 3.1.3.2 The Vice Principal Innovation, Curriculum and Quality will then convene a meeting to include the Vice Principal innovation, Curriculum and Quality, the relevant Assistant Principal Curriculum/Assistant Principal Apprenticeships & Employer Engagement and the Personal Development Tutor/Assessor, to which the learner will be invited and may be accompanied by a friend/parent or guardian.
- 3.1.3.3 The meeting will review the evidence for the appeal and the outcomes from stages 1 and 2, together with other such reports, records and assessments which may be necessary to reach a decision.
- 3.1.3.4 Following the meeting, the learner will be notified of the outcome, in writing, within 5 normal College working days from the conclusion of the investigation.
- 3.1.3.5 In the absence of the Vice Principal innovation, Curriculum and Quality the Assistant Principal Quality or another nominated member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for chairing the meeting and communicating the decision.
- 3.1.3.6 In cases where the learner remains dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 3, they may progress the appeal to the final stage, stage 4.

3.1.4 **Stage 4 - Appeal to the Principal or, if an NVQ/Higher Education Programme, an Appeal to the Appropriate Awarding Body/HEI**

3.1.4.1 Appeal to Principal

- 3.1.4.1.1 A final appeal may be made in writing to the Principal within 5 normal College

working days of the outcome from stage 3, stating the grounds of the appeal.

3.1.4.1.2 The Principal may ask the learner, who may be accompanied by a friend/parent or guardian, to attend in person to hear the decision.

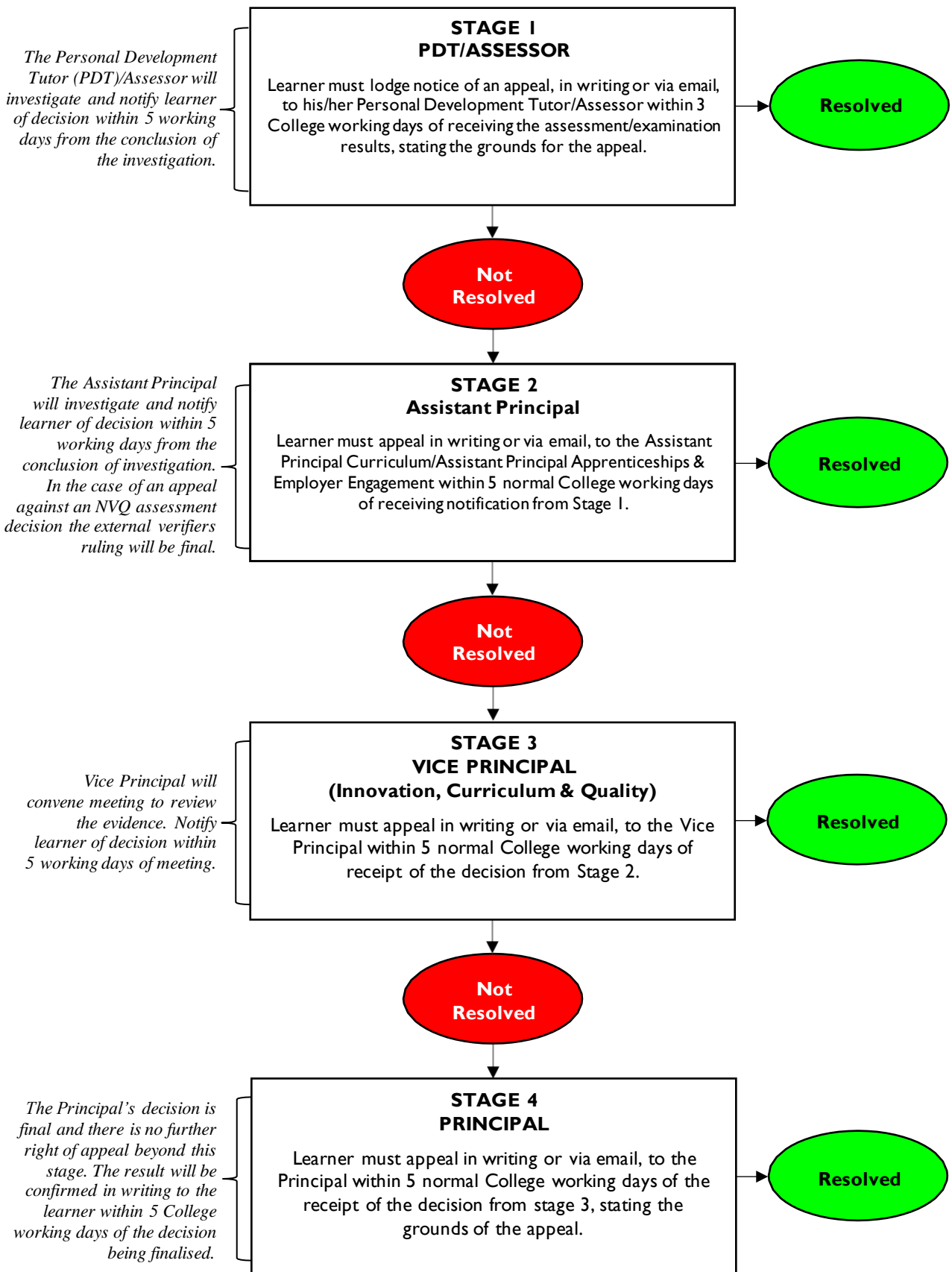
3.1.4.1.3 The Principal's (*or designated nominee's*) decision is final and there is no further right of appeal beyond this stage. The result will be confirmed in writing to the learner within 5 College working days of the decision being finalised.

3.1.4.1.4 In the absence of the Principal another nominated member of the Executive Leadership Team will be responsible for chairing the meeting and communicating the decision.

3.1.4.2 Appeal to Awarding Body

3.1.4.2.1 See Appeals against Marks/Grades Awarded by External Bodies/HEIs above.

Internal Assessment or Grading Decision Appeals Diagram



Appendix A

1. Appeal Against a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) Summer2021

- 1.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic exceptional arrangements for the awarding of grades summer 2021 have been introduced. As a result, many learners will receive a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) in place of sitting final examinations and assessments.
- 1.2 Although the College has worked hard to make sure all learners are issued with the correct grades on results day, there is an appeals system as a safety net to fix any genuine errors that were not identified earlier on. If a learner believes an error has been made in determining a grade, there is a right to appeal.
- 1.3 The College has followed all Awarding Body guidance and a copy of the Centre Quality Assurance Policy approved by AQA on behalf of all Awarding Organisations can be found on the College website. It is important that any learner wishing to appeal a TAG has first read this policy.
- 1.4 It is recommended that learners on a 16 to 19 Study Programme reviews the notes from the Performance Grade 03 (PG03) meeting and any evidence produced because of that meeting. This is to ensure the learner has a good understanding of the sources of evidence used to determine the grade along with any grades/marks associated with them.
- 1.5 Adult Learners should consider all the evidence they have produced during their Programme of Study along with the grades/marks associated with them.
- 1.6 All learners should review communications and college records in relation to any special circumstances that should have been considered in determining the grade, e.g., access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- 1.7 There are two stages to the appeals process.

2. Stage 1: Centre Review

- 2.1 If a learner has a query regarding the grade, they have been issued, they should complete the form enclosed with their results, no later than 16 August 2021 for a priority review¹ and 3 September 2021 for a non-priority review. This will then be reviewed by a member of the College Leadership Team who will review whether:
 - 2.1.1 an administrative error has occurred, e.g., they submitted an incorrect grade; they used an incorrect assessment mark when determining the grade; or
 - 2.1.2 did not apply the procedure correctly, e.g., they did not follow the Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.
- 2.2 **Full details for the grounds of appeal must be included to ensure a full and thorough investigation can be undertaken.**
- 2.3 Once the stage 1 review is complete the learner will be notified in writing of the outcome no later than 20 August 2021 for a priority review and 10 September 2021 for a non-priority review.

3. Stage 2: Appeal to the Awarding Body

- 3.1 If a learner is not satisfied with the outcome from stage 1 they can appeal to the Examination Board/Awarding Body, the learner should email the Examinations Manager (michelle.turner@ccsw.ac.uk) within 2 working days of receiving the outcome of stage 1 and no later than 23 August 2021 for a priority review and 17 September 2021 for a non-priority review. The Examinations Manager will then contact the Awarding Body who will review whether:

¹ Priority reviews are typically only relevant for learners who have a university place or offer of employment/further study that is dependent upon the outcome of the appeal. All other appeals will be treated as non-priority,

- 3.1.1 the College made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement² in the choice of evidence from which they determined the grade and/or in the determination of the grade from that evidence;
- 3.1.2 the College did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g., they did not follow their Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness; or
- 3.1.3 the Awarding Body made an administrative error, e.g., they changed the grade during the processing of grades.

3.2 The Awarding Body will communicate their decision with the College. The College will process the response and communicate with the learner within a maximum of 2 normal working days.

3.3 Finally, if a learner believe the Awarding Body has made a procedural error in handling their appeal, they can apply to Ofqual’s Examinations Procedures Review Service to review the process undertaken by the Examination Board/Awarding Body.

4. Timelines for Priority and Non-Priority Appeals

4.1 The period for **Priority Appeals**:

Dates	Action Required
10 August to 16 August 2021	Learner Requests Centre Review
10 August to 20 August 2021	College Conducts Centre Review
11 August to 23 August 2021	Centre Submits Appeal to Examination Board/Awarding Body

(Table 1: Key Dates and Actions for Priority Appeals)

4.2 The period for the majority of **Non-Priority Appeals**:

Dates	Action Required
10 August to 3 September 2021	Learner Requests Centre Review
10 August to 10 September 2021	College Conducts Centre Review
11 August to 17 September 2021	Centre Submits Appeal to Examination Board/Awarding Body

(Table 2: Key Dates and Actions for the Majority of Non-Priority Appeals)

² A reasonable judgement is one that is supported by evidence. An exercise of judgement will not be unreasonable simply because a learner considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the learner puts forward supporting evidence. There may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.