

Appeals and Review of Results Policy

General

Introduction

This appeals policy is aimed at our customers, including learners, who are delivering/enrolled on or have taken a PMI approved qualification or unit. This policy sets out the process you should follow when submitting appeals to us and the process we will follow when responding to enquiries and appeals.

This policy will ensure PMI Qualification team deal with all appeals in a consistent manner.

Examination Partner/Examination Partner/Centre's responsibilities

It's important that anyone involved in the management, assessment, delivery and quality assurance of our qualifications including your learners are aware and understand the contents of the policy.

In addition, you as the Examination Partner/Centre's are responsible for, and must have in place, a policy and appeal arrangements which learners can fully access if they wish to appeal against a decision taken by your Examination Partner/Centre's.

If a learner wishes to appeal against a decision already made by the Examination Partner/Centre's they must first formally go through the Examination Partner/Examination Partner/Centre's appeals process. If you are an independent learner then please contact the Qualification coordinator for the relevant qualification directly.

If the learner is still not entirely happy with the decision a second appeal should be raised and lodge to PMI. This need to be in a form of email containing the outcome from the Examination Partner/Centre's.

Review arrangements

The appeals policy will be reviewed annually as part of PMI self-evaluation arrangements and revised as in conjunction to the regulatory authorities to align with any appeals and complaints process established by the regulatory authorities such as Ofqual where applicable.

Areas covered by the Appeals Policy

This policy covers the following:

- Appeals from learners and/or Examination Partner/Centre's in relation to an assessment decision on the basis that we did not apply procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly.
- Appeals from Examination Partner/Centre's in relation to a PMI decision concerning the Examination Partner/Examination Partner/Centre's application to offer a PMI qualification.
- Appeals from Examination Partner/Centre's concerning the contents of the Examination Partner/Centre's monitoring report.
- Appeals from Examination Partner/Centre's and/or learners relating to an PMI decision to decline the Examination Partner/Examination Partner/Centre's request to make reasonable adjustments or give special considerations.
- Appeals from Examination Partner/Centre's or learners in relation to the application by PMI of a sanction/action on a Examination Partner/Centre's resulting from a verification visit or an investigation into malpractice or maladministration or a decision to amend a learner/set of learners results following a malpractice or malpractice investigation.
- Appeals from Examination Partner/Centre's relating to a decision made by PMI following an investigation into a complaint about a Examination Partner/Centre's.
- Appeals if you believe we have not applied our procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly, consistently and fairly.

Process for raising an appeal

The Examination Partner/Centre's and learners have 20 working days from the date we notified you of the decision you are appealing against in which to lodge an appeal against our decision- this includes assessment results. It is important and advisable that the learners/Qualifications team are to retain their course evidence until they receive the outcome.

If you the Examination Partner/Centre's are appealing on behalf of your learners, you must ensure that you have obtained the written permission of the learner(s) concerned as grades/results can go down as well as up as a result of an investigation.

Learners who wish to appeal about their assessment results or about a related decision should either be supported by their Examination Partner/Centre and should have exhausted their Examination Partner/ Centre's own appeals process before appealing to us.

In the latter case, learners must provide us with evidence that they have first appealed to their Examination Partner/Centre. It is expected that learners will only appeal directly to us in exceptional circumstances. Independent learners will contact the coordinator as appropriate.

Examination Partner/Centre's should supply relevant supporting information such as the following where relevant:

- learner's name and PMI registration number
- date(s) you or the learner received notification of PMI's decision
- title and number of the PMI qualification affected, or nature of service affected (if appropriate)
- full nature of the appeal
- contents and outcome of any investigation carried out (by you) relating to the issue

Situations brought to our attention by the Regulatory Authorities

Where the regulators notify us of failures that have been discovered in the assessment process of another awarding organisation, we will review whether or not a similar failure could affect our own assessment processes and arrangements.

Initial Review of the appeals process

Upon receipt of all appeals we will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 2 working days and aim to respond fully to the initial review of the potential appeal within 20 days. Please note that in some cases the review processes may take longer, for example, if an Examination Partner/Centre visit is required. In such instances, we will contact all parties concerned to inform them of the likely revised timescale.

At all times we will ensure that PMI personnel assigned to the appeal investigation have the appropriate level of training and competence and they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the matter.

The first stage will be for us to undertake an initial, informal assessment of a potential appeal to ensure the application is complete and to ascertain if the issue can be resolved before it goes to a formal appeal. In all instances we will ensure that the person carrying out this initial check will not have a personal interest in the decision being appealed.

Following the initial review of the potential appeal we will write to the appellant with details of our decision to either:

1. amend our original decision in light of the new rationale/evidence being put forward and which has now been reviewed
2. to confirm we stand by our original decision and in doing so the rationale for this and request that you confirm (within 15 days),
3. whether you now accept this decision or if you wish to formally proceed to our formal appeals process which will be carried out by an independent party.

Seeking an Independent Review

If you decided to proceed to the independent appeal stage the PMI will arrange for an independent review to be carried out.

This will be carried out by someone who is not an employee, an assessor, or otherwise connected to the PMI. They will be someone with relevant competence to make a decision in relation to the appeal and will have not a personal interest in the decision being appealed.

The Independent Reviewer will review all the evidence which took place in the above stages and review if we've applied our procedures fairly, appropriately and consistently in line with the PMI appeals policy.

The independent review process may involve:

- a discussion with the appellant or the learner and PMI personnel
- a request for further information from the appellant, the learner or PMI personnel
- an Examination Partner/Centre's visit by authorised PMI personnel.

The Independent Reviewer's decision is final in relation to how the PMI will consider such appeals and PMI will let you know the outcome of the review within 20 days of receipt of the third appeal.

If the Examination Partner/Centre's/learner is still not satisfied with the outcome at this stage, they are entitled to raise the matter with the relevant qualification regulator (e.g. Ofqual in England).

Successful appeals and/or issues brought to our attention by Ofqual

In situations where an appeal has been successful, or where an investigation following notification from Ofqual indicates a shortfall in PMI processes, PMI will give due consideration to the outcome and will as appropriate take actions such as:

- amend the profile of the Examination Partner/Centre concerned in the PMI iMIS system.
- identify any other learners who may or may not have been affected (e.g. and amend the results for those affected following an appropriate investigation).
- review PMI associated processes and policies to ensure that this type of situation is not repeated in future.

PMI Procedures

The appeals procedure is intended for consideration of circumstances that materially affect a learner's performance in an assessment where all other available routes for enquiries have been exhausted.

The committees responsible for the operation of the PMI's examinations process is the Lifelong Learning Committee

Board of Examiners

These committees operate a rigorous and robust marking process with numerous safeguards to ensure the anonymity of learners, the impartiality of the examining process, reliability, consistency, validity, objectivity and fairness. They report to PMI's Lifelong Learning Committee which in turn reports directly to the PMI Board.

In the event learners have enquiries about their results, PMI provide the services below.

General Procedures

Enquiries can be made by learners, Examination Partner/Centre's or both.

All enquiries about results or the conduct of examinations must be made in writing on the appropriate form to the manager of the Qualifications Team by email at;

PMIQualifications@pensions-pmi.org.uk

within one month of the publication of examination results.

Learners are advised to submit enquiries as soon as possible after the results have been issued. Requests received after the time allowed will not be accepted.

All enquiries about results will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt. Fees are payable for the results enquiries services and are refundable if there view results in a pass.

Post Results Services

There are three options available:

- Clerical re-check and Review
- Re-mark of the paper
- Appeal.

Clerical re-check and Review

Requests for a clerical re-check should be made in writing to the above email address within 20 days of the release date of the results.

This service will comprise the following checks:

- that all parts of the answer sheet have been marked correctly;
- the totaling of marks;
- the recording of marks;
- that any examiner or moderation adjustments, have been correctly applied;
- the application of any grade boundaries;
- the application of any special consideration if applicable (in relation to either reasonable adjustments made prior to the examination or following incidents at the time of the examination).

In addition to the above learners will receive their exact mark for the examination (apart from MCQ Exams).

Post Results Policy (Multiple Choice Examinations)

The PMI is committed to providing fair and transparent processes. The policy of the PMI is to not offer a scored outcome to Multiple Choice Exams in favour of offering a pass or fail approach, as cut off points can vary if all candidates do very well or conversely not do so well. (Cohen method)

It is also true that the pass or fail determinant differs from one exam to another and from one level to another, and as questions are randomised, it is therefore not possible to group themes and offer single topic feedback.

Re-Mark

If unhappy with the clerical check, then a request for a re-mark by an independent examiner can be requested. This will be the original script marked against the original mark scheme by an independent (to the original process) examiner. A re-mark can only be requested up to 4 weeks after the exam results have been released to you. A re-mark will not be accepted after the 4-week period.

Fees

A fee of £50 is payable for this service.

Appeals

Following the clerical re-check and re-mark if an individual remains dissatisfied with the outcome it is possible to make an appeal as described below.

All appeals must be made in writing to the Manager of the Qualifications team within 14 days of the date on which the notification of the final outcome of the above review.

Grounds for an appeal

The appeal process will consider whether the PMI's procedures are consistent and have been fairly and properly applied.

The grounds for an appeal include:

- irregularities in the conduct of an examination
- the procedures for question setting, marking and results moderation of examinations
- extenuating circumstances that were not revealed for valid reasons prior to receipt of result notification.
- dissatisfaction with decisions taken concerning malpractice or maladministration

Fees

A fee of **half of the original examination entry fee** is payable (or £80 whichever is the lower) for such an appeal and is refundable if the findings of the investigation results in a change of outcome for the learner.

The Process

The process consists of two parts:

(part A) – PMI Staff

A review by the Manager of the Qualifications team to provide advice and guidance to the learner where the grounds for the appeal might be unlikely to succeed.

The outcome of this review will be notified in writing.

(part B) – PMI Appeals Panel

If the case is not resolved by the review by the Manager of the Qualification team, it will be referred to an Appeals Panel convened by the Lifelong Learning Committee.

The Appeals Panel will include:

- A member of the Lifelong learning Committee
- An independent examiner as appropriate
- The PMI Chief Executive or nominated representative
- An independent member drawn from the PMI Sector Engagement Committee
- The case will be presented to the Appeals Panel.
- The Appeals Panel can instruct PMI to reconsider the case and may offer recommendations.
- The outcome of and a report on the decision of the panel will be provided.

The PMI will aim to complete the appeal process and report the outcome within 50 working days. The outcome of this Stage is final, and no further requests will be considered.

Data Protection Act

The above options are in addition to an individual's right to request personal data in accordance with Data Protection Act 2018. PMI will comply with such requests as soon as possible and in any event within the relevant timescales. If an individual requires any information in regard of their exam then they can ask for a Subject Access Request (SAR) – please contact:

PMIQualifications@pensions-pmi.org.uk for

further details.

Monitoring the Post Results Policy

The PMI has procedures in place for monitoring, evaluating and reporting annually on the operation of this policy, including the number and nature of enquiries and appeals and their outcomes.

Where necessary PMI shares relevant data with the regulatory authorities on request.

For regulated qualifications, in cases where a learner might be unsatisfied with the outcome of an appeal, they can contact PMI's regulator, the Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) directly. Their website is at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>

In all the processes described above, where deadlines have passed, exceptional circumstances may still be considered.

PMI will also cooperate with any follow-up investigations required by the qualifications regulators and if appropriate agree any remedial action with them.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact

PMIQualifications@pensions-pmi.org.uk

with the subject title "appeals".