Oak Academy

Exams Complaints and Appeals Policy

September 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of Intent

This procedure confirms Oak Academy compliance with JCQ's General Regulations for Approved Centres 2023-2024 (section 5) that the centre will draw to the attention of candidates and their parents/carers their written complaints and appeals procedure which will cover general complaints regarding the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification.

1.2. Audience

This policy is intended for use by all support, teaching staff and management of Authentic Education.

1.3. Revision History

Issue	Date	Author	Changes
V0.00	November 2026	Danielle Fisher	

1.4. Definitions

1.4.1. Detail any definitions here to aid in the understanding of the policy that the reader may not be familiar with. This may include technical or statutory definitions.

2. Grounds for complaint

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

2.1. Teaching and learning:

- Quality of teaching and learning.
- 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.
- The marking of an internal assessment, which contributes to the final grade of the qualification, not undertaken according to the requirements of the awarding body (complainant should refer to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre fails to adhere to its internal appeals procedure.

- Candidate not informed of his/her centre assessed marks prior to marks being submitted to the awarding body.
- Candidate not informed of his/her 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.

2.2. Access arrangements

- Candidate not assessed by the centre's appointed assessor.
- Candidate not involved in decisions made regarding his/her access arrangements.
- Candidate did not consent to personal data being shared electronically (by the non-acquisition of a signed data protection notice/candidate data personal 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 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.

2.3. 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.

2.4. 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 (online) 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 outcome of a special consideration application.

2.5. Results and Post-results

- Before exams, candidate not made aware of the arrangements for post-results services and the accessibility 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 an 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 check, a review of marking, a review of moderation or an appeal (complainant to refer via Exams Office to the centre's internal appeals procedure)
- Centre applied for the wrong post-results service/for the wrong exam paper 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.

3. Complaints and appeals procedure

If a candidate (or his/her parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification he/she is following, Oak Academy encourages him/her to try to resolve this informally in the first instance. for example - A concern or complaint should be made in person, by telephone or in writing to the head of centre.

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

3.1. How to make a formal complaint:

- A formal complaint should be submitted in writing by completing a complaints and appeals form.
- Forms are available from the Exams Office.
- Completed forms should be returned to the Exams Office.
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 10 calendar days.

3.2. How a formal complaint is investigated

- The head of centre will further investigate or appoint a member of the senior leadership team (who is not involved in the grounds for complaint and has no personal interest in the outcome) to investigate the complaint and report on the findings and conclusion.
- The findings and conclusion will be provided to the complainant within 2 working weeks.

3.3. Appeals

- Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.
- Any appeal must be submitted in writing by again completing a complaints and appeals form.
- Forms received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 10 calendar days.
- The appeal will be referred to a special Committee of the Governing body for consideration.
- The special Committee of the Governing body will inform the appellant of the final conclusion in due course.

4. Appendix 1 – Complaints and Appeals Form

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Please tick the box to indicate the nature of your complaint/appeal:

o Complaint/appeal against the centre's delivery of a qualification

o Complaint/appeal against the centre's administration of a qualification</td><td colspan="2">For centre use only</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Date Received</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td><td>Reference No.</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Name of complainant/appellant</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Candidate name (if different to complainant/appellant)</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Please state your grounds for your complaint/appeal below:
(If your complaint is lengthy, please write as bullet points; please keep to the point and include relevant detail such as dates, names etc. and provide any evidence you may have to support your claim)

Your appeal should identify the centre's failure to follow procedures as set out in the relevant policy, and/or issues in teaching and learning which have impacted the candidate. If necessary, continue on an additional page if this form is being completed electronically, or overleaf if completing a hard copy.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Detail any steps you have already taken to resolve the issue(s) and what you would consider to be a good resolution to the issue(s)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Complainant/appellant Signature</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Date of Signature</td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">This form must be completed in full, an incomplete form will be returned to the complainant/appellant.</td></tr>
</table>

5. Appendix 2 – Complaints and Appeals Log

Reference No	Date Received	Complaint or Appeal	Outcome	Outcome Date