



# End-Point Assessment Enquiries and Appeals Policy



## Revisions and Amendment Register

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## 1. Introduction

SFJ Awards is listed on the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR) and as an approved End-Point Assessment Organisation for a range of apprenticeship standards. SFJ Awards administers End-Point Assessment (EPA) in line with specifications outlined in relevant assessment plans.

## 2. Definitions

**Enquiries:** allows an apprentice and customers to ask for clarification or exemplification on specific or general issues.

**Appeals:** allows an apprentice to question a decision or judgement if they believe it was inaccurate. An appeal is a process through which the outcome of a decision may be challenged. Customers may raise an appeal on behalf of an apprentice.

SFJ Awards aims to provide an EPA service that ensures decisions are fair, consistent, and based on valid judgement. For an appeal to be considered, specific grounds for appeal must be provided. These are:

- Assessment results
- Outcomes of applications for access arrangement/special consideration
- Penalties or sanctions resulting from a malpractice investigation.

This policy outlines SFJ Awards' approach for providing End-Point Assessment customers with a means of making an appeal, the steps to follow and how SFJ Awards considers any appeals it receives.

This policy is not to be used in relation to appeals about other qualifications or services offered by SFJ Awards.

SFJ Awards is committed to providing an excellent End-Point Assessment service. In dealing with our customers, staff at SFJ Awards endeavour to provide a service which is courteous and quick to respond to customer needs. Nevertheless, at times, there may be situations where an apprentice or a customer considers that they might have grounds for an appeal against a decision related to End-Point Assessment.

All staff involved in the delivery of SFJ Awards apprenticeship qualifications and/or SFJ Awards End-Point Assessments, and the apprentices, must be made aware of the contents of this policy. All End-Point Assessment training providers should have an appeal handling procedure and appeals process in place to deal with appeals about End-Point Assessment services.

## 3. Stage Definitions

There are three main stages. At each stage, the process will be conducted fairly and consistently, in line with regulatory requirements.

### Stage One: Enquiry

At Stage One an appeal is referred to as an Enquiry and is dealt with as an enquiry about results. The apprentice should request that the customer makes an EPA Enquiry on their behalf and the customer must ensure that the apprentice is aware that their grade could be lowered as a result of the enquiry.

EPA enquiries about results provide an opportunity to question the outcome of an assessment decision. An Enquiry can be made for any graded component and/or for the overall grade of the EPA.

A desk-based review of the assessment decision is carried out by someone not involved in the original decision. SFJ Awards will make every attempt to answer the Enquiry in full and avoid the need to progress to Stage Two.

An Enquiry should be requested within 15 calendar days after the results have been received.

Enquiries **must** be made by completing an SFJ EPA Appeals Application Form and submitted through the E-portal ACE 360. SFJ Awards will deal with enquiries from customers promptly however, timelines may be subject to change where the Enquiry is complex. If there is a change to timelines SFJ Awards will ensure this is communicated outlining any reason for the change. The timelines are as follows:

Acknowledgement of Enquiry	Within 5 calendar days
Outcome of Enquiry	Within 20 calendar days from submission

The Appeals Application Form should be uploaded to the candidate record on ACE 360. The possible outcomes to an Enquiry are:

- The assessment result is upgraded.
- The assessment result is confirmed.
- The assessment result is downgraded.

A report detailing the outcome will be uploaded to ACE 360. If the assessment result is confirmed or downgraded information on how to progress to Stage Two will be included.

### Stage Two: Appeal

The purpose of an appeal is to ensure that the correct processes, procedures, and policies were followed and that assessments were graded correctly in accordance with the grading criteria.

If the appellant (individual who requests the appeal) is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage One, they may progress their appeal to Stage Two. This must be done within 15 calendar days of receiving the outcome of Stage One and made by emailing [epa@sfjawards.com](mailto:epa@sfjawards.com).

The Stage Two appeal reviews the outcome of the enquiry and does not involve re-assessing an apprentice's work. This is a desk-based activity and is completed by a manager not involved in the original decision. The manager may or may not be a subject matter expert but will be an expert on assessment decisions.

Decisions relating to malpractice or maladministration, following an investigation, can be appealed at Stage Two, or at Stage Three, as required.

The Appeals Application Form along with any additional supporting documentation will be used at Stage Two. The timelines are detailed below:

Stage 2 Appeal submission	15 calendar days after receiving Stage One outcome
Acknowledgement	5 calendar days after receipt of notification
Outcome	20 calendar days after acknowledgement date

There are two possible outcomes:

- The appeal is upheld. SFJ Awards will send a report to the appellant including proposed remedial actions.
- The appeal is rejected. SFJ Awards will send a report to the appellant including information on how to progress to Stage Three of the appeals process.

### Stage Three

If the appellant is not satisfied with the outcome at Stage Two, they may progress their appeal for independent review at Stage Three.

Stage three appeals will be reviewed by a panel, including two members of the SFJ Awards' Quality and Standards Committee (QSC), who will be independent to the operation of SFJ Awards, will not be employees of SFJ Awards and will have no connection to the subject of the appeal. There will also be a member of the panel who is completely independent of SFJ Awards, with no connection to the AO or EPAO for at least five previous years. The members of the panel will be trained in the task of deciding appeals.

The appellant must complete an SFJ EPA Appeals Application to the QSC form and outline, in detail, as to their rationale for escalating to Stage Three of the appeals process.

The timelines are detailed below:

Stage Three application deadline	20 calendar days after the outcome of Stage Two
Acknowledgement	3 calendar days after receipt of the application
Appeals Panel	30 calendar days after acknowledgement
Outcome	5 calendar days after the Panel

The outcome of the Stage Three review will be conveyed in writing. The decision made by the Appeals Panel is final.

## 4. Appeal Fees

A fee to cover administration charges related to appeals will be charged. There will be no charge where the outcome of the enquiry or appeal is in favour of the apprentice/customer.

Stage One	Enquiry	£50 per apprentice
Stage Two	Appeal	£100 per apprentice
	Appeal against a decision regarding application for access arrangement, special consideration or malpractice/maladministration.	£25 per apprentice
Stage Three	Independent Appeals Panel	£150 per apprentice
	Appeal against a decision regarding application for access arrangement or special consideration	£25 per apprentice

To contact us regarding an appeal please email [epa@sfjawards.com](mailto:epa@sfjawards.com).

## 5. Monitoring of Appeals

Appeals are logged and routinely monitored by the Quality and Standards Committee to identify any trends or patterns and consideration given to how learnings from appeals support the SFJ Awards continuous improvement process.

## 6. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis as part of SFJ Awards' self-evaluation arrangements and revised as necessary in response to lessons learnt, customer feedback, changes in legislation and guidance from the Qualifications Regulators.

If you have any queries about the content of the policy or you wish to give feedback then please contact SFJ Awards Tel: 0114 284 1970 or email [epa@sfjawards.com](mailto:epa@sfjawards.com)

Regulatory Body	Regulatory guidance document	Regulatory Condition or Criterion
Ofqual	General Conditions of Recognition	I1-I2
Department for Education	APAR Conditions of Acceptance	

## 7. Location of the Policy

A copy of this policy can be downloaded from Odyssey, ACE360 or from the SFJ Awards website: [www.sfjawards.com/policies](http://www.sfjawards.com/policies).

## 8. Copyright

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