

RHS Qualifications

Appeals Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 This document sets out the policy of RHS Qualifications with respect to appeals relating to:

(a) the results of assessments,

(b) decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration, and

(c) decisions relating to any action to be taken against a Learner or a Centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.

2. Appeals against the results of assessments

2.1 A candidate may only lodge an appeal against their result in an examination if their examination script has already been subject to a Re-mark and Feedback through the Enquiry about Results service. It is not possible to have a re-mark for an assessment in a practical skills qualification, so this requirement does not apply in the case of appeals relating to practical assessments.

2.2 A candidate only has grounds for appeal against a result in an assessment if they can demonstrate that RHS Qualifications did not apply procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly.

2.3 Appeals which are made solely on the basis of disagreement with the professional judgement of RHS Qualifications or its appointed assessors will not be accepted.

2.4 Where a candidate wishes to appeal against the result of an assessment that was conducted by Centre staff within an Approved Centre, the candidate must appeal through the Centre's own appeals process.

2.5 An appeal against the result of an assessment must be submitted to RHS Qualifications within 10 working days of receipt of the response from an Enquiry about Results in the case of an examination, or within 10 working days of notification of the result of a practical assessment.

3. Appeals against decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration

- 3.1 Candidates may lodge an appeal against any decisions made by RHS Qualifications regarding the granting of Reasonable Adjustments or in the application of Special Consideration.
- 3.2 Appeals must be submitted to RHS Qualifications within 10 working days of a decision regarding Reasonable Adjustments being received by the Approved Centre. In the case of Special Consideration, an appeal must be submitted to RHS Qualifications within 10 working days of the receipt of the notification of the result of the assessment.
- 3.3 It is not necessary for an Enquiry about Results to be completed prior to submission of an appeal under this category.

4. Appeals against decisions taken against a Learner or an Approved centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration

- 4.1 Where malpractice or maladministration has been proven to have occurred, RHS Qualifications will impose sanctions on the Approved Centre or individuals involved. The sanctions will be proportionate to the seriousness and scale of the malpractice or maladministration that has occurred. Approved Centres and individuals have the right to appeal against decisions made following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.
- 4.2 Appeals against decisions made following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration must be submitted to RHS Qualifications within 10 working days of the communication of the decision to the Head of centre or to the individual concerned.

5. Appeal Process

- 5.1 Receipt of an appeal will be acknowledged within 3 working days.
- 5.2 Following receipt of an appeal, the Head of Qualifications will conduct an initial investigation and will seek further information where appropriate. If the appeal meets the criteria set out in this policy, the Head of Qualifications will forward the appeal to an Appeals Panel for review. The appeal application fee will be due from the appellant at this stage. Details of fees are included in the RHS Qualifications fees notice which is published on the RHS website or available on request.
- 5.3 The Appeal Panel will comprise a director of the RHS, an RHS Independent Moderator or Senior Examiner and an independent person who is not, and has not been at any time during the past seven years, an RHS employee, member of an RHS committee or been in any way connected with the RHS awarding organisation.
- 5.4 All members of the Appeal Panel will be suitably experienced and competent for considering the appeal. No member of the Appeal Panel will have any personal interest in the decision being appealed.

- 5.5 RHS Qualifications will make all reasonable efforts to hold an Appeal Panel review within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 5.6 Following the meeting of the Appeal Panel, the appellant will be notified in writing of the outcome of the appeal within 10 working days.
- 5.7 If an appeal is upheld the appeal application fee will be refunded.

6. Independent Review

- 6.1 Should the appellant not be satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they may request that the appeal be submitted for Independent Review. In such instances, all documentation relating to the appeal will be submitted to an Independent Reviewer.
- 6.2 The review will be conducted by an independent person, who is not, and has not been at any time during the past seven years, an RHS employee, member of an RHS committee or been in any way connected with the RHS awarding organisation. The Independent Reviewer will have had no previous involvement in the appeal.
- 6.3 The Independent Reviewer will provide a written decision within 10 working days from the point that the appeal was referred to them. The findings of the review will be final and will conclude the appeal process.

7. Actions Following an Appeal

- 7.1 Where the application of the appeals process leads RHS Qualifications to discover a failure in its assessment process, RHS Qualifications will take all reasonable steps to:
 - (a) identify any other learner who has been affected by the failure,
 - (b) correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the failure, and
 - (c) ensure that the failure does not recur in the future.

8. Contact

- 8.1 All appeals should be submitted in writing to:

Email: qualifications@rhs.org.uk

Post: RHS Qualifications
RHS Garden Wisley
Woking
Surrey
GU23 6QB

Enquiries regarding the appeals process can be made by phone.

Phone: 01483 226500