

Complaint Policy for Examination or Assessment

Purpose

This policy outlines the process for submitting and addressing complaints related to examinations and assessments, ensuring transparency, fairness, and consistency. This policy assists in ensuring that all candidates are treated equitably throughout the complaints and appeals process.

Scope

This policy applies to all candidates undertaking IoD examinations and assessments. This policy applies to all candidates who wish to lodge a complaint regarding any aspect of their examination or assessment process, including but not limited to exam conditions, marking, grading, and conduct during examination/assessments.

Complaints may relate to:

- Errors in assessment or marking
- Unclear or unfair examination instructions
- Inappropriate behaviour or conduct during the assessment
- Failure to follow examination or assessment regulations
- Issues related to accessibility or reasonable adjustments

Exclusions

This policy does not cover academic judgement where assessment procedures have been correctly followed, safeguarding matters, whistleblowing disclosures, data protection requests, malpractice allegations, or requests for reasonable adjustments prior to the examination or assessment.

Definitions

Complaint: Dissatisfaction relating to the delivery or administration of an assessment or examination.

Appeal: A request to review a decision made as a part of the complaints process.

Malpractice/Maladministration: Any act, or practice that compromises the integrity of an examination or assessment.

Enquiry about results: A clerical or administrative review of any examination or assessment outcomes.

Principles

All complaints will be handled fairly, impartially, confidentially and without discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and data protection legislation. Any actions taken will be proportionate, evidence-based and consistent with procedural fairness.

Complaints and Appeals Process

Stage	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Informal Resolution	Concern raised informally	Professional Standards Team	Within 3 working days
Formal Complaint	Written Complaint submitted with supporting evidence	Candidate	Within 20 working days
Acknowledgement	Complaint acknowledged & process communicated with expected timescales	Professional Standards Team	Within 3 working days
Investigation	Review of assessment/examination materials, recordings, procedures and any other relevant evidence	Professional Standards/Independent	Within 15 working days from acknowledgement

Outcome	Written outcome issued by explanations and actions	Professional Standards	Following investigation
Appeal	Candidate may appeal if dissatisfied with outcome	Candidate	Within 10 working days
Appeal Review	Independent review by Assessment Committee or independent reviewer	Assessment Committee/Independent Reviewer	Within 20 working days
Final Decision	Final internal decision communicated	Head of Professional Standards	Following appeal review

Escalation Levels

Escalation Level	Escalated to	Purpose of Escalation	Examples of matters considered	Outcome
Level 1	Professional Standards Team	Initial operational review and resolution	Assessment delivery concerns, communication issues, procedural clarification	Operational resolution or clarification
Level 2	Head of Professional Standards	Formal management review	Concerns regarding fairness or unresolved matters	Formal written decision and corrective action
Level 3	Assessment Committee/Independent Reviewer	Independent oversight & appeal review	Independent review requests, unresolved appeal matters	Final internal appeal decision
Level 4	Director of Professional Development/ Senior Leadership	Executive review of significant matters	Repeated procedural concerns, reputational risks,	Executive review decision and any

			significant client dissatisfaction	organisational action
Level 5	Legal Department	Legal escalation	Exceptional unresolved matters with strategic, legal or regulatory implications	Final organisation position
Level 6	Company Secretary	Final escalation	Exceptional unresolved matters with strategic, legal or regulatory implications	Ultimate organisational position on resolution

Investigation and resolution

Formal Complaint Submission

The complaint must be emailed to Professionalstandards@iod.com

The formal complaint should include:

- A detailed description of the issue
- Relevant evidence or documentation supporting the complaint (e.g. exam they sat, when it was sat, when the interview took place).

However, where a complainant identifies potential malpractice or maladministration, the matter may be referred to under the appropriate, and relevant IoD policies and procedures.

The Professional Standards team will investigate the complaint thoroughly. This may involve, and is not limited to:

- Conducting a clerical check of the exam/assessment
- Reviewing the relevant examination materials and marking
- Contacting the Lead examiners/markers/assessors or exam platform for further information
- Reviewing the recording of the exam/interview on the exam platform
- Assessing any policies or procedures related to the complaint

Outcome Notification

- Once the investigation is complete, the candidate will be notified in writing of the outcome
- If the complaint is upheld, appropriate remedial action will be taken, such as re-marking of the exam, adjustment of mark, or a new assessment being offered free of charge
- If the complaint is not upheld, a clear explanation of the findings and/or apology, and reasoning behind the decision will be provided to the candidate.

Appeals Process

If the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint, they may appeal the decision. The appeal must be submitted in writing to professionalstandards@iod.com and addressed to the Head of Professional Standards within 10 working days from receiving the outcome notification. The appeal will be reviewed by the Head of Professional Standards and the Assessment Committee, or independent review, and a final decision will be made.

Unreasonable behaviour

The IoD is committed to dealing with all complaints fairly, transparently and proportionately. However, where behaviour becomes unreasonable, excessive, repetitive, abusive or disproportionate, the IoD reserves the right to manage communications appropriately.

Examples may include, and are limited to:

- Repeatedly raising the same issue without new substantive evidence
- Excessive or repetitive correspondence
- Aggressive, abusive, or discriminatory behaviour
- Refusal to accept a final decision after all appropriate stages have been completed

Where such behaviour occurs, examples of actions the IoD may include and are not limited to:

- Restrict communication to a single point of contact
- Limit the frequency or method of communication

- Determine that no further internal review is appropriate where no new substantive evidence has been presented
- Close the complaint following completion of all appropriate stages

Any restrictions will be proportionate, documented and approved by the Head of Professional Standards, and where appropriate, Director of Professional Development and the Legal department.

Confidentiality

All complaints will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in the investigation.

Record Keeping

A record of all complaints, investigations, and outcomes will be securely retained in accordance with regulatory and data protection requirements for three years to ensure transparency and accountability.

Continuous Improvement

Complaint outcomes and trends may be periodically reviewed to support improvement in assessment delivery, governance, candidate delivery and quality assurance processes.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with regulatory requirements and organisational governance standards.

Conclusion

This procedure is designed to ensure that all candidates can address their concerns regarding examinations and assessments fairly and systematically.

Complaints and appeals are recognised as an important part of organisational learning, continuous improvement and effective governance.

The IoD is committed to upholding the highest standards of exam/assessment integrity and fairness in all aspects of the examination process.