

Ballyclare Secondary School



External Examinations Complaints Policy

“Every child deserves a rewarding educational experience.”

<i>Date of last review</i>	<i>October 2023</i>
<i>To be reviewed by</i>	<i>October 2025</i>

Grounds for complaint

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

1. Teaching and learning

- Quality of teaching and learning.
- 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.

2. Access arrangements

- 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.
- Approved access arrangement(s) not put in place at the time of an exam/assessment.

3. Entries

- 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.

4. Conducting examinations

- 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

Complaints procedure

If a candidate (or their parent/carer) has a general concern or complaint about the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification they are following, Ballyclare Secondary School encourages them to try to resolve this informally in the first instance.

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

How to make a formal complaint:

- A complaint should be submitted in writing to the Head of Centre
- Written complaints received will be logged by the centre and acknowledged within 5 calendar days.

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.

Appeals

Following the outcome, if the complainant remains dissatisfied and believes there are clear grounds, an appeal can be submitted.

- This should be completed in writing and forwarded on to the Head of Centre.
- The appeal will then be referred to the Chair of Governors for consideration.
- The Chair of Governors will inform the appellant of the final conclusion in due course.

Appeals against Controlled Assessments Tasks

- Appeals will only be entertained if they apply to the process leading to an assessment. There is no appeal against the mark or grade awarded.
- Candidates may appeal if they feel their coursework has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the specification for the qualification.
- Appeals should be made in writing by 30 May to the Head of Centre/Exams Office who will decide whether the process used conformed to the necessary requirements.
- The Head of Centre's findings will be notified in writing, copied to the Exams Officer and recorded for awarding body inspection.

See the separate Appeals Policy for this.

Appeals against Re-Checks

The **Head of Centre or a private candidate** should submit a written request for an appeal to the relevant awarding body. A list of the awarding bodies' addresses can be requested from the Examinations Officer.

Appeals must be made within 30 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the outcome of the clerical re-check, review of marking or review of moderation ("the Outcome").

The appellant **must** set out clearly and concisely the grounds for the appeal.

When an application for an appeal is received, an awarding body will decide whether it will be accepted or not.

The decision whether or not to accept the application for an appeal is based on:

- The validity of the grounds for the appeal as put forward by the appellant;
- Whether a clerical re-check, a review of marking or a review of moderation has been completed;
- The timescale of the application. If an application for an appeal is not accepted, the reason(s) for this will be given.