



# **SCLS Academic Appeals Policy** **2025/26**

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# Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

## 1. PURPOSE

This document sets out Sefton Community Learning Service (hereafter termed SCLS) policy and procedure for cases where a student disputes and challenges assessment decisions of a tutor/assessor and external assessment.

## 2. SCOPE

**2.1** Appeals of internal assessment decisions apply to all externally moderate accredited programmes and pathways at SCLS.

**2.2** Students have a right to approach the Awarding Body (through the Community Learning Manager) for appeals related to external assessments.

**2.3** Students are assured that they will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of making an appeal in good faith.

**2.4** This policy and procedure is applicable to all students on externally moderated accredited learning programmes or pathways at SCLS.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**3.1 Student** is any person who is enrolled on a programme or pathway of study leading to a recognised qualification with SCLS.

**3.2 Tutor or assessor** is a member of staff facilitating any assessment and/or grading activity.

**3.3 Lead internal verifiers** are nominated persons in the organisation who provide advice and guidance on assessment decisions and student appeals.

## 4. APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

**4.1** In such cases where a student disagrees with the grading decision of his/her work the student can appeal against the decision of the tutor/assessor. Appeals will follow a number of stages as outlined below.

### 4.2 Stages of Internal Appeal

#### Stage 1

In the first instance the student must lodge an appeal regarding the assessment decision to the relevant tutor/assessor. The appeal must be forwarded to the assessor within 5 working days on receipt of the assessment decision, except under exceptional or extenuating circumstances.

The tutor/assessor will respond within 5 working days of receiving the appeal. If a tutor/assessor is on leave this period may be longer as it must be the assessor who marked the work to whom stage 1 of the appeal is made. The response from the tutor/assessor will be one of the following:

- A further clear explanation of the assessment decision and a re-affirmation of the grade awarded
- A re-grading and amendment to the student's assessment feedback sheet and assessment record
- If an administrative error has been made (for example, in the completion or calculation of the unit grade profile) the error will be corrected.
- If none of the above then the tutor/assessor will refer the student to stage 2 below and the completion of the Student Internal Assessment Appeal Form.

## **Stage 2**

On receipt of a completed Student Internal Assessment Appeal Form (Section 1 completed) the tutor/assessor will forward this appeal form to the relevant lead internal quality assessor. In addition, the tutor/assessor will also provide the original assessment feedback sheet and, if appropriate, the candidate's evidence for the appeal.

Upon receipt of the Students Internal Assessment Appeal Form the lead quality assessor will review the original assessment decision by evaluating all the evidence presented. This activity will be completed within 10 working days (assuming the lead verifier is not on leave).

The lead internal verifier will then:

- Conclude there is no case for re-grading (that is the tutor/assessor's original decision is confirmed), the grade indicators are included in the unit grade profile, and the decision is recorded.
- Recommend a change in the grade. If the lead quality assessor's evaluation concludes that there may be a case for re-grading, the work will be referred to the Awarding Body external quality assessor (also referred to as an external or quality reviewer).

In these circumstances, the external quality assessor will need to consider the assessed work directly and satisfy him/herself that an error of judgement has been made in order to approve a change to the grade. Any such changes will be formally recorded.

- No adjustment to tutor/assessor grades can be made without the written agreement of the external verifier. The external verifier's judgement is final.

This will be the final route of escalation within our Service. Therefore, if you remain unhappy after following our own internal appeals procedure then please contact the Awarding Body directly. The awarding body contact details will be provided on request.

Should you address your appeal to the Awarding Body and remain unhappy with the outcome you may then raise your appeal to the relevant qualification regulator. Either a representative of Sefton Community Learning or Awarding Body will be able to offer you guidance on the appropriate qualification regulator in each instance and provide contact details.

If you have any queries about the contents of this policy, please contact the Head of Service.

## **5. APPEALS AGAINST EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT DECISIONS**

### **Stage 1**

In the first instance the student must lodge an appeal regarding the assessment with SCLS exam officer.

### **Stage 2**

The exam officer must issue the student, a student external academic appeals form for completion.

### **Stage 3**

Appeal will then lodge with the Awarding Body in line with their appeals policy and procedures. It is the Community Learning Managers overall responsibility to oversee the process.

### **Stage 4**

Students must be informed of the outcome of the appeal and understand the grade may in some cases be lower than the original grade.

## (Appendix 1) STUDENT INTERNAL ASSESSMENT APPEAL FORM

|                                                                       |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>SECTION 1</b>                                                      |  |
| Name of Student:                                                      |  |
| Name of Assessor:                                                     |  |
| Name of Lead Internal Verifier:                                       |  |
| Date of Decision:                                                     |  |
| Unit(s)/Subject(s) of Appeal:                                         |  |
| Assessor's comments on issue which is the subject of appeal is based: |  |
| Student's reasons for appeal:                                         |  |
| Student signature and date:                                           |  |
| Assessor signature and date:                                          |  |
| <b>SECTION 2</b>                                                      |  |
| Lead Internal Verifier's decision:                                    |  |
| Date appeal received:                                                 |  |
| Date of reply to appeal:                                              |  |
| Name of Lead Internal Verifier:                                       |  |
| Signature of Lead Internal Verifier:                                  |  |
| <b>SECTION 3</b>                                                      |  |
| External Verifier's decision:                                         |  |
| Date of external verification:                                        |  |
| Date of reply to appeal:                                              |  |
| External verifier's name:                                             |  |
| External verifier's signature:                                        |  |



## **(Appendix 2) STUDENT EXTERNAL ACADEMIC APPEALS FORM**

### **ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS**

#### **Candidate Consent Form**

##### **Information for candidates**

The following information explains what may happen following an enquiry about the result of your qualification. If SCLS makes an enquiry about the decision of the external verifier after your subject grade has been issued, there are three possible outcomes:

- Your original mark is lowered, so your final grade may be lower than the original grade you received.
- Your original mark is confirmed as correct, and there is no change to your grade.
- Your original mark is raised, so your final grade may be higher than the original grade you received.

In order to proceed with the enquiry about results, you must sign the form below. By completing and signing this form you are informing SCLS that you have understood what the outcome might be, and that you give your consent to the enquiry being made.

##### **Candidate consent**

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Candidate Name: |  |
|-----------------|--|

##### **Details of enquiry (Awarding Body, Qualification level, Subject title, unit)**

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**I give my consent to Sefton Community Learning Service to make an enquiry about the result of the unit (s) listed above. In giving consent, I understand that the final subject grade awarded to me may be lower than, higher than, or the same as the grade which was originally awarded for this subject.**

Signed: .....Date: .....