



**ESTAR**

ELITE SKILLS, TRAINING  
& RECRUITMENT

**CP-007**

**Enquiries and Appeals  
Policy for Learners**

**REV: 00**



**Policy owner:** Head of Quality & Compliance

**Operational leads:** Programme Managers, Lead Assessors, IQA Team

**Applies to:** All learners and apprentices on ESTAR programmes (funded and non-funded)

**Review cycle:** Annual, or earlier if regulatory/awarding requirements change

**Version:** 00

## 1. Purpose

ESTAR Education is committed to ensuring that **assessment decisions are fair, consistent, transparent and evidence-based**. This policy sets out how learners can raise:

- **Enquiries** – to seek clarification or explanation of an assessment or decision; and
- **Appeals** – to formally challenge an assessment decision where the learner believes procedures were not followed correctly or the decision was unreasonable.

The policy ensures learners are treated fairly and that assessment integrity and awarding standards are maintained.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- internal assessments and decisions made by ESTAR (knowledge tests, practical assessments, observations, professional discussions, assignments);
- assessment-related decisions connected to apprenticeships where ESTAR is the training provider (but **not** the EPAO);
- decisions affecting learner progression or outcomes.

This policy **does not** apply to:

- complaints about general service delivery (see *Complaints Policy*);
- safeguarding concerns (see *Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy*);
- whistleblowing matters (see *Whistleblowing Policy*);
- End-Point Assessment (EPA) decisions made by an EPAO (these must follow the EPAO's own appeals process).

## 3. Principles

ESTAR's enquiries and appeals process is underpinned by the following principles:

- **Fairness and transparency** – decisions are explained clearly and reviewed objectively;
- **Independence** – appeals are reviewed by staff not involved in the original decision, where possible;
- **Timeliness** – clear timescales are applied at each stage;
- **Integrity** – assessment standards and awarding requirements are upheld;
- **Non-retaliation** – learners will not be disadvantaged for raising an enquiry or appeal in good faith.

## 4. Definitions

- **Enquiry:** A request for clarification or explanation of an assessment decision or outcome.
- **Appeal:** A formal request for a review of an assessment decision where the learner believes:
  - assessment procedures were not followed correctly; or
  - the decision was unreasonable based on the evidence.
- **Assessment decision:** A judgement made by an assessor regarding learner performance against assessment criteria.

## 5. Informal enquiry stage (Stage 1)



### 5.1 Purpose

Many concerns can be resolved quickly through discussion and clarification.

### 5.2 How to raise an enquiry

Learners should:

- contact their tutor or assessor directly; or
- request clarification via email or learning platform.

### 5.3 Timescale

- Enquiries should be raised within **10 working days** of receiving the assessment decision.
- ESTAR aims to respond within **5 working days**.

Possible outcomes:

- clarification of feedback or assessment criteria;
- correction of an administrative error;
- confirmation that the assessment decision stands.

If the learner remains dissatisfied, they may proceed to a formal appeal.

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## 6. Formal appeal process (Stage 2)

### 6.1 Grounds for appeal

An appeal may be submitted if the learner believes:

- assessment procedures were not followed correctly;
- relevant evidence was not considered; or
- the decision was inconsistent with assessment criteria.

Disagreement with the academic or professional judgement alone is **not normally sufficient** grounds for appeal.

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### 6.2 Submitting an appeal

Appeals must be submitted:

- in writing (email or appeal form); and
- within **10 working days** of the Stage 1 response or assessment decision.

The appeal must include:

- learner name and programme;
- assessment details and date;
- grounds for appeal;
- supporting evidence (if available).

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### 6.3 Acknowledgement

- ESTAR will acknowledge receipt of an appeal within **2 working days**.

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### 6.4 Appeal review

- The appeal will be reviewed by a senior member of staff or IQA **not involved** in the original assessment, where possible.
- The review will consider:
  - assessment records and evidence;
  - whether procedures were followed correctly;
  - consistency with assessment standards.

## 6.5 Outcome

- A written outcome will be issued within **10 working days** of acknowledgement.
- Outcomes may include:
  - confirmation that the original decision stands;
  - a reassessment or remark by an alternative assessor;
  - correction of an identified procedural error.

The outcome will include the rationale for the decision.

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## 7. Final review stage (Stage 3)

If the learner remains dissatisfied, they may request a final review.

### 7.1 Requesting a final review

- Requests must be submitted within **10 working days** of the Stage 2 outcome.
- The request must explain why the learner believes the appeal was not handled correctly.

### 7.2 Review process

- Conducted by the Head of Quality & Compliance or a senior leader not previously involved.
- Focuses on whether the process was applied fairly and correctly.

### 7.3 Final decision

- A final written decision will be issued within **10 working days**.
- This decision represents ESTAR's final internal position.

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## 8. End-Point Assessment (EPA) appeals

For apprentices:

- ESTAR **cannot overturn EPA decisions** made by an EPAO.
- Learners will be supported to understand and access the EPAO's own enquiries and appeals process.
- ESTAR will provide relevant evidence where required.

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## 9. External escalation

Where internal procedures have been exhausted:

- learners may be signposted to awarding organisations or funding bodies where applicable;
- external escalation routes depend on the type of provision and assessment.

ESTAR will provide appropriate guidance on next steps where relevant.

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## 10. Record keeping and monitoring

ESTAR maintains records of:

- enquiries and appeals received;
- decisions and outcomes;
- actions taken and lessons learned.

This information is reviewed as part of:

- internal quality assurance;
- self-assessment reporting; and
- quality improvement planning.

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## 11. Confidentiality and data protection



## Enquiries and Appeals Policy for Learners

Form: CP-007

Revision: 00

All enquiries and appeals are handled confidentially and in accordance with ESTAR's **Data Protection Policy**. Information is shared only with those involved in the review process.

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### 12. Malicious or vexatious appeals

Appeals that are deemed to be deliberately false, malicious or abusive may be closed following senior review. This does not restrict learners from raising genuine concerns.

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### 13. Policy review

This policy is reviewed:

- annually; and
- following changes to awarding organisation, EPAO, funding or inspection requirements.

Date of last Review	Print Name	Position
02/02/2026	Keiran Casey	Chief Executive Officer
	Darren Beach	Quality Manager