

## Complaints and appeals process

The CifA Assessment Centre aims to offer an efficient, courteous and timely service to learners and their employers, training providers and assessors in line with Centre policies. We value feedback, including complaints, in order to evaluate the organisation's performance and inform quality improvements.

We operate a **Complaints process** for complaints about the administration of the assessment process and an **Appeals process** for appealing against assessment decisions. If you are not sure which is the appropriate process for the issue you want to raise, please contact the Centre Coordinator who will be happy to help you.

## **1. Complaints process**

A complaint can arise from dissatisfaction about any aspect of the administration of the assessment process, including actions of an assessor or member of staff.

### **Informal complaints**

Informal complaints can be made to the learner's assessor, the Centre Coordinator, or the Head of Centre. Complaints and feedback can also be sent by post to Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Assessment Centre), Power Steele Building, Wessex Hall, Whiteknights Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 6DE

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the action leading to the complaint arose in order to resolve the situation in a timely way. Complaints will be logged and acknowledged and will be replied to within 14 days.

All complaints against ClfA are taken seriously. However, in many cases complaints arise from issues that can be resolved by discussion. In the first instance, and before submission of a formal complaint, we would expect you to raise the issue with the relevant member of staff with a view to identifying a route to resolution.

If a complaint is very serious or a candidate feels unable to raise it informally then a formal complaint can be made directly. Acknowledgement of receipt of a complaint will be sent as soon as possible and within 14 days of receipt along with a copy of the complaint procedure.

### **Formal complaint – stage 1**

A complaint should be submitted using the 'Complaints against the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' form which is available on request from the ClfA office or on the website at [www.archaeologists.net/regulation/complaints](http://www.archaeologists.net/regulation/complaints) and sent to the Head of Centre.

Complaints must be received within 28 days of the final assessment. All complaints will be investigated and a formal written response provided. Every effort will be made resolve or act on a complaint within 12 weeks.

Overall responsibility for this process and its implementation lies with the Chief Executive. The policy is approved by the Board of Directors.

### **Formal complaint – stage 2**

If the complainant is not happy with the outcome of Stage 1 they can request that the complaint is reviewed by the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive will review the documentation from Stage 1 and speak to the member of staff involved in investigating the complaint in this part of the procedure. The Chief Executive may delegate this to another nominated person who was not involved with the original investigation

Depending on the nature of the complaint or due to particular circumstances, the Chief Executive may wish to seek assistance from or refer the case to a panel of members of the Board of Directors.

A response will be sent in writing to the complainant. This will give the outcome of the Stage 2 and any actions to be taken.

The decision of the Chief Executive or nominated person is final.

### **Confidentiality**

CifA will attempt to maintain the confidentiality of complaints at all times and expects the complainant to do the same. A breach in confidentiality may result in the complaint being dismissed by the CifA Assessment Centre.

### **Reporting and review**

The CifA Assessment Centre will review complaints on an annual basis and report outcomes and trends to the CifA Board of Directors

## **2. Appeals process**

This page sets out the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) policy on dealing with appeals.

### **Purpose**

To ensure CifA adopts robust procedures for dealing with appeals relating to assessment decisions.

### **Applicability**

Independent Assessors, IQAs and Assessment Centre personnel.

### **Background**

CifA has and will maintain a robust policy and associated procedure for handling appeals from employers, training providers and individual learners. These procedures will ensure that

- All appeal decisions are taken by individuals who have no personal interest in the decision being appealed
- All appeal decisions are taken by individuals who have appropriate competence
- Appellants are kept informed of the progress of their appeal
- Appeals are dealt with within published timescales
- The needs and interests of learners are considered and protected
- Customer facing versions of the appeals policy and procedure are communicated to employers, training providers and individual learners and published using appropriate media
- Every endeavour is made to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and in particular the handling of sensitive data in accordance with the GDPR
- Where an appeal results in the identification of a failure in the assessment process, CifA takes all reasonable steps to identify any other learners affected, correct or mitigate as far as is practicable the effect of the failure, and ensure that the failure does not recur
- Learners (or an employer or training provider on behalf of a learner(s)) undertaking end point assessment with the EPAO may appeal against the grade(s) on receipt of their results.

### **Appeals process**

Learners (or an employer or training provider on behalf of a learner(s)) may appeal against an assessment decision within 28 days of receiving their results. Appeals can be made on the procedural grounds, ie the assessment did not follow published procedures and/or failed to make reasonable adjustments and/or failed to take into account

relevant evidence of competence or on the grounds that an incorrect assessment decision has been made.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Internal Quality Assurer and should clearly indicate the reason for the appeal supported by appropriate evidence. Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged within 5 working days and any further documentation required will be requested.

The appeal will be heard by a panel who will inform the Internal Quality Assurer of their decision. The panel shall consist of two members of CifA's Advisory Council who are not also assessors and one qualified assessor who has no previous connection with the assessment in question. The appeal panel will hear the appeal within 28 working days of confirmation that all necessary documentation has been completed and will complete their report within 5 working days.

Following receipt of the panel's report, the Internal Quality Assurer will give a clear explanation, in writing, to the learner and their employer stating justification for the decision.

### **Monitoring appeals**

CifA will ensure that:

- Appropriate records are maintained of the numbers of appeals received and their outcomes
- Reports are made to the Board of Directors as part of the self-evaluation procedure
- Guidance from the regulators is reviewed and the policy is updated to comply with good practice

### **Compliance with EPAO requirements**

CifA will comply with the requirements of any appeals process established by the regulator of EPAO in the form in which it may be published and revised from time to time.