



APPEALS POLICY

Pace Educators Student Centre

A fair, transparent and learner-centred approach to handling appeals

Document owner	Centre Manager / Quality Lead
Version	1.0
Effective date	July 2026
Next review date	July 2027
Classification	Internal / Learner Facing

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1. Introduction

Pace Educators is committed to providing a fair, transparent and supportive learning environment. This Appeals Policy explains how learners, applicants, parents or guardians, employers and other relevant stakeholders may challenge a decision made by the centre where they believe the decision was not reached fairly, consistently, accurately or in line with published procedures.

The policy is designed for a student centre context and applies to academic, administrative and learner-support decisions made by Pace Educators. It should be read alongside the centre's complaints, safeguarding, assessment, reasonable adjustments, malpractice and learner conduct procedures where applicable.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that appeals are received, recorded, reviewed and resolved in a fair and consistent way. An appeal is not a general expression of dissatisfaction; it is a formal request for Pace Educators to review whether a decision, action, process or procedure was applied properly and fairly.

This policy aims to:

- give learners and stakeholders a clear route to challenge eligible decisions;
- ensure that appeals are handled objectively and without bias;
- protect the rights of learners while maintaining the integrity of centre decisions;
- ensure clear evidence, communication, timescales and record keeping;
- support continuous improvement in centre practice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to appeals relating to decisions made by Pace Educators in connection with:

- admissions, course placement or progression decisions;
- internal assessment decisions and internally assessed coursework outcomes;
- reasonable adjustment or special consideration decisions;
- attendance, learner conduct or disciplinary decisions;
- withdrawal, suspension or exclusion decisions;
- centre-based certification, registration or portfolio decisions;
- decisions arising from maladministration or malpractice investigations;
- learner support decisions where the appellant believes the published procedure was not applied fairly.

Where a qualification is awarded or regulated by an external awarding organisation, Pace Educators will follow the relevant awarding body or regulatory appeal route after the centre's internal procedures have been completed, where required.

4. Principles

- Appeals will be treated seriously, confidentially and respectfully.
- No learner will be disadvantaged for submitting an appeal in good faith.
- Appeals will be considered by staff who were not directly responsible for the original decision wherever practical.
- Decisions will be based on evidence, published procedures, relevant regulations and the balance of probability.
- Reasonable adjustments will be provided where required to support access to the appeals process.
- Clear written outcomes will be provided at each stage.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Learner / appellant	Submit the appeal on time, explain the grounds clearly and provide supporting evidence.
Parent / guardian / representative	Support the learner where appropriate and act with the learner's written permission, except where safeguarding or legal duties require otherwise.
Tutor / assessor / relevant staff member	Provide records, evidence and professional input when requested.
Centre Manager / Quality Lead	Oversee the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.
Appeals Officer	Acknowledge appeals, maintain records, coordinate reviews and communicate outcomes.
Appeal Panel	Review Stage 2 appeals independently and make a final centre decision.

6. Grounds for appeal

An appeal may be accepted where there is evidence or a reasonable basis to believe that:

- the centre did not follow its own published policy or procedure;
- the decision was not based on available evidence;
- relevant evidence was not considered;
- there was an administrative or clerical error;
- the decision-maker had a conflict of interest or acted with bias;
- a reasonable adjustment, special consideration or support request was not handled properly;
- new evidence is available that could not reasonably have been provided earlier.

7. Matters not covered by this policy

This policy does not normally cover:

- general complaints about service, behaviour or facilities, which should be handled through the Complaints Procedure;
- requests for a reassessment simply because the learner disagrees with academic judgement;
- appeals submitted outside the stated timescale without a valid reason;
- matters that have already been fully considered under another policy;
- anonymous appeals, unless the centre decides there is a safeguarding, legal or public interest reason to investigate.

8. Submission requirements and timescales

Appeals should be submitted in writing using the Pace Educators Appeal Submission Form or by email where this is more accessible. The appeal must identify the decision being challenged, the reason for the appeal, the outcome requested and any supporting evidence.

Appeal type	Submission deadline	Centre response target
Appeal against a centre decision	Within 10 working days of receiving the decision	Acknowledgement within 3 working days
Appeal against an assessment-related decision	Within 10 working days of receiving the result or decision	Stage 1 outcome normally within 10 working days
Stage 2 appeal panel request	Within 5 working days of the Stage 1 outcome	Panel outcome normally within 15 working days
Late appeal	Must include reasons for delay	Accepted only where there is a valid reason

9. Appeals process

Pace Educators uses a staged appeals process so that issues can be resolved at the earliest appropriate point while preserving the right to an independent review where necessary.

1. Informal query: The learner may first speak with the tutor, assessor, course coordinator or centre administrator to clarify the decision. This is not compulsory where the matter is urgent or sensitive.
2. Stage 1 - Formal review: A written appeal is reviewed by a member of staff who was not directly responsible for the original decision wherever practical.
3. Stage 2 - Appeal panel hearing: If the appellant remains dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, they may request a panel review.

Safeguarding concerns identified during an appeal will be referred immediately through Pace Educators' safeguarding procedures and may be handled separately from the academic or administrative appeal.

10. Stage 1 - Formal review

The Appeals Officer will check whether the appeal falls within the scope of this policy, whether it was submitted within the required timescale and whether enough information has been provided. If information is missing, the appellant may be asked to provide further details by a stated deadline.

The Stage 1 reviewer will consider:

- the original decision and the reason given;
- the relevant policy, procedure, assessment criteria or learner agreement;
- evidence submitted by the appellant;
- records held by the centre;
- whether the decision was made fairly, consistently and without bias;
- whether any reasonable adjustments or support needs were appropriately considered.

The Stage 1 outcome will normally be issued in writing within 10 working days of acceptance of the appeal. Where the case is complex, Pace Educators will inform the appellant of the revised timescale and the reason for the delay.

11. Stage 2 - Appeal panel hearing

If the appellant is not satisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, they may request Stage 2 review within 5 working days. The request must explain why the appellant believes the Stage 1 outcome was incorrect or incomplete.

The Appeal Panel will normally include at least two people who were not involved in the original decision or Stage 1 review. The panel may meet in person or remotely. The appellant may be accompanied by a parent, guardian, support worker, interpreter or other appropriate representative. Legal representation is not normally required but must be declared in advance if requested.

Before the hearing, both parties will be given access to the relevant evidence where appropriate and lawful. The panel may ask questions, request clarification and consider whether Pace Educators applied its policies and procedures fairly.

12. Outcomes and further action

At either stage, the appeal may be:

- upheld, meaning the appeal is successful;
- partially upheld, meaning some concerns are accepted and remedial action is required;
- not upheld, meaning the original decision remains in place.

Possible remedial actions include correcting an administrative error, reviewing an assessment process, reconsidering a decision, arranging additional support, changing a record, issuing an apology, or taking improvement action to prevent recurrence. The Stage 2 outcome is the final internal decision of Pace Educators unless an external awarding organisation, regulator or statutory body provides a further route of appeal.

13. Equality, confidentiality and data protection

Pace Educators will handle appeals in line with equality, safeguarding and data protection requirements. Information will be shared only with people who need it to consider the appeal, support the learner, fulfil legal duties or comply with awarding body requirements.

Personal data collected during an appeal will be stored securely and retained only for as long as necessary for quality assurance, legal, safeguarding, regulatory or awarding body purposes. Once the retention period has expired, records will be securely destroyed or anonymised.

14. Monitoring and review

The Centre Manager / Quality Lead will monitor appeals to identify trends, recurring issues, equality implications and opportunities for improvement. This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if there are changes to centre operations, awarding body requirements, legislation or regulatory expectations.

15. Contact information

Organisation	Pace Educators Ltd
Appeals contact	Centre Manager / Quality Lead
Email	info@paceducators.org
Address	235 Timberlog Lane Basildon Essex SS14 1PB

Appendix A - Appeal submission form

Learners may use the form below or provide the same information in writing by email or letter.

Learner name	
Course / programme	
Date of decision being appealed	
Decision being appealed	
Reason for appeal	
Evidence attached	
Outcome requested	
Representative details, if applicable	
Signature and date	