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Change History

Version	Date of Release	Policy Owner	Authorised by
1.0L	13/01/2012	Responsible Officer	Head of CYQ
1.0C	15/12/2012	Responsible Officer	Head of CYQ
1.1L	08/11/2012	Responsible Officer	Head of CYQ
2.0L	29/04/2013	Responsible Officer	Head of CYQ
2.0C	10/04/2015	Responsible Officer	Director of YMCA Awards
3.0C	23/06/2015	Responsible Officer	Director of YMCA Awards
3.0L	26/06/2015	Responsible Officer	Director of YMCA Awards
4.0C	07/09/2017	Head of Quality and Assessment	Director of YMCA Awards
4.0L	19/07/2019	Head of Quality and Assessment	Director of YMCA Awards
5.0C	19/07/2019	Head of Quality and Assessment	Director of YMCA Awards
6.0	12/08/2021	Senior Regulatory Compliance Officer	Awards Committee
6.1	08/12/2022	Senior Regulatory Compliance Officer	Head of YMCA Awards
6.2	28/09/2023	Lead Quality Manager	Head of YMCA Awards
6.3	28/10/2024	Lead Quality Manager	Head of YMCA Awards
6.4	29/11/2024	Lead Quality Manager	Head of YMCA Awards

Appeals policy and procedure

Responsibilities

Board of Trustees/ Awards Committee	Overall responsibility for the policies and procedures that govern the work at Central YMCA.
Chief Executive	Overall responsibility for ensuring Central YMCA's resources are used effectively and appropriately.
Policy Owner	Responsible for ensuring guidelines are in place and that policies and procedures reflect our charitable ethos and commitment to equality and diversity.
All Employees and Volunteers	To follow policies and procedures, promoting best practice throughout the organisation.

Policy statement

This policy provides guidance to our approved centres and learners on how they can appeal against a decision or action taken by YMCA Awards. An appeal differs from a complaint because it is a specific request to reconsider or challenge a decision or action taken by YMCA Awards.

Centres and/or learners may also make a complaint alongside their appeal and should refer to our [Feedback and Complaints policy](#) to do so.

Definitions

We, us, our	YMCA Awards; of YMCA Awards; YMCA Awards is part of Central Young Men's Christian Association (Central YMCA). Registered Charity Number 213121. Limited company register in England no. 119249. Registered address 112 Great Russell St, London WC1B 3NQ.
Centre	YMCA Awards approved training provider (centre); of a YMCA Awards approved training provider (centre); An organisation undertaking the delivery of an assessment (and potentially other activities) to Learners on behalf of an awarding organisation. Centres are typically educational institutions, training providers, or employers.

Scope

This policy covers appeals against decisions or actions taken by YMCA Awards.

Appeals against decisions and actions taken by centres where learners are studying are out of scope of this policy and would need to be addressed by the centre's appeals policy.

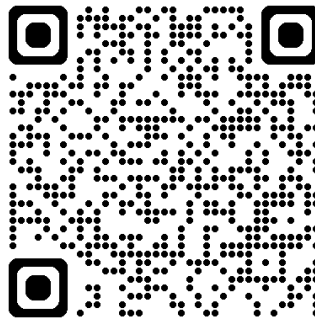
Related policies, procedures and templates

- YMCA Awards' Feedback and complaints policy
- YMCA Awards' Malpractice and Maladministration: policy and procedure

Background

We aim to protect the interests of learners by requiring approved centres to assess learners against the agreed and published criteria. We publish these criteria on our website within qualification specifications.

We also require centre staff involved in making or quality assuring assessment decisions – assessors and internal quality assurers (IQAs) respectively – to suitably trained. We set out principles for staff approval on our website, with qualification specific requirements outlined within qualifications specifications.



ymcaawards.co.uk/approval-requirements/

We monitor adherence to our criteria and our [Centre Agreement](#) through a range of activities, including:

- external quality assurance
- qualification approval and staff approval requests
- responding to concerns or information supplied by relevant stakeholders.

Under our obligations in the [Centre Agreement](#) and duties to our regulators, we regularly make decisions on centres' ability to deliver our qualifications. Our decisions are based on evidence, expertise and made in relation to appropriate guidance and criteria.

We recognise that our decisions are often likely to have a direct impact on the operations of a centre. We take this into account when taking action to ensure we do not place unnecessary or unjustified burden on centres. In addition, we strive to provide appropriate and clear guidance documentation to centres to support and assist them in meeting their responsibilities.

Areas for appeal

The table below outlines areas for appeal relevant to centres and learners.

Centres	Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the application of a sanction (including withdrawal of approval)• the content of an external quality assurance visit or sampling report• a change in the centre's risk status• a decision made by YMCA Awards to not permit a named member of staff to deliver, assess, internally quality assurer or otherwise be involved in the provision of a YMCA Awards qualification at a centre• the outcome of a malpractice or maladministration investigation• rejection of a qualification approval application• withdrawal of a qualification for which the centre has current approval• any other refusal to permit the centre to undertake a particular activity that is not already prohibited in the qualification specification, centre guidance, centre agreement, or by law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the mark or grade awarded for an external assessment• the YMCA Awards external quality assurers' decision on any element of assessment that differs to the assessor's or internal quality assurer's decision (for example, if an internal assessment has been marked by the centre assessor as achieved but the external quality assurer disagrees with this judgement)• an application for a Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration submitted to YMCA Awards for approval• YMCA Awards' final, overall assessment decision for a unit or qualification.

Grounds for appeal

The table below provides examples of appropriate grounds for appeal for centres and learners. These lists are not comprehensive.

Centres	Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the application of a sanction or increase in risk status is not fully justified• an application for qualification approval was refused without reason or without reference to the full evidence supplied in the application• there were extenuating circumstances which affected the centre's ability to provide requested information or evidence during an external verification or malpractice or maladministration investigation (appropriate written evidence will be requested by YMCA Awards), which resulted in a sanction or change in risk status• YMCA Awards did not follow its published procedure when carrying out a malpractice investigation, resulting in incorrect findings• there was inappropriate or irregular conduct on the part of the YMCA Awards external quality assurer which affected the content or outcome of the activity the external quality assurer was undertaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• there was an error in the external assessment materials• a reasonable adjustment was refused without reason or a decision to limit a requested reasonable adjustment proved to be inappropriate or insufficient• the learner requested Special Consideration but this does not seem to have been applied• there were medical or other extenuating circumstances which affected the learner's performance in an external assessment and were not previously supplied to YMCA Awards through a request for special consideration (appropriate written evidence will be requested by YMCA Awards)• the external quality assurer was not supplied with all the relevant assessment evidence or made a decision to over-rule the assessor's decision without providing an explanation• there was inappropriate or irregular conduct on the part of the assessor, which YMCA Awards may have been aware of and had not dealt with, and which resulted in an incorrect assessment decision.

Possible outcomes of an appeal

Where an appeal is successful – or where our regulators indicate a failure in our process – we will consider the outcome to take appropriate action. This may include:

- Amending our original decision
- Identifying other learners that may have been impacted, and correct – or where the issue cannot be corrected – mitigate the effect
- Review our policies and procedures to prevent reoccurrence of an issue

Appeals procedure

Stage 1 – Centre review

Centres	Learners
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Centres should review the outcomes of a disputed or unsatisfactory decision internally to determine whether to seek an appeal. This internal review, should ideally include senior staff within the centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learners should contact their centre to request information on appealing a decision, outcome or result.If the outcome or result relates to decision made by the centre, the learner should use the centre's appeal procedure. <p>Once a centre's appeal procedure has been exhausted, if a learner remains unsatisfied with the outcome, they may contact us to make a complaint about the centre's conduct in making the original decision, in responding to the appeal or both.</p> <p>See our Feedback and Complaints policy.</p>

Please note, appeals relating to external assessment need to be made within four weeks of the our decision being made available (e.g. within four weeks of the publication of an external assessment result or refusal of a request for reasonable adjustment). This ensures information and evidence used to make our decision is available. It may not be possible for us to process an appeal made after this time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Stage 2 – Decision to proceed

Our team can provide advice on whether an appeal is an appropriate course of action but cannot make the decision to proceed on the centre's behalf.

If a decision to proceed with an appeal enquiry is reached, the centre's Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) or Head of Quality/Head of Department should:

- create an Appeal Application form in Y-Connect (or ask for an alternative format if they are not already an approved YMCA Awards centre)
- complete the appeal details section
- submit the form to YMCA Awards.

We will aim to review the application within 3 working days.

The submission of an appeal will incur a fee (see the [fees section on our website](#)). The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. In addition, if the appeal is upheld, costs associated with remedying the decision or outcome will usually be absorbed by YMCA Awards.

Stage 3 – Investigation and outcome

We aim to investigate and issue an outcome of all appeals within four weeks. Where is not possible, we will communicate the expected time for us to provide a full response within 3 working days of the appeal's submission.

We will ensure that all people involved in reviewing an appeal are suitably trained, and do not have a conflict of interest in the outcome of the appeal (e.g. were not involved in making the original

decision). Where it is not possible (e.g. because the decision has been made by a senior member of the YMCA Awards team) we will make arrangements to an external independent reviewer to support the investigation.

Following the outcome of the appeal, the centre's (IQA) or Head of Quality/Head of Department should complete the outcome response section of the Appeal Application form. This section allows the centre to close the appeal or escalate to Stage 4.

Stage 4 – Escalation

Escalation of an appeal will incur a fee (see the [fees section on our website](#)) and must be requested within four weeks of the appeal outcome. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

During this stage, an independent reviewer will check that we have followed the correct procedures with regards to our appeals process and, if appropriate, will make recommendations back to original investigator.

The independent reviewer will inform all parties of the outcome of the review and a report of the investigation will be sent to all relevant parties.

Stage 4 is the final stage of the appeal process where a final decision will be made regarding the outcome of the initial appeal. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal after exhausting our Appeals procedure, you can get in touch with the relevant qualifications regulator:

Location	Regulated by
England	Ofqual public.enquires@ofqual.gov.uk
Wales	Qualifications Wales enquiries@qualificationswales.org
Northern Ireland	CCEA Regulation info@ccea.org.uk
Other UK regions and outside of the UK	Ofqual public.enquires@ofqual.gov.uk