



SoundSkool Music

Appeals Policy

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Statement of intent

SoundSkool is committed to ensuring that all students are able to achieve the exam/certification results that they are capable of. It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the exam processes to read, understand and implement this policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure SoundSkool has an efficient appeals procedure with clear guidelines for all relevant staff.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- JCQ (2023) 'A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Student Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Roles and responsibilities

The exam person is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy throughout SoundSkool and ensuring the relevant staff understand its impact.
- Responding to queries in regards to this policy.
- Liaising with students when an internal or external appeal is submitted.
- Liaising with awarding bodies when an external appeal is submitted.
- Ensuring moderating standards are maintained and effective.
- Processing all internal appeals forms and establishing the next course of action from each.
- Handling any disputes in accordance with this policy.

The Head of College is responsible for:

- Reviewing the marking of all new internal markers, to ensure standards are satisfied.
- Reviewing this policy in liaison with the exams person and SLT.
- Ensuring that markers within SoundSkool are familiar with the grade boundaries, marking criteria and high standards of consistency that they are expected to use when internally marking work.
- Offering guidance and training to IQAs as required.
- Monitoring the effectiveness and consistency of marking within their departments and addressing any issues promptly.

Internal Quality Assurers are responsible for:



- Marking internal work against the correct marking criteria and grade boundaries.
- Ensuring their marking is consistent and fair, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring they are unbiased when completing their marking.
- Participating in reviews and monitoring activities of marking data, assignment briefs to ensure it remains consistent across SoundSkool.

Students are responsible for:

- Completing exams/ units to a high standard, revising appropriately and preparing themselves for the completion of their qualifications.
- Taking responsibility for their learning.
- Completing and submitting an internal appeals form if required.

Acceptable grounds for appeal

Appeals will only be deemed valid when based on procedural irregularity in terms of the conduct of the examination or determination of the result of a unit

Appeals will be deemed invalid and not upheld if based purely on the following:

- Academic judgement of examiners/assessors
- Extenuating circumstances affecting performance
- The student's lack of awareness of exam/qualification regulations and procedures

Internal appeals process

SoundSkool will ensure that students are informed of their centre-assessed marks prior to them being submitted to the awarding body, so that students may request a review.

Students will be informed that they may request copies of materials to assist them in considering whether they wish for a review to take place. Any requests for copies of materials will be returned to the students within [seven days](#) and students will have [seven days](#) to review the materials.

If a student, wishes to appeal against the procedure used in an internal assessment, they should write to SoundSkool's exams person using the internal appeals form.

The deadline for appeal applications is [10 days](#) prior to the start of the written exam series.

Internal appeals will be resolved by the date of the last internally/externally assessed paper of the series (e.g. by the end of June).

On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry will be conducted by the exams person, a member of the SLT and the Head of College who is not involved in the internal assessment decision. SoundSkool will ensure that those completing the review have the appropriate competence and are unbiased.

This enquiry will consider whether the procedure used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body and the JCQ Code of Practice.



Consideration will be given to whether the original mark awarded is fair and just. If necessary, comparisons will be made to other students' work to help determine a correct and appropriate mark.

A written response to the appeal will be sent to the student within [10 working days](#) of SoundSkool receiving the appeal.

A written record of the appeal and the outcome will be kept on file at SoundSkool, with the awarding body being informed of any amendments.

Students should note, after their work has been internally assessed, it is moderated by the awarding body to ensure consistency – this moderation process may lead to marks being altered and SoundSkool has no control over this.

External appeals process

Enquiries about results (EARs)

EARs can be submitted throughout the academic year.

Students should be aware that EARs can result in the marks/grades being raised, confirmed or lowered.

Any student who wants to query a mark/grade awarded by an awarding body should adhere to the following procedure:

- Contact the exams person and the subject teacher as soon as possible in person to discuss the mark/grade.
- The exams person will advise on the options available to query the mark/grade and any costs involved in doing so.
- Students must sign a consent form to confirm that they understand the consequences of an EAR; these forms will be issued by the exams person.
- Consent forms must be returned before an EAR can be valid.
- The subject teacher will review the student's grades and discuss them with the head of College in the appropriate action, considering the breakdown of marks, the grade boundaries and the student's predicted grades.

If the EAR is supported, the head of College will make a request, together with the student's consent form, to the exams person before the deadline for EARs.

The cost of the enquiry will be met by SoundSkool. If the EAR is successful, the fee will be refunded.

- Appeals should be made in writing to the CEO at least [five working days](#) before the published deadline for EARs
- The appeal should state the reason(s) for the appeal
- This appeal must be signed, dated and include the contact number and email address of the student.

The appeal information will be reviewed by the exams person and a member of the SLT.



The outcome of the appeal will be communicated either by telephone, email or first-class post, as appropriate, within [24 hours](#) of receipt.

The decision that is reached will be final.

Outcomes following EARs will be forwarded by the exams person to the student as soon as they have been received from the awarding bodies.

[Appeals against outcomes of post-results services](#)

Post-results services refer to clerical re-checks, reviews or marking and reviews of moderation.

In instances where SoundSkool is dissatisfied with an assessment result, SoundSkool will apply for a clerical re-check, review of marking or review of moderation.

Once an outcome has been reached in the post-results service, an appeal against this can be made where the student or headteacher believe that:

- A marking or moderation error has occurred, including where a review of marking or moderation has already been made.
- The awarding body did not apply its procedures consistently, properly or fairly.

A written request for appeal will be made by the head of College to the relevant awarding body which sets out clearly and concisely the grounds for the appeal – this must be take place within 30 calendar days of the awarding body issuing the outcome of the post-results service. If an appeal application is accepted, an investigation into students' or SoundSkool's results will follow – if the appeal is accepted on procedural grounds, this will generally not involve a further review of a student's work.

As internal students are not entitled to appeal directly, SoundSkool will do it on their account, if SoundSkool agrees.

The appeal will either be not upheld or upheld in whole or in part.

[Appeals against malpractice, maladministration or non-compliance](#)

This covers cases where there is an alleged breach of the published JCQ regulations and awarding body requirements.

The CEO may appeal against a finding of malpractice and/or the sanction imposed by the awarding body, and on behalf of students. Appeals will be made within 14 calendar days of the receiving the malpractice decision. The appeal will set out clearly and concisely the grounds for appeal and include any further relevant and supporting evidence.

Where an appeal is made on a student's behalf, the student will be informed beforehand. The student will be provided the opportunity to submit a statement, if they wish.

Appeals will be based on reasonable grounds relating to the incident in question. Reasonable grounds include:

- The incident was not dealt with in line with JCQ's 'Suspected Malpractice – Policies and Procedures'.

- The decision was unreasonable in light of the evidence presented.
- Further evidence has come to light which may change the awarding body's decision.
- The sanction imposed is disproportionate to the seriousness of the malpractice.

The awarding body will either reject the appeal or refer it to an appeal hearing.

Appeals against decisions made in respect of access arrangements, reasonable adjustments and special consideration

SoundSkool must make appeals on students' behalf. The exams person will attempt to discuss the matter with the relevant awarding body to see if it can be resolved without the need for an appeal. Where this is not possible, a written request setting out the grounds for a preliminary appeal will be sent to the relevant awarding body within fourteen calendar days of the original decision.

If the outcome of the preliminary appeal is unsatisfactory, a request for an appeal hearing will be made within 14 calendar days of receiving the outcome of the preliminary appeal.

Disputes over appeals

Internal

If, after appealing an internal mark, students are dissatisfied with the decision, a letter requesting a personal hearing should be made to the exams person.

Following this:

- A date for a hearing must be given to the student and any teachers involved in the assessment.
- A hearing panel should be established. The panel must consist of a least [two](#) individuals who have not previously dealt with the particular case.
- SoundSkool will make a written record of the hearing, which should include the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for that outcome.
- A copy will be sent to the student, and teacher(s) within [10 working days](#) of the hearing.

If, after this, students are still dissatisfied, students will compile a written explanation of the situation and pass this to the CEO.

The exams person will pass the following details on to the chair of governors within [24 hours](#) of the CEO receiving the student's letter:

- An explanation and confirmation of the assessment decision
- Assessment record sheets
- Any written comments

Students will be given an opportunity to speak to the SLT.

The assessor who marked the work originally will be asked to attend the meeting and answer any questions.



The matter will be discussed in private by the SLT and the student will be given a written response within [five working days](#). **This decision will be final.**

Appeals against school's decision to not support a clerical check, review of marking, review of moderation or an appeal

Where SoundSkool does not support a decision to appeal for a clerical check, review of marking, review of moderation or an appeal, the student is at liberty to pay the appropriate fee and a request will be made to the awarding body on their behalf.

If the student believes there are grounds to appeal against SoundSkool's decision to not support an enquiry, an internal appeal can be submitted to SoundSkool using the internal appeals form at least [one week](#) prior to the internal deadline for submitting an EAR.

Appeal hearing

If SoundSkool is dissatisfied with an appeal from an awarding body, SoundSkool may request for an appeal hearing – the full procedure for this is detailed in JCQ's ['A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes](#)'.

If SoundSkool decides to submit a request for an appeal hearing, we will submit the application within 14 calendar days of the outcome of the preliminary appeal being issued – appeals made after this period will typically be rejected by the awarding body.

The request will clearly set out the grounds of the appeal with supporting documentation.

The submitted grounds of the appeal must be exactly the same as the grounds of the appeal which will be presented at the hearing itself. Any differences or new material introduced at the hearing will be considered by the appeal panel.

A member of SLT staff will represent SoundSkool at the appeal hearing – they will be permitted to be accompanied by a third party, e.g. a colleague however, the names and addresses of all representatives must be given to the awarding body no later than seven calendar days before the hearing.

The student who the appeal is being made on behalf of, will not be called as representatives but can attend as observers with the prior permission of the chair of the panel convened by the awarding body.

Internal students, their parents or a third party cannot represent SoundSkool at an appeal hearing.

Legal representation will not normally be permitted; where SoundSkool wishes to be legally represented, this must be agreed with the awarding body beforehand.

The appeal hearing will take the form of a re-examination of the evidence, comments and reports provided to and by the awarding body, and observations presented by the appellant.

An appeal hearing is not a remarking exercise. Panel members must ensure that they will not display any academic judgement. They should also not be thought of as subject matter experts.



After the appeal hearing, the panel's decision to uphold an appeal does not necessarily mean that a student's marks will change. Panel members are not subject experts and therefore may not instruct an awarding body to award specific marks. SoundSkool will ensure that only trained and standardised examiners may award marks.

Further avenues of appeal

Appeal hearings complete the awarding body's internal appeal procedures, and they will not accept further appeals. Where SoundSkool or student remain dissatisfied with the outcome, further avenues of appeal will be considered.

For cases of malpractice, no further avenue of appeal will be open to SoundSkool.

Quality assurance

SoundSkool is committed to quality assurance and believes it is an integral part of its processes.

The provision of education is regularly monitored and reviewed by the Head of College

At SoundSkool, an internal verification process is in place to ensure that consistent testing and assessment standards are maintained.

Several methods of internal verification are carried out on an ongoing basis, including the following:

- Cross-marking
- Peer reviewing
- Working observations
- Moderation
- Standardisation

All cases of borderline achievement are internally verified. All internal verification is recorded on students' work and on central recording systems.

At least [10 percent](#) of other assessments are checked across all relevant markers and modules.

All necessary staff members attend relevant training and courses, keeping up-to-date with various methods of assessment and marking.

Where a new marker is assessing, all work is double-marked until the Head of College is satisfied with the standard.

All new tutors will be observed during the first [six months](#) and [annually](#) thereafter to ensure assessment regulations are being followed.

Existing tutors will be observed conducting an assessment at least once a year.

Information from the awarding body is circulated to all members of staff involved in the assessing of students' work.



SoundSkool's Equal Opportunities Policy is followed at all times and regularly monitored.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually

The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2026



Internal Appeals Form

For school use	
Date received	
Reference number	

Please complete this form so that SoundSkool can establish the nature of your appeal.

Reason for appeal	Please tick
Appeal to dispute the suitability of evidence considered	
Appeal to dispute mitigating circumstances not being appropriately considered	
Allegation of maladministration or malpractice, e.g. bias or discrimination	

Name of appellant		Student name, if different	
Subject		Assessment title	
Please provide details regarding your appeal, e.g. justification for the appeal:			
Tick below, if applicable:			
<input type="checkbox"/> My appeal is against an internal assessment decision and I wish to request a review of SoundSkool's marking			
<input type="checkbox"/> I confirm that all work submitted is my own			



Appellant signature		Date	