

# Appeals procedure

CIH Awarding Organisation

## Introduction

The Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) is the independent voice for housing and the home of professional standards. Our goal is simple – to provide housing professionals and their organisations with the advice, support and knowledge they need to be brilliant. CIH is a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation. This means that the money we make is put back into the organisation and funds the activities we carry out to support the housing sector. We have a diverse membership of people who work in both the public and private sectors, in 20 countries on five continents across the world. Further information is available at: [www.cih.org](http://www.cih.org)

CIH is the awarding organisation (AO) for housing qualifications and we are dedicated to providing the highest quality, relevant and up-to-date qualifications for everyone in housing.

The CIH has been offering housing qualifications at all levels for many years and achieved its first AO status in 2000. CIH qualifications are nationally recognised and regulated by:

- Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual) in England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>
- Qualifications Wales in Wales - <http://qualifications.wales/?lang=en>
- Scottish Qualifications Authority Accreditation (SQA Accreditation) in Scotland- <http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/home>
- CCEA Regulation in Northern Ireland - [http://ccea.org.uk/regulation/about\\_us](http://ccea.org.uk/regulation/about_us)

CIH AO has comprehensive quality assurance procedures. In the event that these systems fail an appeal may be made to CIH AO. There is no fee for an appeal.

## Grounds for an appeal

An appeal is a formal request by a learner or a named representative from an approved centre to CIH AO to undertake an investigation (on the grounds outlined below) and to arrive at a decision. An appeal may be made by an approved centre, a learner undertaking a CIH AO qualification or a CIH AO EQA.

### Centre appeals

A centre may appeal the following decisions:

- Refusal of centre approval.
- Decisions relating to any action taken following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.
- Refusal of an application to deliver an additional qualification.
- Decisions made by EQA's, only when the centre believes correct procedures have not been followed.

### Learner appeals

The centre appeals process must be exhausted before appealing to CIH AO. The learner can appeal the following decisions:

- The results of assessments.
- Decisions regarding reasonable adjustments and special considerations.
- Decisions relating to any action taken following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.

### CIH AO EQAs

An EQA can appeal the following decisions:

- Termination of contract due to consistent poor performance
- Decisions relating to any action taken following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.

## Stage 1

The first stage of an appeal is to enquire about a decision or a reported result. This is the process by which CIH AO may be asked to check one or more of the steps leading to a decision and/or a reported result. If this enquiry is from a learner, the learner must have exhausted the centre's own enquiry and appeals process. Investigations of this type of enquiry and appeal will be made on the basis that CIH AO did not apply procedures consistently or that procedures were not followed properly and fairly.

Within 10 working days of the decision under appeal the appellant should submit a formal written request to the Head of Professional Standards at CIH AO. The written appeal must contain the following information as appropriate.

- The name and the contact details of the appellant
- The decision that is being appealed
- The grounds for the appeal
- Supporting documentation
- Name of centre
- Details of the course, the qualification and unit
- Names of the learner involved in the case

Where the appeal relates to a finding of maladministration or malpractice, the CIH AO malpractice and maladministration process must be concluded before an appeal is submitted.

CIH AO will undertake an initial investigation into an appeal. Additional evidence may be collected from the appellant and/or named representative and other persons involved in the case.

A decision will be taken as to whether there is a valid appeal to be made. The appellant will be advised of the outcome of the review within **30 days** of the receipt of the enquiry. If there is a valid appeal stage 2 of the process will be carried out. If not, the appellant will be notified of the decision.

## Stage 2

Where the validity of the appeal is accepted, CIH AO will prepare an appeal case within 30 days. Appellants will be kept notified at each stage of the appeal process. The appellant will be sent a copy of the papers and given **15 days** to comment on the contents.

The appeal case and any appellant comments will be submitted to the CIH Awarding Organisation Appeal Panel. The Panel will be convened within **30 days** of the finalisation of the appeal case.

Appellants will be notified in writing of the final decision of the appeals panel within **15 days** of the final decision being made.

### Appeals panel

The panel will comprise of three members:

- One member will be a member of the CIH regional board
- One member will be a CIH AO representative
- One member will be from an independent awarding organisation
- Other members may be co-opted depending on the manner of appeal

This composition is designed to achieve a balance between members that bring independent review and those who will bring an understanding of qualifications, and the CIH as an organisation. The panel will be convened as and when is necessary.

The panel will report to CIH AO:

- The panel will receive and determine CIH AO appeal cases from centres, learners or external quality assurers.
- Where the appeal is successful, the panel must consider whether there has been a wider impact, and the actions that those concerned must take to remedy the decision and prevent a recurrence of the issue with the application of the procedure.
- The panel may propose amendments to the CIH AO policy, process and procedures where the appeal case has indicated weaknesses.

### Impact on other learners

Where an appeal case is successful, the appeal panel will consider whether there is an impact on the results of other learners.

To ensure that these learners are not adversely affected, they may require that that the work of other learners is remarked where appropriate the grades or assessment decisions must be adjusted.

## **Monitoring and reporting of enquiries and appeals**

CIH AO will hold records of all enquiries and appeals. These will be evaluated for trends, including any adverse equality and diversity impact on specific groups of learners.

A formal report, which includes the number of cases, compared over a three year period, will be made annually.

## **The regulators**

Once this process is exhausted if a learner is still dissatisfied then they may contact:

### **SQA accredited qualifications**

Where a referral is made to SQA accreditation, they may undertake activities to assess the effectiveness of the CIH AO appeals process. Where concerns are raised CIH AO must take appropriate preventative and/or corrective action to prevent re-occurrence. SQA accreditation is unable to overturn assessment decisions or academic judgements.