		
ISSUED BY: AO Director Caroline Walton	Awarding Organisation Policies and Procedures	**ISSUE DATE:** September 2026 **REVIEW DATE:** September 2027
	Appeals Policy	**ISSUE:** V7

Scope and Purpose

The purpose of this document is to advise Apprentices, training providers and employers on the Explosive Learning Solutions (ELS) policy relating to appeals. All ELS staff, both core and associate, are also familiarised with this policy.

Aims

This policy is aimed at Apprentices, training providers and employers who are using, or have used, any of the products or services offered by ELS, and who may wish to submit an Appeal on the following:

- Dissatisfaction with any judgement regarding results, tests, assessment, portfolios or any Apprenticeship Assessment component.
- The decisive outcome of an enquiry.
- The outcome of reasonable adjustment or special consideration requests.
- The outcome of any investigation relating to malpractice, maladministration, cheating or plagiarism, made against the Apprentice.
- If a complaint is upheld by ELS or the response to a complaint was not deemed to be satisfactory by the complainant.

ELS Appeals Process

Appeals may be submitted in relation to any of the grounds detailed within the Aims section of this policy.

Stage 1

1. To request an Appeal, the Apprentice, employer or training provider must submit their Appeals Form within **10 working days** from the date an assessment, outcome or judgement is issued. All Appeals are for the attention of the ELS AO Quality Assurance Manager and must be submitted, alongside any relevant evidence, to: assessments@explosivelearningsolutions.com

Alternatively, appellants could send a written Appeal through the post to ELS for the attention of the ELS AO Quality Assurance Manager at the following address:

Explosive Learning Solutions (ELS) Ltd. Unit 4, The Terraces, Library Avenue, Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, Didcot,
Oxfordshire, OX110SG
Telephone: 01235 861805

All Appeals received by ELS are reviewed along with their outcomes.

ELS record all decisions in the ELS Appeals Log and retain those decisions within ELS' ACE360 secured Learning Management System (LMS).

2. The AO Quality Assurance Manager will review all Appeals submitted within 1**0 working days** of the Apprentice, employer or training provide receiving the original assessment decision or outcome. ELS sends an acknowledgement of the Appeal to the Apprentice, employer or training provider within **2 working days** of receipt. Throughout the Appeals process all parties will be kept up to date.

3. The AO Quality Assurance Manager will conduct an impartial review of the Appeal. This may include discussions with the Assessor and a request for a written rationale outlining the basis of the original assessment decision. The Quality Assurance Manager undertaking the review will not have been involved in the original assessment decision. The review will consider the grounds for appeal, the information detailed within the Appeal submission, and any supporting evidence provided. Where necessary, additional information may be requested from the Apprentice, employer, training provider, Apprenticeship Assessor and/or Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) to ensure a fair, objective and evidence-based review.

4. During the Appeals process the AO Quality Assurance Manager must check and keep a record of all documentation, notes and comments, recording them in the ELS ACE360 LMS. Records are stored for six years.

5. Once the Appeal has been reviewed and investigated, the Quality Assurance Manager will respond in writing to the Apprentice/appellant providing the outcome of the Appeal.

Stage 2

1. If the appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 of the Appeals Process, they may request that their appeal progresses to Stage 2.

The appellant must submit a completed **Stage 2 Appeals Form** in writing within **five working days** of receiving the response from the AO Quality Assurance Manager confirming the outcome of Stage 1.

A **£500 fee** is payable for a Stage 2 Appeal. This fee contributes towards the administrative costs and the cost of an independent Subject Matter Expert (SME) review associated with the appeal.

The outcome of the Stage 2 Appeal will determine the proportion of the fee refunded by ELS, as follows:

- **Appeal upheld in full:** 100% of the £500 fee will be refunded.
- **Appeal partially upheld:** 50% of the £500 fee (£250) will be refunded.
- **Appeal not upheld:** No refund will be issued.

ELS will communicate the outcome of the Stage 2 Appeal to the appellant in writing, including the reasons for the decision and any applicable refund arrangements.

'Stage 2 Scenario: An apprentice is dissatisfied with the outcome of their Stage 1 Appeal and believes that relevant assessment evidence was not fully considered when the original Assessment decision was made.
Within five working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome from the AO Quality Assurance Manager, the apprentice submits a completed Stage 2 Appeals Form and pays the £500 appeal fee.
ELS appoints an independent Subject Matter Expert (SME), who has not been involved in the original assessment or Stage 1 Appeal, to review the assessment evidence, the original decision and the handling of the Stage 1 Appeal.
Following the review, the SME identifies that relevant evidence was overlooked and that this may have affected the assessment outcome. The Stage 2 Appeal is therefore upheld in full, and ELS refunds the £500 appeal fee to the appellant. ELS also determines the appropriate corrective action in accordance with the applicable assessment requirements and informs the appellant of the outcome in writing.'

2. All Stage 2 Appeals are discussed with an Appeals Panel. The Appeals Panel will comprise members of the ELS senior leadership team together with at least one independent person who possesses relevant sector competence. SME will review all the evidence and seek and agree on an outcome. Decisions made through the Appeals Panel are final and are provided within 10 working days of a Stage 2 submission.

3. Once the Appeals Panel has ratified the Appeal outcome, a member of that panel will produce a written report explaining the outcome of the Appeal for the Apprentice, employer or training provider.

ELS Appeals Panel consists of:

Independent person(s) with sector competence
Director of AO
Senior Managing Director of ELS
Director of ELS
AO Quality Assurance Manager

Response Timings

ELS will acknowledge an Appeal request within **two working days** of receipt or sooner.

ELS aims to resolve all Appeals requests within **10 working days** or sooner from receipt of Stage 1 Appeals. Any stage 2 Appeal requests will be resolved within **10 working days**.

Appeals Log

All Appeals received, regardless of their nature, will be recorded in ELS Appeals Log. Details will include the nature of the Appeals, the decision it relates to, and people involved in the outcome.

ELS reviews the Appeals Log on a quarterly basis and the information contained is used towards continuous improvement of the services provided by ELS.

Responsibility

All Appeal documentation will be stored on the ELS ACE360 learner management system (LMS). ELS will securely retain Appeal records and associated documentation for a minimum period of six years.

ELS staff, both core and associate, must read and be familiar with the Appeals policy and procedure. The Director of ELS AO is responsible for ensuring that IQAs and Apprenticeship Assessors are aware of the Appeals procedure.

ELS will inform Apprentices, employers and training providers about the Appeals Procedure, before booking their Assessments.

Quality and Continuous Improvement

Where an Appeal identifies a potential issue relating to assessment practice, assessment materials or quality assurance processes, ELS will review whether other Apprentices may have been affected.

Any identified risks, corrective actions and improvement opportunities will be recorded and monitored through ELS quality assurance and continuous improvement processes.

Help and Guidance

If you would like to talk to an ELS member of staff about any aspect of this policy or process, then please email us at assessments@explosivelearningsolutions.com or telephone 01235 861805.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:-	**APPROVED BY:-** Caroline Walton, AO Director