

OCN London Complaints Procedure

Introduction

This procedure is intended to ensure that any complaints received by OCN London are dealt with promptly, fairly, transparently, and effectively. OCN London aims to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. However, complaints may be complex and require scrutiny of extensive documentation. OCN London will normally aim to reach a final conclusion within three months of receiving a written complaint. Where complaints are particularly complex, timescales may be extended and the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

Complaints will normally be made in writing and sent to complaints@ocnlondon.org.uk. However, where this presents difficulty, other appropriate means of communication will be accepted. OCN London will make reasonable adjustments to its complaints process where required to ensure accessibility for all complainants.

This procedure may be used for complaints about OCN London's processes, the application of those processes, or the conduct of any OCN London staff, contractors, or agents. Complaints may, for example, relate to:

- A Centre's application to deliver an OCN London qualification or units of a qualification
- A Centre's experience of external moderation
- A Learner's experience of an internal assessment process, once the Centre's own appeals process has been exhausted
- A Learner's experience of an external assessment process, including where procedures were not applied consistently, properly, or fairly
- A Centre's and/or Learner's experience of making a request for Reasonable Adjustments or Special Consideration
- A Centre's or Learner's experience of any action taken during an investigation into malpractice or maladministration
- A Centre's experience of the implementation of sanctions relating to its approval to deliver an OCN London qualification or units of a qualification

Complaints should be made as soon as possible after the event or experience concerned and, in any case, within four weeks. Complaints relating to a Centre's internal assessment processes must be made within four weeks of the Centre's own process being exhausted.

OCN London will consider complaints from individual Learners or their advocates, groups of Learners or their representatives, Centres, or groups of Centres.

All complaints will be handled sensitively and confidentially. Personal data will be processed in accordance with applicable data protection legislation.

Procedure

When a complaint is received concerning OCN London qualifications or units of qualifications, the Chief Executive or another authorised representative of OCN London will acknowledge receipt within five working days. They will determine whether the complaint falls within the scope of OCN London's remit as outlined above.

Where a complaint is not within scope, the Chief Executive or representative will write to the complainant explaining the reasons why the complaint cannot be acted upon and, where appropriate, advise on alternative procedures that may apply.

The Chief Executive or any other representative dealing with a complaint will have no personal interest in the subject or outcome of the complaint.

Informal Consideration

Where a complaint is within scope, the Chief Executive or representative will first consider whether it may be resolved informally without recourse to the formal complaints procedure.

Where there are reasonable grounds to believe this may be achievable, the Chief Executive or representative will contact the complainant with a proposed response. If the complainant is satisfied with the outcome, the formal complaints procedure will not be invoked.

Formal considerations

If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the formal complaints procedure will be initiated.

- Within 15 working days, the Chief Executive or representative will seek relevant information and documentation from the complainant and any other relevant parties. This may include OCN London staff, contracted External Moderators, or Quality Assurers, staff at recognised Centres, or other third-party agents.
- Within ten working days of receiving all requested documentation, the Chief Executive or representative will consider whether the evidence is sufficient to reach a decision. Where further clarification or documentation is required, this will be requested.
- Once satisfied that all relevant information has been received, the Chief Executive or representative will reach an initial conclusion and write to the complainant. This will address each point raised, reference the evidence considered, and identify any recommendations or implications arising from the outcome.
- The complainant will be invited to comment on the factual accuracy of the initial conclusion within ten working days.
- Any additional information provided will be considered before a final conclusion is reached. The final conclusion will normally be confirmed to the complainant within ten working days of receiving any further comments.

If the complaint remains unresolved, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit an appeal using the OCN London Appeals Procedure. Appeals relate to decisions made, whereas complaints relate to service delivery or process.

Ofqual's Complaint Process

OCN London will comply with Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition and any applicable guidance relating to complaints and appeals, as updated from time to time. OCN London will give due regard to the outcome of any Ofqual complaints process relating to qualifications it makes available.

Where Ofqual notifies OCN London of failures identified in the assessment processes of another awarding organisation, OCN London will review whether a similar failure could affect its own assessment processes. Where such a risk is identified, OCN London will take appropriate action as if the failure had been identified through Ofqual's complaints or appeals processes.

QAA's Complaint Process

For Access to HE Diplomas, OCN London will comply with QAA's Licensing Conditions for Access Validating Agencies (AVAs) and any applicable guidance relating to complaints and appeals, as updated from time to time. OCN London will give due regard to the outcome of any QAA complaints process relating to qualifications it makes available.

The [QAA Access to HE Concerns Scheme](#) provides an opportunity for learners, staff or other parties to raise concerns about the delivery and management of Access to HE courses, or the way in which an AVA is undertaking its responsibilities or meeting regulatory requirements. OCN London will cooperate with any investigation undertaken by QAA under the remit of the Access to HE Concerns Scheme.

Where QAA notifies OCN London of failures identified in the assessment processes of another Access Validating Agency, OCN London will review whether a similar failure could affect its own assessment processes. Where such a risk is identified, OCN London will take appropriate action as if the failure had been identified through QAA's complaints or appeals processes.

Outcome of a Complaint

Where a complaint identifies a failure in systems or processes, OCN London will take all reasonable steps to protect the interests of Learners and the integrity of its qualifications. This may include:

- Identifying any other Learners or Centres affected by the failure
- Correcting the failure or, where this is not possible, mitigating its impact as far as reasonably practicable
- Reviewing and strengthening quality assurance processes to prevent recurrence

- Reviewing the qualification and its units where there is evidence that their integrity may have been compromised

Reporting

OCN London will report annually to the OCN London Board of Trustees on the operation of its complaints arrangements. This will include information on the number, nature, and outcomes of complaints received.

Relevant records and data will be shared with qualification regulators upon request.

Company Secretary use only

Document version control					
Version number	Change or update	Author or owner	Classification	Date	Review period
1.0	First Version	Company Secretary	Public	1 May 2023	2 years
2.0	Reviewed and updated	Head of Quality and Assessment	Public	19 December 2025	2 years
3.0	Reviewed and updated	Access to HE Standards Coordinator	Public	16 February 2025	Until 1 August 2026
4.0	Added reference to new AVA licensing conditions	Access to HE Standards Coordinator	Public	1 August 2026	2 years