

How to appeal a portfolio decision

The following sets out the procedure for appealing a portfolio assessment and verification

CTSI's assessors, verifiers both at the local authority level as well as at the external verifier level will endeavour to maintain the highest standards of excellence, consistency and fairness.

However, it recognises that on occasion disagreements can occur over assessment and verification.

If you do not agree with

Evidence requirements

Fairness of the process

Assessment/verification decisions

It is important you read through the appeal information so that you can follow the process.

Important!

The procedure set out in this guidance will give you a step by step process you will need to follow. Ensure you document at all points.

Remember!

It is the responsibility of both candidate and assessor/verifier to document this progress. To reference the evidence using CTSI's published standards for assessment and verification.

Types of grounds of appeal (not exhaustive)

- Administrative shortcomings – for example, inaccuracy in recording your progress or unreasonable delays
- Inadequate resources – for example, inappropriate or insufficient physical resources, or inexperienced and unqualified staff
- Shortcomings in the conduct of assessment – for example, non-availability of alternative assessment methods or the use of extraneous criteria by the assessor or internal verifier
- Barriers to access – for example, the imposition of unreasonable requirements as a precondition to assessment
- Lack of equality of opportunity – for example discrimination on grounds of age, gender, race or creed

The process.....

1 - Informal discussions

- The candidate should contact their assessor within 10 working days of the assessment taking place.
- Both parties should agree the necessary arrangements to discuss the decision subject of the disagreement and attempt to resolve the matter.
- It is the responsibility of both assessor and candidate to progress this stage.
- Every attempt should be made to resolve the issue at this stage and the advice of the internal verifier, external verifier, lead external verifier and CTSI Education Department may be sought informally, without moving to the formal stage of the procedure.
- Recommendations and observations made by the internal verifier, external verifier, lead external verifier and CTSI education team will not be binding at this stage of the process.
- If the disagreement cannot be resolved by these informal means then go to **2 - formal appeal** process.

If the candidate is concerned about raising the issue directly with the assessor they may contact the internal verifier, external verifier, lead external verifier or the CTSI Education Department to discuss the issue before raising it with the assessor. The time limit for raising the appeal will be considered met if this is done within 10 working days of the assessment decision subject of the appeal.

2 - Formal appeal

- The candidate should now formally contact the internal verifier responsible for verification of their work and give details of the disagreement.
- The candidate and assessor should make it clear that they now wish to resolve the matter through formal process.
- The candidate and assessor will supply the relevant evidence of the assessment to the verifier for examination.
- The verifier will then convene a formal meeting of the candidate and assessor and attempt to broker an agreement, using his or her expertise of the assessment decision to guide the other two parties.
- If agreement cannot still be reached at this stage then go to **3 - escalation to external verifier**.

3 - Escalation to external verifier

- The internal verifier will summarise the disagreement between the two parties and collect all of the evidence relevant to the assessment decision, and forward all of this to the external verifier.
- The external verifier will review the evidence and the documents relating to the disagreement and either agree or disagree with the assessment decision that has been made.
- The external verifier may choose to meet the parties and discuss the evidence.
- The matter will then be referred back to the assessor and candidate for the assessor to either sign off that assessment or for the candidate to provide further evidence for assessment purposes.

4 - Appealing against IV

- Where a candidate is appealing against the decision of an internal verifier, they should follow the informal discussion resolution route. **1 - Informal Discussions**
- If these informal discussions are unable to resolve the issue then the formal process, **5 verifier decisions / appeal board**, should be used.

5 - Verifier decisions / appeal board

- Where a candidate is appealing against the decision of an internal or external verifier (including a disagreement over an appeal process outcome) then the matter will be referred to an Appeals Board, consisting of the following:

An independent assessor,
An independent Internal Verifier
An independent External Verifier and
A member of the TSI Examinations Board.
and chaired by the Lead Verifier or nominee.

The Appeals Board may choose to conduct its business electronically or in a meeting in person. The Board will attempt to reach a determination on any appeal made to it within one calendar month of receipt, and its decision shall be final and binding in all cases.

When a formal appeal board is convened, a fee will be applicable. See current TSQF fees, Appeal fee. You must supply either a cheque or a purchase order made payable to **Chartered Trading Standards Institute**. The board will not be convened until this fee is paid/purchase order supplied.