

What to do if you want to complain

Policy

We welcome complaints and value your feedback as an important indicator of how we can improve our service to customers. All complaints will be handled sensitively and efficiently.

Procedure

This document tells you what to do if you are not satisfied with a product or service we have provided. Please follow the procedure to enable us to respond to your complaint as quickly as possible.

Some OCR services have separate procedures for dealing with a customer's concern (e.g. an enquiry about results) and some concerns are beyond the limits of OCR's authority and influence (e.g. the quality of teaching). Before you submit a complaint please check the section at the end of this document to see if there is a more appropriate procedure for dealing with your concerns. This will ensure that your concern reaches the appropriate department more quickly where it will receive prompt attention from knowledgeable staff.

OCR will not normally investigate complaints which were received more than six months after the incident or occurrence took place.

Definition

A complaint is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with a product or service delivered by OCR.

Giving us details of your complaint

To enable us to process your complaint effectively and direct it to the correct person please provide us with as much of the following details as you can:

- your name and address
- centre* name and number (if you are from an approved examination centre)
- an email address
- candidate numbers, if relevant
- The relevant qualification and specification code your complaint relates to
- a clear description of your complaint
- copies of any relevant correspondence.

If you are a learner or parent/carer

We want to help you as much as possible but we are unable to share specific examination related information because we don't hold enough information to verify your identity and we have a duty to protect the confidentiality of the data we hold. We advise learners and parents/carers to discuss their concerns with the Head of Centre or Examinations Officer in the first instance and they will be able to act on your behalf. If you are unhappy with your results or feel that they are incorrect, your teacher is in the best position to help you. They will be able to clearly explain the options available to you.

If your concerns relate to the teaching of one of our qualifications or a decision which has been made by the centre each of our examination centres are required to have their own internal complaints and appeals process which you must follow before contacting us. If you have been through this process and remain dissatisfied you may bring your concern to our attention.

Confidentiality and whistle blowing

We understand that sometimes a complainant will wish to remain anonymous. While we are prepared to investigate issues which are reported to us anonymously we shall always, in these cases, try to confirm an allegation by means of a separate



investigation before taking up the matter with those responsible. The outcome of any investigation will be confidential between OCR and our examination centres and we won't be able to provide any information on what action we have taken. It is always preferable to reveal your identity and contact details to us, and if you are concerned about possible adverse consequences request us not to divulge your identity.

OCR will investigate complaints from whistle-blowers in accordance with relevant whistle blowing legislation.

What we will do and how long it will take

We will deal with your complaint fairly and aim to do our best to sort out your complaint immediately, dealing with each point you raise. We aim to:

- Acknowledge receipt of your complaint within 5 working days of receipt
- Provide a full response within 10 working days. If the issues raised are more complex or involve staff who are unavailable, it may take longer to investigate if this is the case we will let you know when we expect to respond.

How to contact us

We encourage customers to put their concerns in writing. This helps us to ensure that all points are understood and are faithfully communicated to someone who can help you.

By post:

Complaints Team
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

By email:

complaints@ocr.org.uk

If we have your email address we shall always acknowledge receipt and respond to your complaint via email. However, if we need to refer to confidential information or enclose copies of important documents, we shall respond via post.

By phone – contact our Customer Contact Centre:

Tel: 01223 553998

What to do if you are still not happy

On occasions a customer may not be satisfied with our response and will write again restating their issues. On receiving such correspondence we shall review the original response:

- If the matter has been fully addressed and there is no further relevant information the complaint will be closed without further lengthy correspondence.
- If the response did not deal fully with all the points raised in the complaint, a full response will be given.
- If further evidence or related issues come to light, the complaint will be reopened and investigated further.
- We reserve the right to cease corresponding with a customer if the correspondence is in our opinion frivolous, vexatious or abusive.

We always aim to deal with your complaints ourselves; however, if you are not satisfied with our final response you can refer your complaint to Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual). Their address is:

Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry
CV5 6UB

Complaints with specific procedures of their own

Complaints about Freedom of Information

Complaints about the way your Freedom of Information access request has been handled, or with the outcome of the consideration of the request, must be submitted in writing to the Cambridge Assessment Group Finance Director:

Mrs J Rippeth
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU



Note: Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act should be sent in the first instance to:

Mrs S Knight
Company Secretary
Progress House
Westwood Way
Coventry
CV4 8JQ

Dissatisfaction with the conduct of an examination or assessment

If you are unhappy about the way an examination or assessment was managed by the examination centre, and if you suspect malpractice, you should send your concern to:

Head of Risk and Compliance
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

or email it to: malpractice@ocr.org.uk

The matter will be investigated and processed in accordance with the JCQ Policy and Procedures for Dealing with Cases of Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments.

Dissatisfaction with results of examinations or assessments

If your complaint relates to published results, EARs or appeals you should follow the procedures for enquiries about results and appeals which are set out in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) publications Post-Results Services and *A Guide to the Awarding Bodies' Appeals Processes*. These can be found on the JCQ website www.jcq.org.uk. It is the responsibility of the Head of the centre which entered the

individual for the examination or assessment to submit an enquiry about results or make an appeal. Appeals are not accepted from individual candidates unless the candidate entered for the examination as a private candidate.

Dissatisfaction with services provided by OCR centres (schools, colleges, private training organisations)

Centres are obliged, under the terms of their approval to offer OCR qualifications, to have:

- A procedure for submitting enquiries about published results
- A formal, codified procedure for handling disputes when a learner or parent/carer disagrees with a decision by the centre not to support an enquiry.

If a centre fails to deal with an enquiry about a result or appeal appropriately, or fails to make available its procedures for dealing with enquiries about results and appeals, the matter can be dealt with under OCR's complaints policy.

Some OCR assessments are undertaken by centre staff (e.g. the assessment of controlled assessment) who work according to mark schemes and assessment procedures designed by OCR. If your concern is about the outcome of one of these assessments before the outcomes are submitted to OCR, you should use the centre's own internal complaints and appeals procedure to resolve the matter. OCR will accept a complaint in respect of these issues only if the centre procedures have been followed first without satisfaction.

OCR will not normally investigate complaints about centres that concern the quality of teaching or training received. In the first instance these complaints should be raised with the Head of Centre or the Chair of Governors of the institution.

*a centre is defined as any establishment approved to deliver OCR Assessments.

www.ocr.org.uk

OCR customer contact centre

Vocational qualifications

Telephone 024 76 851509

Facsimile 024 76 851633

Email vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

General qualifications

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

Email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk

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