

APPEALS AGAINST INTERNAL ASSESSMENT DECISIONS

Centre-Assessed Marks, Coursework and Non-Examination Assessment

Policy owner: Head of Centre

Operational lead: Exams Officer

Applies to: GCSE, GCE AS/A Level, Project qualifications, coursework, controlled assessment where applicable, non-examination assessments, and other internally assessed components submitted to awarding bodies

Centre: Excel Tutors

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1. INTRODUCTION

Excel Tutors is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff mark candidates' work, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the relevant awarding body's specification, mark scheme, assessment criteria and subject-specific instructions.

Excel Tutors recognises that some qualifications include components that are marked internally by the centre before marks are submitted to the awarding body. These may include coursework, controlled assessment, non-examination assessment, practical work, speaking assessments, projects, portfolios or other centre-assessed components.

Excel Tutors will ensure that candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks before marks are submitted to the awarding body, so that candidates have an opportunity to request a review of the centre's marking.

This policy sets out the procedure candidates must follow if they wish to request a review of an internal assessment decision.

2. PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure internal assessment decisions are fair, consistent and evidence-based
 - ensure candidates understand their right to request a review of centre-assessed marks
 - ensure candidates receive sufficient information to decide whether to request a review
 - ensure all review requests are handled before awarding body submission deadlines
 - ensure reviews are carried out by a competent person who has not previously assessed the candidate's work for the component in question
 - ensure records are kept and made available to the awarding body if requested
 - ensure Excel Tutors meets JCQ and awarding body requirements
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3. SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy applies to internal assessment decisions made by Excel Tutors where work is marked by centre staff and submitted to an awarding body.

This includes, where applicable:

- GCSE non-examination assessments
- GCE AS and A Level non-examination assessments
- coursework components
- controlled assessments where still applicable
- speaking, practical or performance-based assessments marked by the centre
- Project qualifications
- internally assessed units in vocational or technical qualifications
- any other component where Excel Tutors submits a centre-assessed mark to an awarding body

This policy applies to candidates entered through Excel Tutors as internal candidates or private candidates where Excel Tutors is responsible for marking and submitting the centre-assessed mark.

4. KEY PRINCIPLES

Excel Tutors will ensure that:

1. Candidates' work is marked fairly, consistently and in line with awarding body requirements.
 2. Marking is carried out by staff with appropriate knowledge, understanding, skill and training.
 3. Work is authenticated in line with awarding body requirements before marks are submitted.
 4. Where more than one teacher or assessor is involved, internal standardisation or moderation takes place.
 5. Candidates are informed of their centre-assessed marks before the marks are submitted to the awarding body.
 6. Candidates are told that centre-assessed marks are provisional and may change following awarding body moderation.
 7. Candidates are given sufficient time to request copies of relevant materials.
 8. Candidates are given sufficient time to decide whether to request a review of marking.
 9. Requests for review must be made in writing by the published deadline.
 10. Reviews are completed before the awarding body's mark submission deadline.
 11. Reviews are carried out by a competent reviewer who has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate's work for the component under review.
 12. The outcome is confirmed to the candidate in writing.
 13. A written record of the review is kept and made available to the awarding body on request.
 14. The Head of Centre is informed of the review outcome.
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5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 Internal Assessment Decision

An internal assessment decision is a mark or assessment judgement made by Excel Tutors staff before submission to an awarding body.

5.2 Centre-Assessed Mark

A centre-assessed mark is a mark awarded by Excel Tutors for work that is internally assessed and then submitted to the awarding body for moderation.

5.3 Review of Marking

A review of marking is a review of whether the original assessor correctly applied the awarding body's mark scheme, assessment criteria and centre standard.

It is not a re-teaching exercise, a negotiation, or an opportunity to submit new work.

5.4 Candidate

A candidate is any person entered for a qualification through Excel Tutors.

5.5 Awarding Body

An awarding body is the examination board or organisation responsible for awarding the qualification, such as AQA, Pearson Edexcel, OCR, WJEC, Cambridge International or another relevant awarding organisation.

5.6 Non-Examination Assessment

Non-examination assessment is any form of assessment that is not completed as a timed written examination. It may include coursework, practical work, oral assessment, project work, fieldwork, portfolios or performance-based assessment.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 Head of Centre

The Head of Centre is responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy is in place
- this policy is reviewed annually
- staff follow this policy
- candidates have access to this policy
- internal assessment arrangements meet JCQ and awarding body requirements
- review outcomes are considered and recorded
- any required awarding body communication is completed

6.2 Exams Officer

The Exams Officer is responsible for:

- coordinating the internal appeals process
- ensuring candidates receive relevant deadlines
- receiving written review requests
- maintaining review records
- liaising with assessors, reviewers and the Head of Centre
- ensuring reviews are completed before awarding body deadlines
- retaining evidence and records
- submitting final marks to awarding bodies

6.3 Subject Teacher or Assessor

The subject teacher or assessor is responsible for:

- marking work in line with the awarding body's assessment criteria
- applying the mark scheme accurately and consistently
- annotating work where required
- keeping assessment records
- confirming candidate authentication where required
- participating in internal standardisation where required
- providing relevant materials for review if requested

6.4 Internal Reviewer

The internal reviewer must:

- have appropriate competence in the subject or assessment area
- have had no previous involvement in assessing the candidate's work for the component under review
- have no personal interest in the outcome
- review whether the mark awarded is consistent with the standard set by the centre
- complete a written review record
- report the outcome to the Exams Officer and Head of Centre

6.5 Candidate

The candidate is responsible for:

- reading this policy
 - checking the centre-assessed mark when provided
 - requesting copies of relevant materials within the stated timescale
 - submitting any review request in writing by the deadline
 - setting out clear reasons for the review request
 - understanding that the mark may stay the same, go up or go down
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7. INFORMING CANDIDATES OF CENTRE-ASSESSED MARKS

Excel Tutors will inform candidates of their centre-assessed marks before the marks are submitted to the awarding body.

Candidates will be informed:

- in writing, by email, candidate portal, letter or another recorded method
- of the mark awarded by the centre
- that the mark is provisional
- that the mark may change following awarding body moderation
- of the deadline to request materials
- of the deadline to request a review of marking
- of how to submit a review request

Excel Tutors will not submit centre-assessed marks to the awarding body until candidates have had a reasonable opportunity to consider whether to request a review, subject to the awarding body's published deadline.

8. ACCESS TO ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

A candidate may request copies of materials to help them decide whether to request a review.

Materials may include:

- the candidate's marked work
- the mark scheme or assessment criteria
- relevant assessment guidance
- assessor comments or annotation, where available
- the centre's internal assessment record, where appropriate

Excel Tutors will provide copies promptly, subject to any restrictions imposed by the awarding body.

Materials are provided only to support the candidate in deciding whether to request a review. They must not be shared online, published, altered, used to compromise assessment security, or used in breach of awarding body rules.

9. GROUNDS FOR REQUESTING A REVIEW

A candidate may request a review if they believe that:

- the mark scheme or assessment criteria were not applied correctly
- the centre's marking procedures were not followed
- the mark awarded is not consistent with the standard set by the centre
- there was an administrative error in recording or calculating the mark
- relevant evidence in the submitted work was not considered

The candidate must explain clearly why they believe a review is required.

A general disagreement with the mark is not enough. The request must relate to the application of the mark scheme, assessment criteria, procedure, evidence or calculation.

10. MATTERS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

This policy does not cover:

- appeals against final grades issued by awarding bodies
- post-results services after results have been published
- complaints about general teaching quality
- complaints about centre administration unrelated to internal assessment decisions
- requests to improve work after the assessment deadline
- requests to submit new or amended work after the work has been marked
- challenges to the awarding body's national moderation process
- complaints about staff conduct, unless the conduct directly affected the internal assessment decision

Post-results services are handled separately under awarding body and JCQ post-results procedures.

11. DEADLINES

Excel Tutors will set internal deadlines each year for each qualification and component.

The deadlines will allow enough time for:

- candidates to receive their centre-assessed marks
- candidates to request copies of materials
- Excel Tutors to provide those materials
- candidates to decide whether to request a review
- the review to be completed
- any mark changes to be made
- the outcome to be confirmed in writing
- final marks to be submitted by the awarding body deadline

Review requests received after the published internal deadline will not normally be accepted.

A late request may only be considered where:

- the candidate provides a valid reason for missing the deadline
- there is still enough time to complete the review before the awarding body's submission deadline
- accepting the late request does not compromise awarding body requirements

The Head of Centre will make the final decision on whether a late request can be accepted.

12. HOW TO REQUEST A REVIEW

A candidate must submit a review request in writing.

The request must include:

- candidate full name
- candidate number, where available
- qualification
- subject
- component or unit
- centre-assessed mark being challenged
- clear grounds for the review
- specific concerns about the marking, criteria, procedure or calculation
- candidate signature or email confirmation
- date of request

Requests must be sent to the Exams Officer at Excel Tutors.

Where a candidate is under 18, a parent or carer may support the candidate, but the review remains a candidate assessment matter.

13. REVIEW PROCEDURE

Excel Tutors will follow this procedure.

Stage 1: Candidate Informed of Mark

The candidate is informed of the centre-assessed mark and the deadline for requesting a review.

Stage 2: Candidate Requests Materials

If the candidate wishes to consider a review, they may request copies of relevant materials.

Excel Tutors will provide these promptly.

Stage 3: Candidate Submits Review Request

The candidate submits a written review request by the published deadline.

Stage 4: Request Checked

The Exams Officer checks that:

- the request was received on time
- the request relates to a centre-assessed mark
- the request includes clear grounds
- there is enough time to complete the review before the awarding body deadline

Stage 5: Reviewer Appointed

The Head of Centre or Exams Officer appoints a reviewer.

The reviewer must:

- be appropriately competent
- have had no previous involvement in assessing the candidate's work for that component
- have no personal interest in the outcome

Stage 6: Review Conducted

The reviewer considers:

- the candidate's work
- the original mark
- the mark scheme or assessment criteria
- awarding body guidance
- assessor annotation or comments
- internal standardisation records, where relevant
- the candidate's stated grounds for review

The reviewer checks whether the candidate's mark is consistent with the centre standard and whether the assessment criteria were applied correctly.

Stage 7: Outcome Recorded

The reviewer records:

- whether the original mark is upheld or changed
- the reason for the decision
- any mark adjustment
- whether the change affects the mark submitted to the awarding body
- any procedural issue identified

Stage 8: Head of Centre Informed

The outcome is made known to the Head of Centre.

Stage 9: Candidate Informed

The candidate is informed of the outcome in writing.

Stage 10: Final Mark Submitted

The final centre-assessed mark is submitted to the awarding body by the required deadline.

14. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

The review may result in one of the following outcomes:

1. The original mark is confirmed.
2. The mark is increased.
3. The mark is decreased.
4. A clerical or administrative error is corrected.
5. A procedural issue is identified and addressed.

The candidate must understand that requesting a review may result in a lower mark.

15. COMMUNICATION OF THE OUTCOME

Excel Tutors will inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review.

The written outcome will include:

- whether the original mark has been upheld or changed
- the final centre-assessed mark
- a brief explanation of the decision
- confirmation that the mark remains provisional until awarding body moderation is complete
- confirmation that the awarding body may increase or decrease the mark during moderation

The outcome of the internal review is final within the centre's internal assessment review process.

16. RECORDS AND RETENTION

Excel Tutors will keep a written record of each review.

Records will include:

- candidate review request
- copies of materials provided to the candidate
- date materials were provided
- original mark
- reviewer name
- confirmation of reviewer independence
- review notes
- review outcome
- final mark submitted
- written communication to the candidate
- Head of Centre confirmation

Records will be retained securely and made available to the awarding body on request.

17. AWARDING BODY MODERATION

Candidates must understand that centre-assessed marks are provisional.

After Excel Tutors submits marks, the awarding body may carry out moderation. This may result in marks changing upwards or downwards.

The internal review process checks whether Excel Tutors has applied its own marking and standardisation procedures correctly. Awarding body moderation checks whether the centre's marking is in line with national standards.

The mark submitted by Excel Tutors is therefore not final until confirmed by the awarding body.

18. MALPRACTICE AND AUTHENTICATION CONCERNS

Excel Tutors must authenticate candidates' work in line with awarding body requirements.

If Excel Tutors cannot confirm that work is the candidate's own, or if there is suspected malpractice, the centre may reject the work or apply the awarding body's malpractice procedures.

This policy covers appeals against internal assessment decisions, including decisions to reject work where the centre cannot confidently authenticate it or where malpractice concerns affect the assessment decision.

Where malpractice is suspected, Excel Tutors will follow the relevant JCQ and awarding body malpractice procedures.

19. COMPLAINTS ABOUT STAFF CONDUCT

If a candidate believes that staff conduct affected the fairness of the internal assessment decision, this must be raised in writing as part of the review request.

Examples may include:

- failure to follow published assessment arrangements
- unequal access to assessment information
- inconsistent application of assessment criteria
- procedural unfairness

If the concern relates to wider staff conduct rather than the mark itself, Excel Tutors may also consider the matter under its complaints or staff conduct procedures.

Where the concern involves safeguarding, it will be referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with Excel Tutors' safeguarding procedures.

20. POST-RESULTS SERVICES AND APPEALS

This policy applies before centre-assessed marks are submitted to the awarding body.

After results are issued, different procedures apply.

Post-results services may include:

- clerical re-checks
- reviews of marking
- reviews of moderation
- access to scripts
- appeals to awarding bodies

For internal candidates, appeals to awarding bodies must normally be submitted by the Head of Centre. Internal candidates and their parents or carers are not normally entitled to appeal directly to the awarding body.

Any request after results have been issued will be handled under the relevant awarding body's post-results procedures and deadlines.

21. CANDIDATE REVIEW REQUEST FORM

Excel Tutors

Request for Review of Centre-Assessed Mark

Candidate full name:

Candidate number:

Qualification:

Subject:

Component or unit:

Awarding body:

Centre-assessed mark received:

Date mark was received:

Date materials were requested, if applicable:

Date materials were received, if applicable:

Grounds for Review

Please explain why you are requesting a review of the centre's marking.

You should refer to the mark scheme, assessment criteria, procedure, evidence in your work, or any calculation issue.

Candidate statement:

Candidate Declaration

I understand that:

- this review concerns the centre's marking before marks are submitted to the awarding body
- the review may result in my mark staying the same, going up or going down
- the centre-assessed mark is provisional
- the awarding body may later change the mark through moderation
- I cannot submit new or amended work as part of this review

Candidate signature:

Date:

Parent or carer name, if supporting a candidate under 18:

Parent or carer signature:

Date:

22. INTERNAL REVIEW RECORD FORM

Excel Tutors

Internal Review of Centre-Assessed Mark

Candidate full name:

Candidate number:

Qualification:

Subject:

Component or unit:

Awarding body:

Original assessor:

Original centre-assessed mark:

Date review request received:

Was the request received by the deadline? Yes / No

Reviewer name:

Reviewer role:

Reviewer Independence Check

The reviewer confirms that:

- they have appropriate competence to conduct the review
- they had no previous involvement in assessing this candidate's work for this component
- they have no personal interest in the outcome

Reviewer signature:

Date:

Evidence Reviewed

- Candidate work
- Mark scheme or assessment criteria
- Awarding body guidance
- Original assessor comments or annotation
- Internal standardisation evidence
- Candidate's written grounds for review
- Other relevant records

Review Findings

Summary of review:

Was the original mark scheme or assessment criteria applied correctly? Yes / No

Was the mark consistent with the centre standard? Yes / No

Was any clerical or administrative error found? Yes / No

Was any procedural issue found? Yes / No

Outcome

Original mark:

Reviewed mark:

Outcome:

- Mark upheld
- Mark increased
- Mark decreased
- Clerical correction made
- Procedural issue identified

Reason for outcome:

Head of Centre Confirmation

Head of Centre name:

Signature:

Date:

Candidate Communication

Date outcome sent to candidate:

Method: Email / Letter / Candidate portal / Other

Final mark submitted to awarding body:

Date submitted:

23. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually before the start of each academic year, or sooner if JCQ or awarding body requirements change.

The Head of Centre is responsible for approving the policy.

The Exams Officer is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented and made available to candidates.