



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF SPECTACLE MAKERS

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE - Examinations

A candidate (or an employer) who wishes to complain about some aspect of WCSM's administration and/or assessment procedures (or procedures carried out by ABDO Examinations on behalf of WCSM), whether the perceived error be one of omission or commission, should submit the complaint in writing (giving as much detail as possible) to the ABDO Examinations Office, as soon as he or she feels aggrieved.

To lodge a complaint, contact Linda Pogson at ABDO by email lpogson@abdo.org.uk, copied to clerk@spectaclemakers.com or write to:

Linda Pogson, ABDO Examinations, The Old Dairy, Godmersham Park, Godmersham, Canterbury, Kent CT4 7DT

The complaint will in any case be forwarded to WCSM, as the Awarding Organisation.

It is our policy that a definitive answer will be given to each complaint within a month of all the facts being established.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE - Workplace-Assessed Qualifications

A candidate or an employer who wishes to complain about some aspect of WCSM's administration and/or procedures for workplace assessed qualifications (Level 2 and Level 3 Diplomas in Optical Retail Skills and Level 2 and Level 3 Diplomas in Manufacturing Spectacles) should submit the complaint in writing (giving as much detail as possible) to WCSM, as soon as they have reason to make such a complaint.

To lodge a complaint, please email clerk@spectaclemakers.com or write to:

The Clerk

The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers

Apothecaries' Hall

Black Friars Lane

London EC4V 6EL

The complaint will be investigated and a response will be provided within a month of all the facts having been established.

Complaints about an employer's management of a workplace-assessed qualification should be addressed within the employer's own internal grievance procedures. If the candidate is not satisfied with the outcome, and if the complaint has a direct bearing on the candidate's ability to complete the WCSM qualification, the candidate may forward a complaint, with supporting evidence, to The Clerk of WCSM at the address above. WCSM will investigate to establish the facts and will provide a written response to the candidate.

Candidates should note that WCSM does not provide training for workplace-assessed qualifications. Complaints about workplace training should be addressed within the employer's own internal grievance procedures.

ENQUIRIES AND APPEALS - Examinations

1. Any candidate may raise an enquiry about the validity of their result by contacting Linda Pogson in the ABDO Examinations Office: lpogson@abdo.org.uk. The candidate's script will be reviewed by the Principal Examiner to check that all marks have been totalled correctly. The script may also be forwarded to the Moderations Group for independent revalidation. A written response will be provided to the candidate within 2 weeks from the date the enquiry was received.
2. If the candidate does not accept the outcome of the enquiry, they may lodge an appeal which will involve a full re-examination of the candidate's response to a particular question or questions.
3. An appeal must set out the grounds for the appeal clearly and in detail, and be sent to ABDO's office at: ABDO Examinations and Registration, The Old Dairy, Godmersham Park, Godmersham, Canterbury, Kent CT14 7DT within 28 days of the date shown on the letter notifying the candidate of his or her result. Where the appeal arises out of dissatisfaction with the Company's response to an enquiry, then it must be lodged within two weeks of the date of that response.
4. The Head of ABDO Examinations and Registration will acknowledge receipt of an appeal immediately and request a fee. The appeal fee is currently £35. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.
5. If the substance of the appeal is not clear, ABDO will seek clarification from the candidate.
6. It is ABDO's policy that appeals will be responded to within 28 days of receipt of the fee payable.
7. The Head of ABDO Examinations and Registration will then forward the appeal and the relevant script to the relevant Principal Examiner appointed by WCSM and ask for a report within 7 days. These will then be referred to the WCSM Moderation Group who will be asked to make a ruling. If the ruling is against the candidate, the WCSM Moderation Group will be asked to put its reasons in writing for onward transmission to the candidate.
8. If the candidate does not accept the findings, the appeal and the Principal Examiner's report will then be referred to the Chairman of WCSM's Qualifications Committee for decision. A response to the candidate, confirming whether the Committee has upheld or rejected the appeal, will be provided within a month of the candidate's rejection of the findings.
9. A further appeal may be made to the WCSM Professorial Committee. The Committee, which is made up of heads of academic departments across the UK, will be asked to include two independent arbiters in their deliberations and to include their opinions in a written judgement which should be delivered to the Clerk at WCSM within a month of the referral being made to them. This will be sent to the candidate via ABDO.
10. If the candidate is still not satisfied, the matter will be submitted to a totally independent review panel, which will again be asked to report within a month. There may be a separate fee for this review. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

11. If the appeal is upheld at any stage in this process, and in the opinion of the adjudicators calls into question the accuracy of other results, the matter will be referred immediately to the Chairman of the Qualifications Committee for urgent consideration, in consultation with ABDO, the Principal Examiner and the Head of the Moderation Group.
12. The Head of Examinations and Registration will maintain a log of all appeals received within each academic year, and the action taken.

Further Right of Appeal to SQA Accreditation for Candidates in Scotland

Candidates in Scotland should follow the above procedure first. Candidates sitting examinations for a qualification accredited by SQA to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications framework (SCQF), or their employers, have a right of appeal direct to SQA Accreditation if they are not satisfied with their appeal to WCSM as the Awarding Organisation but should inform WCSM and the ABDO Examinations Office if they choose to exercise this right and why. Candidates must be aware that SQA will not overturn assessment decisions.

Should the candidate be unsatisfied with the response of SQA Accreditation, they can then contact the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).

APPEALS – Workplace-Assessed Qualifications

1. An appeal against a result determined by WCSM's External Assessor must be delivered in writing within one month of the assessment and must set out the grounds for the appeal clearly and in detail. The appeal should be sent to The Clerk, WCSM, Apothecaries' Hall, Black Friars Lane, London EC4V 6EL or by email to clerk@spectaclemakers.com
2. The Clerk will acknowledge receipt of an appeal immediately and may request evidence from the candidate and/or the internal verifier. If such evidence cannot be provided by email or by post and a separate visit to the workplace is required, a fee of £50 may be payable to cover time and travelling expenses. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.
3. If the substance of the appeal is not clear, The Clerk will seek clarification from the candidate. Appeals will be responded to within 28 days of all the facts having been established.
4. The Clerk will forward the appeal and supporting evidence to the Chairman of the Qualifications Committee for review. The Chairman may call upon other independent members of the Committee for specialist advice.
5. A response to the candidate, confirming whether the Committee Chairman has upheld or rejected the appeal, will be provided within a month of the candidate's appeal.
6. If the ruling is against the candidate, a written response from the Chairman of the Qualifications Committee will be provided to the candidate, setting out the reasons for the decision.
7. If the candidate is still not satisfied, the matter will be submitted to a totally independent review panel of optical practitioners in practice, who are members of The Worshipful Company of Spectacle Makers. The panel will again be asked to report within a month. There may be a separate fee for this review. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.
8. The Clerk will maintain a written register of all enquiries and appeals lodged in relation to workplace-assessed qualifications.