



Appeals Policy

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Public

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Document Revision History		
Version	Date	Description of Change
4.0	03/04/2024	2024 Rebranding
3.0	05/12/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates regarding Appeal fees (Section3) • Updates regarding Process for raising an Appeal (Section 7) • Updates regarding Actions and lessons learned (Section10) • Minor wording updates
2.0	10/03/2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates to clarify appeals' raising process (Section 7) • Minor wording updates
1.0	29/12/2021	Initial version of revised Appeals Policy

1 Introduction

We have written this policy for our customers:

- our accredited organisations (AOs) who deliver courses leading to a PeopleCert certification;
- candidates who have enrolled on or taken a course and/or exam leading to a PeopleCert certification;
- candidates who plan to take, or have taken, an exam leading to a PeopleCert certification and who have organised this exam independently.

This policy outlines the process to follow when you submit an appeal to us, and the process we follow when responding to your appeal. Our staff also follow this policy so that we manage all appeals fairly and consistently.

2 Review arrangements

We review this policy annually and revise it when necessary to take account of your feedback. If you would like to feedback your views, please contact us using the details provided at the end of this policy.

3 Appeal fees

We charge a fee to cover our administrative and people costs to manage appeals, and we review your appeal application as soon as we receive your appeal fee payment. The appeal fee for all PeopleCert exams is £85.00. If we uphold your appeal, we refund the appeal fee in full.

4 The scope of this policy

This policy covers:

Appeals from our AOs and candidates about:

- A decision PeopleCert has made to decline a request to make reasonable adjustments or allow special consideration.
- A PeopleCert exam or a certification on the basis that we did not follow our published procedures consistently and fairly.
- A PeopleCert decision to amend candidate results following a malpractice and/or maladministration investigation

Appeal from our AOs about:

- Your application to offer a course leading to PeopleCert certification.
- The contents of a PeopleCert audit report.
- A PeopleCert decision following an investigation into a complaint we have received about the AO.
- PeopleCert sanctions on an AO following an audit or an investigation into malpractice and/or maladministration.

Appeals from candidates about:

- A decision an AO took on a course leading to a PeopleCert certification.
- A decision PeopleCert took after investigating your complaint.

5 Guidance for our Accredited Organisations (AOs)

All AO staff who manage, deliver and quality assure courses leading to a PeopleCert certification and all candidates taking such courses must be aware of this policy and its contents.

In addition, as a PeopleCert accredited organisation, you must have documented procedures in your AO to handle complaints against your decisions, appeals, and requests to you for refunds. You must inform all your trainees and PeopleCert exam candidates of their right to make a complaint or an appeal and advise your candidates and staff to retain their course evidence until they receive their exam result.

When you have considered a complaint or an appeal from a trainee, you must notify them in writing of the investigation results and their right to object further to your decision by contacting us directly if they consider that their case has not been satisfactorily resolved.

As part of your application to become a PeopleCert AO, we checked that you had documented procedures in place for handling complaints and appeals. This is re-checked from time-to-time during our monitoring activities.

If your candidate wishes to complain about their PeopleCert exam experience or their exam marks/results, we will accept appeals from you on their behalf, if you wish to support them and if you have their written consent. We will also accept appeals in such cases directly from candidates.

If you decide to appeal to us in your own right or on behalf of your candidate, you must first complete our PeopleCert Appeals form.

6 Guidance for candidates

If you wish to appeal a decision your training centre took, you must first have exhausted the centre's own appeals process and we will ask you for evidence that you have done this. We expect that most candidates will appeal directly to us about their centre only in exceptional circumstances.

If you took an exam delivered by PeopleCert and wish to appeal a decision PeopleCert took about your exam experience or your exam marks/results, you do not need to appeal to, or through, a centre first. In these instances, we will consider an appeal from you directly. If you have organised your PeopleCert exam directly with us, we will follow exactly the same process as we do for candidates who organised their exam with one of our AOs.

If you wish to ask your centre or another organisation to appeal on your behalf, we will also accept this, but only if you have given your centre or other organisation your written consent to do this for you, and we will request evidence of this.

Please note before you decide to appeal that:

- exam marks/results can go down as well as up after an investigation;
- we have an appeal timeline and process below.

If you have an urgent deadline, please let us know in your appeal application so that, where possible, we can prioritise your appeal. You can contact us any time if you believe you have additional information that will help us with your appeal. Repeated contact without any additional information may delay us in getting the appeal decision to you on time and it will not expedite the appeal timeframe. We ask that you refrain from persistent requests for updates during this time.

If you do decide to appeal to us directly, you must first complete our PeopleCert Appeal form following the process below.

7 Process for raising an appeal

You have one (1) month from the date we notified you of your examination results or the decision that you have decided to appeal during which you can lodge your appeal application.

The PeopleCert Appeal form can be found with this Appeals Policy in PeopleCert's Legal Documents and Policies on the PeopleCert website. The completed form should be sent to customerservice@peoplecert.org. The appeal form requires the following information:

- The candidate name(s) and PeopleCert unique registration number(s) (URN).
- The date(s) our AO or candidate received notification of any PeopleCert decision.
- The title of the PeopleCert certification(s) affected, or nature of service(s) affected (as appropriate).
- The full nature of the appeal in as much detail as possible.

Our AOs and their centres will often undertake their own investigation before an appeal comes to us. Where this is the case, we also ask you to let us know on the Appeals form:

- The contents and outcome of any investigation carried out by the AO.

8 Initial appeal and informal assessment

We acknowledge receipt of appeal applications within 48 hours.

First, we undertake an initial, informal assessment of any appeal application to ensure the application is complete and to see if we can resolve any issues for you before it goes to a formal appeal.

In all instances, we will ensure the person carrying out this initial assessment will have no previous involvement or personal interest in the decision being appealed or in the outcome of the appeal assessment. If required, we will appoint external investigators/assessors to do this.

If we cannot resolve the issue for you immediately, we aim to complete this initial review of the potential appeal within **20 business days** and will respond to you on or before that date. In some cases, our review process may take longer, for example, if we need to visit a centre. In such instances, we will contact you to inform you of our expected timescale.

Following the initial review of the potential appeal, we will write to you with details of our decision. We will either:

- Amend our original decision considering the information in your appeal that has now been reviewed;
or
- Confirm we stand by our original decision, giving you the reason(s) for this decision.

When you receive our decision, you must confirm, **within 10 business days**, whether you now accept this decision or if you wish to proceed to our formal appeals process.

9 Formal appeal

If you decide to proceed to a formal appeal, we will arrange for a review to be carried out by a member of our Quality & Compliance team. We will ensure that the people assigned to undertake the review and to oversee and manage the review have the appropriate level of training and competence and that they have had no previous involvement or personal interest in the decision or in the outcome of your appeal.

The Quality & Compliance team reviewer will assess all evidence gathered in the initial review stage and seek to ascertain if we have applied all our procedures fairly, appropriately, and consistently in line with our policies.

The review process may involve:

- A discussion with you and with PeopleCert personnel;
- A request for further information from you or from PeopleCert personnel;
- A centre visit by authorised PeopleCert personnel.

We will let you know the outcome of the review up to **25 business days** after the receipt of the formal appeal. The Quality & Compliance team reviewer's decision is then final.

10 Actions and lessons learned

In situations where your appeal is upheld, or where the appeal is not upheld but uncovers issues we need to address, PeopleCert will give due consideration to any issues and the outcome of your appeal, and will, as appropriate, take additional actions such as:

- Reimbursing the appeals fee where an appeal is upheld;
- Amending the profile of the centre or candidate concerned in the PeopleCert Assessment Portal (PASSPORT);
- Identifying any other candidates who may have been affected and correct or, where it cannot be corrected, mitigate as far as possible the effect of the issue (e.g. including amending the results for the candidate(s) affected following an appropriate investigation);
- Reviewing relevant processes and policies to mitigate the likelihood that the issue could occur again.

11 Contact us

For any queries about the contents of this policy, please contact us by using one of our support channels found here <https://www.peoplecert.org/help-and-support>



E-mail: info@peoplecert.org, www.peoplecert.org

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