

Icon Accreditation

Appeals and Complaints Policy

Policy number	07.10 Other Documents
Summary	This Policy details the Institute of Conservation’s (Icon) processes in place to manage appeals and complaints in relation to the delivery of Icon Accreditation.
Who this policy applies to	The Policy applies to Assessors, Specialist Advisors, Accreditation Moderation Committee members and Icon Staff involved in the delivery of Icon Accreditation.
Author/policy contact	Patrick Whife, Policy and Programmes Director
Approved by / approval level	Professional Standards & Development Committee
Date effective	09.05.2023
Last reviewed or updated	08.08.2024
Frequency of review	Every three years

1.	Introduction
	<p>The Institute of Conservation (Icon) recognises the vital importance of ensuring that all assessments it undertakes as part of the delivery of Icon Accreditation are valid, fair and objective.</p> <p>This policy details Icon’s approach towards dealing with complaints and managing the appeals process to ensure that candidates receive a fair and objective assessment. This policy relates appeals and complaints with respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the results of assessments, • decisions regarding Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration, and • decisions relating to any action to be taken against a candidate following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration. <p>An overview of the appeals and complaints Process is detailed in Appendix A.</p> <p>This Policy relates to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icon Accreditation Fair Access Policy • Icon Accreditation Malpractice & Maladministration Policy
2.	Definitions
	<p>Appeal: a request by a candidate for a review of a failed outcome from their Icon Accreditation Assessment.</p> <p>Complaint: an expression of dissatisfaction relating to Icon’s actions, products or services, the application of Icon’s policies or the outcome of an assessment decision which it has made.</p>

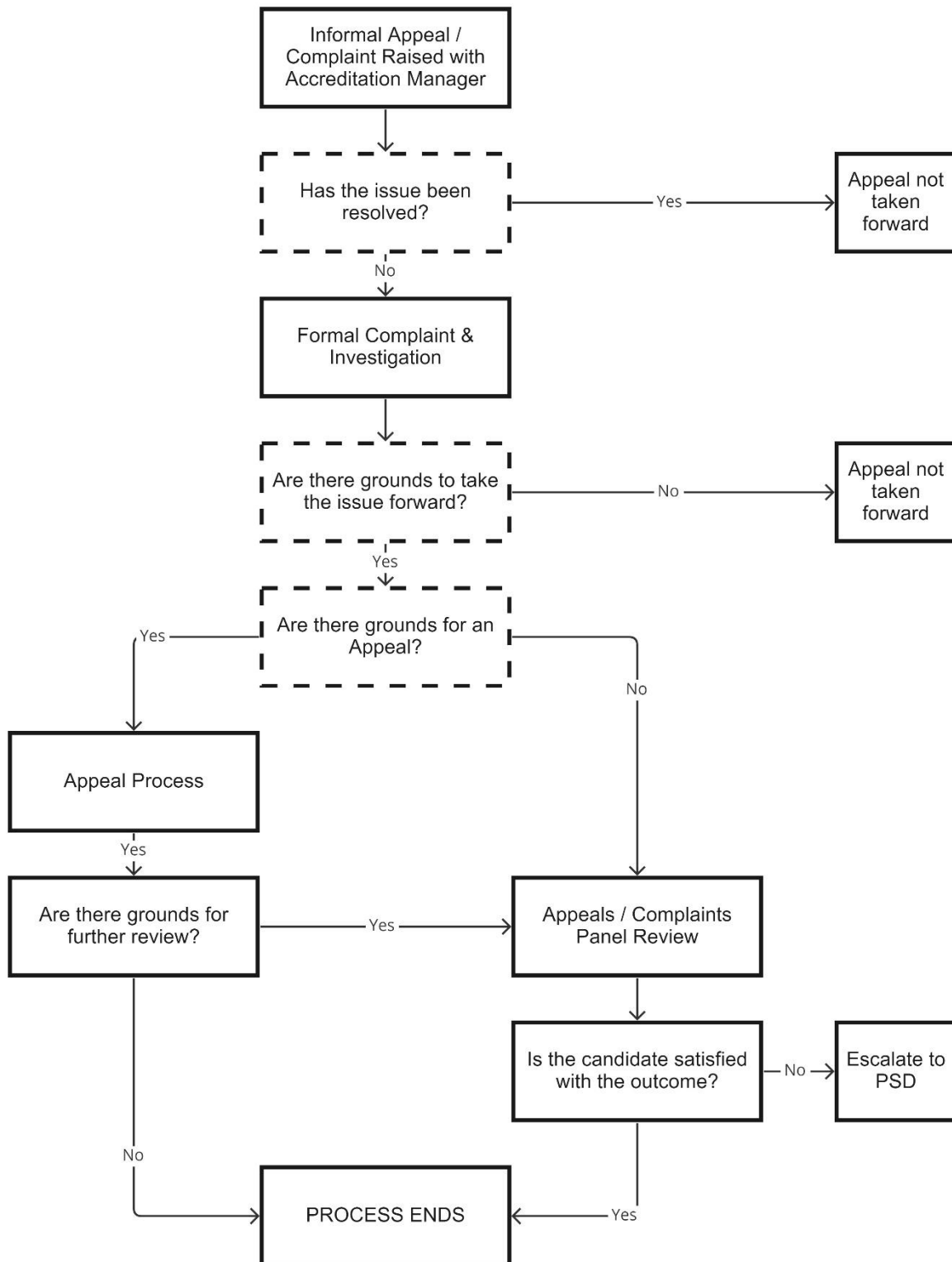
3.	Responsibilities
	<p>The management of the appeals and complaints policy rests with Accreditation Manager who will oversee and manage the appeals and complaints process. If the complaint relates to Icon’s Accreditation Manager, Icon’s Policy and Programmes Director will manage the complaints process.</p> <p>All staff involved in the delivery of Icon Accreditation have a responsibility to understand the policy and ensure that it is implemented.</p>
4.	Grounds for appeals and complaints
	<p>An appeal will normally only be considered if it meets one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extenuating circumstances which the Assessors were unaware of, and the candidate can demonstrate that there was good reason for them not having highlighted the issue. • That an assessment decision was not made in accordance with the assessment criteria. • That the Accreditation Moderation Committee was presented with incorrect or inaccurate assessment information. • That a decision made by Icon staff (including those relating to a Fair Access or Special Considerations Request) or the outcome of a malpractice / maladministration investigation, is inappropriate (following assessment). • Subsequent to assessment having been completed; that an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation under the ‘Malpractice & Maladministration Policy’ or the outcome of a Fair Access or Special Considerations request under the ‘Fair Access Policy’. <p>A complaint will normally be considered if it meets one of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A procedural or other irregularity such as the dates of assessment changing without sufficient notice. • That there was unfairness or impropriety on the part of the one or more of the Assessors, Specialist Advisors, Accreditation Moderation Committee members or Icon Staff. • Prior to assessment having been completed; that an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome of an investigation under the ‘Malpractice & Maladministration Policy’ or the outcome of a Fair Access or Special Considerations request under the ‘Fair Access Policy’.
5.	Raising an appeal or complaint
	<p>An appeal or complaint can only be raised by the candidate.</p> <p>We recognise that in many cases concerns can be dealt with informally. As such the party raising the appeal or complaint is to be encouraged to first discuss their concern with the Accreditation Manager to understand whether an appeal or complaint can be made through this policy.</p>

	<p>If, after discussing their concerns with the Accreditation Manager, the party raising the appeal or complaint wishes to escalate the appeal or complaint they should follow the formal process outlined in section 6.</p>
6.	Formal submission and initial investigation
	<p>Appeals or Complaints should first be raised to the Accreditation Manager within 20 working days of the announcement of results / assessment decisions, the outcome of a fair access request or malpractice / maladministration investigation.</p> <p>The individual should submit their appeal or complaint in writing including documentary evidence providing grounds to support the appeal or complaint. Appeals or complaints received after this time will only be considered at the discretion of the Accreditation Manager, for example if the appeal or complaint follows an accepted request for special considerations. Appeals or Complaints for which full documentary evidence is not included will be rejected.</p> <p>The Accreditation Manager will make contact (in person, by phone or email) with the candidate within 10 days of receiving the complaint to arrange a formal meeting with the candidate (in person or virtually). The candidate may bring someone with them, but there is no right to legal representation.</p> <p>As a result of this meeting one of three outcomes will be agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the candidate is content not to proceed with the appeal or complaint. 2. That the candidate should proceed to the Appeals Process (section 7). This will typically be appropriate if the issue relates to the grounds for appeal (see list of criteria in section 4) 3. That the candidate should proceed to the Appeals & Complaints Panel Review (section 8). This will typically be appropriate if the issue relates to the grounds for a complaint (see list of criteria in section 4).
7.	Appeals Process
	<p>The Accreditation Manager will appoint an Assessor not involved in the formal assessment process to undertake a review of the assessment decisions. In doing so, the review will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal grounds of the appeal and supporting evidence • Assessment report • Supporting information relating to the assessment method(s) being considered. This may include the Portfolio of evidence which supported the Professional Discussion. <p>Outcomes</p> <p>There are three possible outcomes of this stage:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The result is upgraded (e.g. changed from ‘fail’ to ‘pass’.) 2. The result is confirmed

	<p>3. The result is downgraded (e.g. changed from ‘pass’ to ‘fail’)</p> <p>If, after appeal, the candidate is dissatisfied with the outcome they may proceed to the Appeals & Complaint Panel Review (section 8).</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Appeals & Complaints Panel Review</p>
	<p>The Appeals and Complaints Panel will be convened if the issue relates to a complaint, or in the instance that an individual is dissatisfied, with the outcome of the Appeal process.</p> <p>The Appeals and Complaints Panel will be convened within one month of the date that the appeal or complaint was received. The panel will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Icon’s Accreditation Manager • Icon’s Policy and Programmes Director • Chair of Icon’s Accreditation Moderation Committee • Assessor not involved in the assessment itself. • The Candidate • External Representative from the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists • The candidate may bring someone with them; however, they will only participate at the behest of the candidate. There is no right to legal representation at this stage. <p>If the candidate does not attend the appeals meeting, the meeting will still proceed.</p> <p>The panel’s decision will be made solely on the basis of the evidence provided by the candidate. The panel will review the evidence following the meeting and notify the candidate of the assessment decision within 5 working days of the meeting.</p> <p>Outcome</p> <p>There are two possible outcomes from the Appeals & Complaint Panel Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal / Complaint is accepted. The panel agrees that clear grounds for the complaint or dissatisfaction with the appeal / complaint. <p>If this relates to an assessment that has already taken place, the candidate will be offered a re-assessment of the relevant assessment method(s) with an Assessor and Specialist Advisor not involved in the original assessment or appeals process.</p> <p>If this relates to an assessment yet to take place, the adjustments agreed by the Panel will be implemented.</p> <p>If the Panel has highlighted any failure on behalf Icon, steps will be taken immediately to identify any other candidate who has been affected by the failure, rectify and mitigate as far as possible the effects of the failure, and ensure that failure does not reoccur in the future.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeal / Complaint is rejected. The panel confirm that all appropriate procedures and policies have been followed fairly and accurately during the conduct of the assessment. <p>If the appeal or complaint cannot be resolved through Icon’s own Policy, it will be escalated to the Professional Standards and Development Committee.</p>
9.	Managing implementation and review
	<p>This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it is reflective of current regulations and guidance and is responsive to local, national and international events.</p>

Appendix A – Overview of Appeals and Complaints Process



Example – Candidate dissatisfied with outcome of Fair Access Request (Prior to assessment)

- Candidate has raised grounds for a Fair Access request, but is dissatisfied that the proposed variations to the assessment and believes they are not sufficient / appropriate to deal with their individual concerns.
- Following initial conversation with Accreditation Manager the candidate wishes to continue with the Appeal.
- Request proceeds to ‘Formal submission and initial investigation’. Accreditation Manager reviews formal submission and deems there are grounds to escalate the Appeal / Complaint further.
- As request is raised prior to assessment, the appeal proceeds to the ‘Appeals / Complaints Panel Review’ process.
- The Panel meet to consider the request. The request is rejected on the basis that the original adjustments were deemed appropriate and the candidate is informed.
- The candidate is satisfied with the outcome of the review
- Process Ends.

Example –Candidate dissatisfied with assessment decision

- A Candidate believes an assessment decision was not undertaken in line with the grading criteria outlined in the Assessment Plan.
- Following initial conversation with Accreditation Manager, the candidate wishes to continue with the Appeal.
- Request proceeds to ‘Formal submission and initial investigation’. Accreditation Manager reviews formal submission who deems there are grounds to escalate the Appeal / Complaint further.
- As request is raised prior to assessment, the appeal proceeds to the ‘Appeals’ process.
- The Appeals Panel meet and consider the request. They agree with the candidate and the supporting evidence. The assessment decision is moderated and the candidate is informed.
- The candidate is satisfied with the outcome of the review
- Process Ends.