

Equal Opportunities

Proficiency Solutions as an IMI Approved Assessment Centre is committed to promoting equal opportunities in all aspects of on-line training and assessments as well as eliminating all types of discrimination. This code sets out Company policy and provides guidance to management, supervisors, administrators and candidates.

The Company's aim is:

- to ensure that no-one receives less favourable treatment (directly or indirectly) on the grounds of sex (including sexual orientation), race, colour, nationality, ethnic or racial origins, marital status, religion or belief, disability, age, (herein shown as "sex, race, etc.") or suffers disadvantage by the application of a provision, criteria or practice, which cannot be shown to be related to their ability to work safely or effectively.
- to avoid any unjustifiable requirements or practices which have a disproportionately adverse effect on any candidate by reason of sex, race, etc.
- to encourage and assist all candidates to realise their full potential and ensure that individuals receive treatment which is fair, equitable and consistent with their relevant aptitudes, potential, skills and abilities.

Implementation of the Policy

Senior Management has overall responsibility for the implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

All Managers will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is followed.

All management and supervisors must guard against discrimination on the basis of generalised assumptions that individuals (because of their sex, race etc.) possess characteristics that would make them unsuitable for training etc.

All staff and candidates must respect the principle of equal opportunity and avoid discrimination of fellow staff and candidates. Any deliberate display of prejudice on grounds of sex, race etc. or any deliberate act of discrimination during the training and assessment programme in breach of this policy will be regarded as a serious breach of discipline, which may lead to specific action being taken.

Complaints Procedure

Anyone who believes that they are not being offered equal opportunities should discuss this with their internal system Administrator or Line Manager.

If this informal approach does not resolve the problem, or if you consider this course of action is inappropriate, then your complaint should be raised using the IMI's Appeals and Complaints Procedure.

All complaints will be dealt with in confidence and investigated in line with the terms of the IMI's Appeals and Complaints Procedure.

Monitoring and Review

Proficiency Solutions aim to keep the necessary records to ensure that the policy is effectively monitored and maintained. All aspects of this policy and procedure will be kept under review to ensure that they do not operate against equal opportunities.

Specific Considerations for Disabled Candidates

Where a candidate or potential candidate suffers from a disability that impacts on their ability to use the on-line training or assessment system, Proficiency Solutions will consider what reasonable adjustments could be made to the training and assessment procedures.

Any adjustments will be considered in the light of their effectiveness, cost and disruption to others.



CANDIDATE COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE

Where a candidate or their representative wishes to complain about an assessment decision or any other aspect of the centre's activities relating to the assessment and verification/moderation of IMI Awards' qualifications, they must in the first instance, follow the approved centre's complaints procedure. Only when this route has been exhausted should a candidate complain to IMI Awards.

Note: All approved centres must have a clear and up-to-date complaints procedure which must be provided to candidates (normally during their induction).

Candidates or their representatives who wish to take their complaint further, or who wish to complain against a decision or action taken by any IMI Awards personnel, should contact IMI Awards.

Complaints should be referred to the IMI Head of Customer Support and Compliance and should be made in writing. The Head of Customer Support and Compliance will arrange for the Chief Verifier or other members of the quality assurance team to investigate the complaint. Ultimately, it will be the Head of Customer Support and Compliance Customer Support and Compliance's responsibility to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties wherever possible.

Resolving Complaints

If it not possible to resolve the complaint within a week – often complaints are able to be sorted out immediately – the candidate or their representative will be sent a written acknowledgement stating which member of staff is progressing their complaint. IMI Awards will issue a response as soon as possible thereafter, but no later than one month from the date that the complaint was received.

Any candidate or centre who is not satisfied by the proposals made to resolve their complaint may appeal against the decisions made.

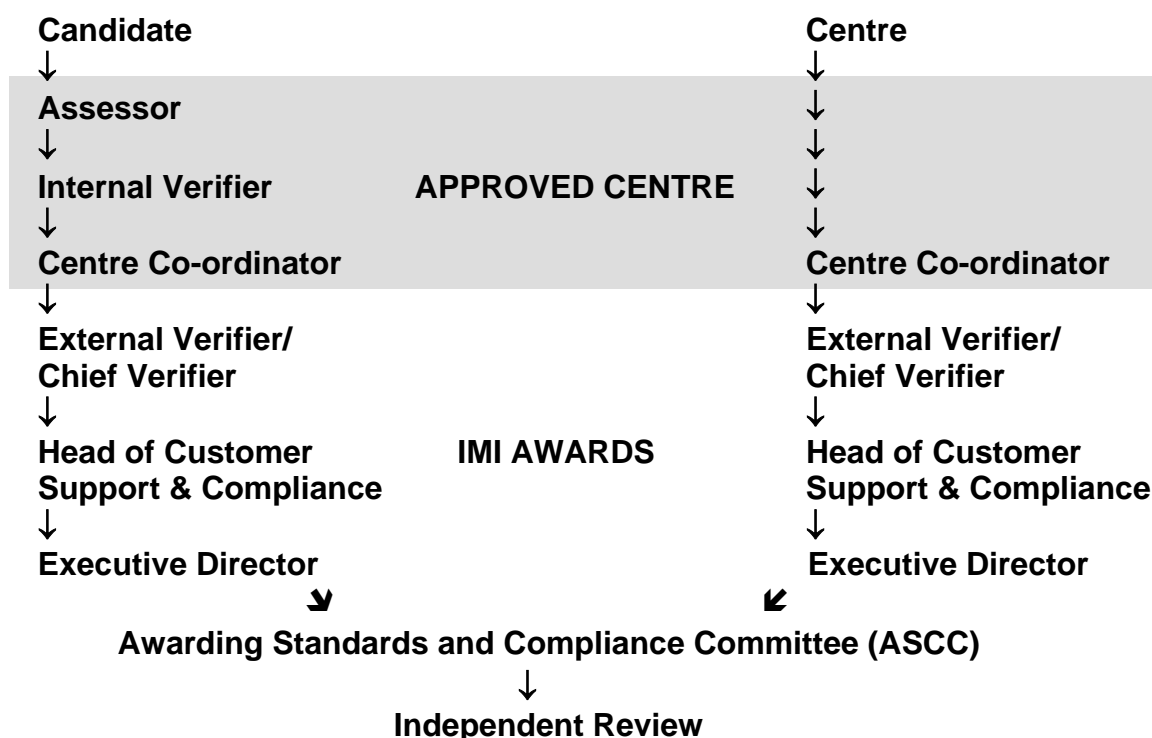
Candidate Appeals

A candidate may appeal to IMI Awards, free of charge, regarding decisions of an approved centre on the following grounds:

- discrimination of any sort
- dissatisfaction over assessment decisions

Candidates may also appeal to IMI Awards, free of charge, if a complaint made about decision or action taken by any IMI Awards personnel has not been resolved to their satisfaction.

The IMI Awards candidate appeals process follows the stages below:



Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Head of Customer Support and Compliance. A written acknowledgement of the appeal, stating when the appeal will be heard, will be issued within two working days from the receipt of the appeal.

The Head of Customer Support and Compliance will arrange for the appropriate member(s) of the quality assurance team to investigate the grounds for appeal and to report his/her findings, in writing, within 21 working days.

As part of the appeal process, the Head of Customer Support and Compliance will review this report and all information provided by the candidate. He will inform the candidate of the outcome of the appeal, in writing, within one month of receipt of the written appeal. (Note: In some cases and at IMI Awards' discretion, the timescale for the appeal process may be extended).

If the candidate is not satisfied with the appeal decision, they may take their appeal to IMI Awards' Executive Director, who will respond, in writing, within one month of the appeal being submitted to him.

If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the issues raised, then the next stage is for the appeal to be heard by the Awarding Standards and Compliance Committee (ASCC).

The candidate will be notified of the outcome of an appeal heard by the ASCC within 14 days of the meeting taking place.

If the ASCC is unable to resolve the issues raised, then the candidate will be offered the opportunity to take his/her appeal to independent review. This review will be carried out by a person who is independent from the candidate, centre IMI Awards and the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI).

The outcome of the independent review is final and binding on all parties. The appellant and IMI Awards will be notified of the outcome of an independent review within 14 days of the review taking place.