

Bournemouth Bay TTP Complaints and Appeals Policy

Review by policy owners:	Verity Burgess, SCITT Director, March 2025
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This policy reflects the legislation at the time that it was last reviewed. Any changes in legislation will take precedence over anything printed in this policy.

APPEALS PROCEDURE – assessment decisions

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE – disagreement or incident linked to training provision

Introduction

This policy aims to bring together the previous Appeals Policy and Complaints Policy in order to help trainees and schools understand the correct pathways to follow, should they feel they need to make a formal appeal or complaint. The aim is to set out the framework within which complaints and appeals against decisions from all stakeholders will be dealt to ensure that they are acted upon consistently, appropriately and in a timely manner.

Our Commitment

Bournemouth Bay Teacher Training Partnership (BBTTP) is committed to providing a high-level service to all trainees and partner schools. We encourage all involved in the course provision to provide us feedback and to make constructive suggestions on how to improve our work and the quality of training. We seek to avoid the need for complaints by always promoting effective relationships and communications, acting on feedback including from our quality assurance procedures. However, we recognise that occasionally a trainee or a school may have concerns that they wish to draw to the attention of BBTTP. Equally, there may be occasions when a trainee or school wishes to appeal against a decision made in relation to an aspect of the provision.

Scope

This policy and procedure relate to appeals against decisions and complaints from individuals to whom BBTTP provides its services, including trainees and schools. This procedure does not apply to safeguarding allegations, concerns relating to the prevent duty or whistleblowing complaints, each of which should be raised and dealt with under the relevant policy.

Complaints procedure

Complaints made to Bournemouth Bay Teacher Training Partnership are under the auspices of Twynham Learning. Please follow this [link](#) to the Twynham Learning Policy Site where the Twynham Learning Complaints Policy can be found.

Our complaints procedure covers three stages:

Stage 1: Informal resolution

A trainee who has a complaint about an aspect of the provision should initially raise it with the Hub Lead. If the trainee has a complaint about the quality of their placement provision, they should initially raise with the Professional Tutor at their school. If the issue cannot be resolved within the school, the trainee should raise the matter their Hub Lead. If the problem cannot be resolved, a complaint should be made to the Director of SCITT to investigate the complaint and to seek a solution. Or if the complaint is about the Director of SCITT, the complaint should be referred to the deputy CEO of Twynham Learning.

Stage 2: First formal stage

If the involvement of the SCITT Director or Deputy CEO does not resolve the concern, the complainant should make a formal complaint, in writing, as set out in Twynham Learning's Complaints Policy, which can be found on the Twynham Learning Policy page.

Stage 3: Second formal stage

If the complaint is still not resolved, then it will be moved to a panel hearing with Trust governors, as per the Twynham Learning Complaints Policy.

APPEALS PROCEDURE – disagreement linked to assessment or a disciplinary action

The aim of this procedure is to enable trainees to appeal against decisions in respect of interim or final assessment of teaching or course activities, particularly if they have resulted in the trainee being asked to leave the training programme. It may also be used as the procedure for appealing against the result of a Disciplinary Action.

Appeals based solely on a disagreement with the decision of the Awards Group not to award QTS will not be considered.

Grounds for Appeal

If the trainee has failed to follow the reasonable steps laid out to support them when on a Rapid Action Plan and have failed to demonstrate any real progress against clear targets when on Stage 3 of the support process; there are no recognised grounds to appeal unless the following apply:

- a) that the trainee's assessment performance had been adversely affected by circumstances which the trainee could not have reasonably divulged to the SCITT Director or the Awards Group at the time of the original assessment. (Submissions made on these grounds must be supported with appropriate documentary evidence such as police reports, hospital letters.)
- b) that there had been an administrative error materially affecting the relevant assessment.
- c) that procedural irregularities with regards to the marking of course activities such as the case study bundle or in the formal conduct of the assessment process can be found e.g. lack of consistency with formal lesson observations, lack of objectiveness of the viva panel.
- d) where there is robust evidence of prejudice or discrimination on the part of a person involved in the assessment.

Our assessment process is quality assured both internally and externally so the trainee should be reassured that the assessment process is robust and non-judgemental.

Procedures to be followed before a formal appeal

Before a formal commencement of an appeal, it is expected that the trainee discusses the grievance with the appropriate assessor, Professional Tutor or Subject Mentor. An independent representative will be made available on request. An overview of this meeting will be recorded in writing and signed by both parties that it is an accurate representation of the discussion.

Lodging an Appeal: Stage 1

- a) An appeal must be made in writing within 14 days of the publication of the assessment result, or the outcome of the Disciplinary Panel, to the SCITT Director.
- b) After considering the appeal in discussion with named people involved in the case, the SCITT Director will inform the trainee of the outcome of their decision within 10 days of receipt of the appeal.

c) If the SCITT Director is provided with evidence that there are justifiable grounds for appeal, they will consult the Chair of the Awards and Examinations Group with a view to amending the original assessment

d) Where the SCITT Director, on investigating the evidence, finds evidence that the original assessment was accurate, the trainee will be informed of the reasons for the decision

e) The trainee can then either accept the outcome, in which case no further action need be taken, or move to Stage 2 of the procedure

Lodging an Appeal: Stage 2

a) If the trainee wishes to continue the appeal, they must inform the SCITT Director in writing within 10 days of the notification of the outcome of Stage 1

b) On receipt of the notice, the SCITT Director, in consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Partnership Board, will convene a meeting of the Appeals Group as soon as reasonably practicable and, in any event, within 28 days.

c) The Appeals Group shall be comprised of three members of which two shall be Headteachers or their representatives of Partnership Schools. The members of the Appeals Group shall not be the same as members of the Awards and Examinations Group, nor shall they have a direct connection with the trainee such as being the Headteacher of one of the trainee's placement schools. The SCITT Director shall act as secretary to the Group.

d) Both the trainee and a representative of the Awards Group shall be informed of the date of the appeal meeting at least 7 working days in advance and will be invited to attend. Any written statements or documentary evidence must be passed to the Secretary 5 working days in advance of the meeting to allow time for distribution to the other members of the Group.

The Appeals Group Meeting

a) No observers are permitted to attend the meeting, but the trainee may be accompanied by another person who can act as their representative (this can be a workplace colleague or trade union representative).

b) The Group shall have the authority to ask any individual to appear before it if it is considered to be in the interests of the parties for it to do so

c) The Group shall adjourn after the hearing to consider the evidence and arguments presented to it. Only its members may be present at this time.

d) The only options open to the Group shall be to:

- i. dismiss the appeal and decree that the original decision shall stand
- ii. uphold the appeal, in which case it shall request those responsible for the initial decision to reconsider that decision in the light of the new evidence

e) The trainee shall be notified of the Appeals Group decision within 5 working days.

f) Confidential minutes of the meeting will be agreed by the Secretary and Chair of the Appeals Group and given to the Chair of the Strategic Partnership Board.

g) If the group decides for the trainee, the Group responsible for the original decision shall be reconvened at the earliest opportunity and its decisions conveyed to the Secretary and Chair of the Appeals group, before informing the trainee of the final decision.

h) If the group decides for the SCITT provider, the trainee can take their appeal to the OIA.

PGCE

Academic appeals will be referred to the validating University of Reading's Appeals Procedure, in line with the validation agreement between the University and the Partnership. This can be found on their website.

The decision of the University of Reading will be final and binding in regard to the assessment and grading of assignments, requests for deadline extensions and final marks. There is no right to raise a complaint or appeal with BBTP in relation to these matters in relation to the PGCE award.

The policy of the University of Reading in relation to appealing the mark of an assignment is as follows:

- Any assignment achieving a mark of under 50% can be resubmitted. Trainees are contacted by the University and told of the date that resubmissions have to be made by.
- All resubmissions are subject to a cap on the final mark of 50%.

Referral to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

If the trainee teacher is not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint or appeal (having exhausted BBTP and Twynham Learning's procedures) they may refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) for an independent review. BBTP is a member of this scheme. You can find more information about making a complaint to the OIA, what it can and can't look at and what it can do to put things right if something has gone wrong here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>. When BBTP's internal procedure for dealing with complaints and appeals has been exhausted, BBTP will issue (if requested) a Completion of Procedures Letter. The referral to the OIA must be made within 12 months of the final BBTP decision.