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# ASSESSMENT APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

The following document provides guidance on the process undertaken for assessment appeals and complaints related to incidents. This process applies to FINSIA programs developed in partnership with the Chartered Banker Institute and covers the Professional Banking Fundamentals, Certified Professional Banker, Chartered Banker and Chartered Banker by Experience programs.

## Lodging an appeal or complaint

Learners can lodge an appeal or complaint on the following grounds:

- **Complaints due to an incident that occurred at the time of the exam:** These complaints relate to an event or incident, that occurred at the time of the exam, which the learner believes has materially impacted their performance.
- **Appeals against assessment results:** These appeals relate to the marking and results verification process, where the learner believes a material error has occurred.
- **Appeals against decisions made regarding reasonable adjustments:** These appeals relate to situations where a learner has, or has not, been offered an appropriate accommodation to support the completion of an assessment.

## Complaints due to an incident at the time of the exam

A complaint is lodged by the learner as a result of an event or incident occurring at the time of their exam.

The following steps outline the process that is to be followed for the lodgement and assessment of a complaint due to an incident or event that occurs at the time of the exam.

**Step One:** The learner must submit their complaint in writing to FINSIA, within 3 business days of the exam occurring.

Where applicable, the incident should also be raised with the invigilator at the time of the incident. Raising the incident with the invigilator at the time of the incident provides valuable information to assist with the investigation process.

The complaint is lodged via email at [education@finsia.com](mailto:education@finsia.com) with **Exam Complaint** in the subject line. The email must include the following information:

- The learner's name.
- Program the complaint relates to. For example, Professional Banking Fundamentals.
- Date of exam.
- Details relating to the complaint which may include:
  - Medical certificates or other documentary evidence acceptable to the Chartered Banker Institute to demonstrate that the learner's performance was adversely impacted during the exam.
  - Evidence that there has been a material administrative error, or that the assessments were not conducted in accordance with the current regulations for the program, or that some other material irregularity or technical failure has occurred at the time of the exam.

FINSIA and the Chartered Banker Institute recognises that this information may be of a personal nature and it will be treated as such. FINSIA and the Chartered Banker Institute will not seek any more information than is reasonably considered by us as essential to determining eligibility for an appeal. FINSIA and the Chartered Banker Institute will not disclose this information to a third party without the consent of the learner and will not retain any medical information provided by the learner. Further information about FINSIA's Privacy Policy can be accessed at [www.finsia.com/privacy-policy](http://www.finsia.com/privacy-policy).

**Step Two:** On receipt of the email and where appropriate, FINSIA will review and determine the outcome of the appeal. This decision will then be communicated to the learner.

**Step Three:** FINSIA may decide to refer the learner's appeal to the Chartered Banker Institute's Incidents Committee department, with all supporting documentation for review. The Chartered Banker Institute's Incidents Committee will review the complaint request and one of the following outcomes will be communicated to FINSIA:

- Further information is required to complete the investigation. The learner will be contacted by FINSIA with a request for further information. Once the learner has provided the information, FINSIA will share it with the Chartered Banker Institute and the review will continue.
- The Chartered Banker Institute's investigation determines there is no case and rejects the complaint. FINSIA will be notified of this decision and will communicate the outcome to the learner within 10 business days of receiving the decision.
- The Chartered Banker Institute's investigation determines that there is sufficient evidence and grounds to support the learner's complaint. FINSIA will communicate this outcome and any next steps to the learner, such as rebooking an assessment within 10 business days of receiving the decision.

The decision of the Chartered Banker Institute's Incidents Committee is final, and no further submissions or escalations may be made by the learner or any third party acting on behalf of the learner.

## Appeals against assessment results

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These appeals are lodged by the learner and relate to the marking and verification process of any assessment that requires manual marking, where the learner believes that a material error has occurred after the assessment (generally an exam or assignment submission) itself and once the result has been received by the learner. Appeals of this nature can only be raised after the exam or assignment has been submitted and the marking has been completed.

The following steps outline the process that is to be followed for the lodgement and review of an appeal against assessment results:

**Step One:** If the learner believes their exam or assignment result may not be accurate, the learner should request a review of the marking. This request must be lodged within two weeks of the result being received. The learner must submit their appeal request in writing to FINSIA via email to [education@finsia.com](mailto:education@finsia.com) with **Assessment Appeal** in the subject line. The email must include the following information:

- The learner's name.
- Program the learner is completing. For example, Chartered Banker.
- Date of exam or assignment submission.
- The learner must clearly and concisely outline their grounds for appeal and provide documentation to support their appeal.

Any submitted learner appeals should focus on whether FINSIA and/or the Chartered Banker Institute have used procedures that were consistent with the Chartered Banker Institute's Rules and Regulations and have applied procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.

**Step Two:** FINSIA will review the appeal and if all required information has been provided will send all documentation to the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality and Standards department for review.

**Step Three:** The Quality and Standards department will review the learner's request and determine whether it will be accepted. This decision is based on:

- The validity of the grounds for the appeal as put forward by the learner.
- Whether a review of marking has been completed.
- The timescale of the application.

**Step Four:** If an application for an appeal is not accepted, the reason(s) for this will be communicated to FINSIA. FINSIA will notify the learner of the outcome within 10 business days of receiving the decision.

If the Quality and Standards department determine there are grounds for the appeal, it will be investigated by a team member within Quality and Standards who has not had any previous involvement in the matter. These accepted appeals will then be referred to the Chartered Banker Institute's Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee meet on a fortnightly basis.

**Step Five:** Appeals that are referred to the Appeals Committee will be investigated. In the following instances, the Appeals Committee will review the circumstances of the exam (or assignment) to determine:

- Whether the Appeals Committee is satisfied by evidence, from the learner or any other person, that there has been a material administrative error with the marking and verification process, or that the process was not conducted in accordance with the current regulations of the program.
- Whether the learner believes there were inaccuracies within the assessment questions themselves.

**Step Six:** Following the Appeals Committee meeting, the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality and Standards department will communicate the outcome to FINSIA to share with the learner within 10 business days of receiving the decision. This includes communicating any reason(s) if the appeal is rejected.

**Step Seven:** On receiving the outcome of the decision made by the Chartered Banker Institute's Appeals Committee, if the learner considers the decision of the Appeals Committee disadvantages them, they can submit a further appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel (IAP). The Chartered Banker Institute's Independent Appeals Panel will review the information provided by the learner.

Please refer to the section titled **Chartered Banker Institute's Independent Appeals Panel** for further information about this process and associated fees.

## **Appeals against decisions made regarding reasonable adjustments**

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These appeals relate to situations where a learner feels their assessment accommodation request was not dealt with appropriately. FINSIA recognises that there are some learners who may be prevented from demonstrating their achievement due to a permanent or long-term disability, learning difficulty or medical condition. Special accommodations (or reasonable adjustments) are pre-exam adjustments approved before an assessment. This allows learners with special educational needs or requirements, disabilities or temporary injuries, to complete their assessment with appropriate additional time allocated or additional support provided.

The following steps outline the process that is to be followed for the lodgement and review of an appeal against decisions made regarding reasonable adjustments.

**Step One:** If the learner believes their request for reasonable adjustments was not dealt with in a 'fair' manner or due process was not followed, the learner must submit their appeal request in writing to FINSIA via email to [education@finsia.com](mailto:education@finsia.com) within seven days of their receipt of the decision for reasonable adjustments. The subject line of the email must include **Assessment Appeal** and the email must include the following information:

- The learner's name.
- Program the learner is completing. For example, Professional Banking Fundamentals.
- Date of assessment or assignment submission.
- The learner must clearly outline the accommodation requested, the reason for their appeal and include any further evidence to support their request.

**Step Two:** Where appropriate FINSIA will review and determine the outcome of the appeal. This decision will then be communicated to the learner.

**Step Three:** FINSIA may decide to refer the learner's appeal to the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality & Standards department, with all supporting documentation for review.

**Step Four:** The Quality and Standards department will review the learner's request and determine if it will be accepted. This decision is based on:

- The validity of the grounds for the appeal, as submitted by the learner.
- Whether a review of marking has been completed.
- The timescale of the request being submitted by the learner i.e., has this been submitted within seven days of the decision for reasonable adjustments being received.

**Step Five:** If the application for appeal is accepted by the Quality and Standards department, it will be investigated by a team member of Quality and Standards who has not had any previous involvement in the matter. These accepted appeals will be referred to the Chartered Banker Institute's Appeals Committee.

**Step Six:** Appeals that are referred to the Appeals Committee will be investigated and in the following instances, the Appeals Committee will review the circumstances of the exam (or assignment) to determine whether the Appeals Committee is satisfied by evidence, from the learner or any other person, that the request for reasonable adjustments was not dealt with in a 'fair' manner or due process was not followed.

**Step Seven:** Following the Appeals Committee meeting, the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality and Standards department will communicate the outcome to FINSIA to share with the learner within 10 business days of receiving the decision. This includes communicating any reason(s) if the appeal is rejected.

**Step Eight:** If the learner considers the decision of the Appeals Committee disadvantages them, even after the outcome of the Chartered Banker Institute's Appeals Committee procedure has been followed, the learner can escalate their appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel (IAP). The Chartered Banker Institute's Independent Appeals Panel will review the information provided by the learner.

Please refer to the section titled **Chartered Banker Institute's Independent Appeals Panel** for further information about this process and associated fees.

## **Chartered Banker Institute Independent Appeals Panel (IAP)**

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In situations where the learner considers the decision of the Chartered Banker Institute's Appeals Committee continues to disadvantage them, the learner can submit an appeal to the Chartered Banker Institute's Independent Appeals Panel (IAP).

An Independent Appeals Panel hearing is designed to ensure the learner has a formal opportunity to present their case to an impartial body. The panel will consist of:

- A senior employee from the Chartered Banker Institute.
- An employee from the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality and Standards department.
- Two additional independent panel members, drawn from a larger pool of individuals who are not directly employed by the Chartered Banker Institute.

Each panel member will be asked to confirm at the start of the appeal hearing that they have not had a previous connection with nor have they any personal interest in the case. Where possible, the learner may wish to attend the appeal hearing via a virtual meeting.

The following steps outline the process when an appeal is escalated to the Independent Appeals Panel:

**Step One:** The learner is to submit their request for their appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel, with all supporting documentation and correspondence to date to [education@finsia.com](mailto:education@finsia.com), including **IAP Escalation** in the subject line of the email.

A request for an Independent Appeals Panel hearing must be made within two calendar weeks of receipt of any Appeals Committee outcome. Any escalation of appeals made outside of this timeframe will be rejected.

**Step Two:** Once the request has been received by FINSIA, it will be forwarded to the Chartered Banker Institute to commence the Independent Appeals Panel process.

**Step Three:** A fee of £200 is charged for referring an appeal to the Independent Appeals Panel. For appeals where the outcome from the Independent Appeals Panel was either 'Appeal partially upheld' or 'Appeal fully upheld' the fee of £200 will be refunded by the Chartered Banker Institute to the learner directly. The Chartered Banker Institute will contact the learner to request this payment be made when they receive the appeal. The payment must be made directly to the Chartered Banker Institute.

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**Step Four:** Once the Independent Appeals Committee have met, the Chartered Banker Institute's Quality and Standards department will communicate the outcome to FINSIA to share with the learner within 10 business days of receiving the decision. The outcomes from the Independent Appeals Panel are:

- 'Appeal rejected'.
- 'Appeal partially upheld'.
- 'Appeal fully upheld'.

The decision of the Independent Appeals Panel is final, and no further submissions may be made by the learner or other third party acting on behalf of the learner.