



Exam Procedures Review Service (Covid-19)

JUNE 2020



Version history

Version 1 of the Exam Procedures Review Service (Covid-19) was published on 29 June 2020. This will replace our existing Exam Procedures Review Service (November 2019) and will remain in force until such date as specified or determined by Qualifications Wales.

Feedback on this document is welcomed at any time. Please send any comments to policy@qualificationswales.org

Exam Procedures Review Service (Covid-19)

1. The Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) (Covid-19) is a procedure that Qualifications Wales undertakes in order to review the following:
 - **whether the awarding body was compliant with our regulatory requirements;**
 - **whether the awarding body was compliant with its own policies and procedures;**
 - **whether any error identified in the data used to generate a calculated grade(s) and/or in the grade(s) issued, was properly corrected, and**
 - **decisions relating to any action to be taken against a learner or a centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.**

Scope

2. In respect of GCSE, AS, A Level and Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications, awarding bodies are required to have appeals processes in accordance with GQCov5 of our [Extraordinary Regulatory Framework: General Qualifications – COVID-19 Conditions and Requirements](#).
3. The EPRS (Covid-19) is used for reviewing appeals undertaken by awarding bodies on the following grounds:
 - (a) that the awarding body did not apply any process or procedures pursuant to Condition GQCov3.2(a)(i) consistently or that such process and procedures were not followed properly and fairly;
 - (b) that the awarding body used the wrong data in applying the process and procedures pursuant to Condition GQCov3.2(a)(i);
 - (c) that a result generated by applying the process and procedures pursuant to Condition GQCov3.2(a)(i) was incorrectly issued by the awarding body in respect of one or more learners, and
 - (d) decisions relating to any action to be taken against a learner or a centre following an investigation into malpractice or maladministration.
4. EPRS (Covid-19) relates to the award of the following qualifications:

- Approved GCSE qualifications;
 - Approved GCE AS qualifications;
 - Approved GCE A level qualifications;
 - Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC), and
 - Legacy GCSE, GCE AS and GCE A level qualifications which are only available to learners in Wales¹.
5. For other general qualifications taken this summer, applicants should refer to Ofqual's EPRS process which can be found on their [website](#).
 6. Whilst the EPRS (Covid-19) only applies to the qualifications listed above, we will deal with complaints about the award of other regulated qualifications in line with our [Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy](#).

Who can apply for EPRS (Covid-19)?

7. Applications must be made by a centre on behalf of a learner directly affected by the awarding body's original decision.
8. A Private Candidate who meets the eligibility criteria set out in Condition GQCov3.5 of our Framework may submit an application directly to us.

What is EPRS (Covid-19)?

9. The EPRS (Covid-19) is made up of a panel whose role is to review the process undertaken by the awarding body in handling the appeal.
10. The EPRS (Covid-19) panellists will determine the extent to which the awarding body was compliant with our requirements and with their own policies and procedures. Therefore, only cases that have concluded a final decision stage will usually be heard by us. This is to ensure that the awarding body has had the

¹ WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Information and Communication Technology, WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Information and Communication Technology (Short Course), WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Health and Social Care, WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Home Economics: Child Development, WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Applied ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Health and Social Care and WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care.

opportunity to fully deal with the case and that we review that entire process for compliance.

11. For the applicant, this means that an appeal process has been completed and possibly an independent reviewer has reviewed the decision by the awarding body and upheld that decision, before making an application to us. The EPRS (Covid-19) is the final recourse.
12. In addition, EPRS (Covid-19) will not normally consider an application made more than 20 working days after the date on which the applicant received a final decision from the awarding body.
13. Other complaints relating to awarding bodies' actions in the award of regulated qualifications may be dealt with in line with our [Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy](#).

The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel

14. The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel will normally include our Head of Corporate Governance, Head of Monitoring and Compliance and Head of Regulatory Policy. The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel may at any time seek legal, technical, or specific case related advice, and can also draw on independent reviewers as and when this is deemed necessary.
15. The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel may be undertaken as a desk-based review of all the evidence, or could conduct a hearing, as well as collect evidence including through interviews with relevant persons.

Contacting EPRS (Covid-19)

16. If you wish for your appeal to be reviewed by the EPRS (Covid-19), please contact us on:

Qualifications Wales
Q2 Building
Pencarn Lane,
Imperial Park
Coedkernew
Newport

NP10 8AR

01633 373 222

corporategovernance@qualificationswales.org

17. When you contact us, you should notify us of the following:

- your name;
- the name of the relevant awarding body; and
- a summary of the case, including the name of the relevant qualification and any relevant dates.

You should indicate that you wish the case to be reviewed by our EPRS (Covid-19), and include sufficient information to enable us to determine whether or not the case falls within the scope of our EPRS (Covid-19) process.

Process for review

18. On receiving the request, we will convene the EPRS (Covid-19) panellists to determine if the request is within scope of this policy. On the occasions when it is, we will subsequently contact the applicant to confirm this and outline our timescales to undertake the EPRS (Covid-19) process.
19. Where the request is not within the scope of this policy, we will contact the applicant to let them know within 10 days of receipt of their request explaining the reasons why.
20. The EPRS (Covid-19) process will normally take around 28 days to complete. If we require more time, we will contact the applicant and explain the reasons for this.
21. Where further evidence is required from the applicant and/or awarding body, we will notify them, specifying the evidence we require and set out the timescale in which that evidence must be provided.
22. Qualifications Wales will decide whether the further evidence should be disclosed to the applicant or to the awarding body, as appropriate and may allow a period for representations to be made following such disclosure.

Report

23. The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel will produce a report summarising its findings. This may include recommendations to be made to the awarding body or centre. The report will:
- (a) identify the aspect of the awarding body's own procedures that it believes the awarding body has failed to follow;
 - (b) identify the outcome that the awarding body has failed to secure and any Condition(s) that the panel believes the awarding has not complied with;
 - (c) identify any disadvantage or potential disadvantage to a relevant learner, and
 - (d) explain the reasons for its decision, including setting out the evidence on which it has relied, explaining any inferences it has drawn and any evidence on which it has not felt able to rely.

If the EPRS (Covid-19) Panel identifies instances of potential non-compliance on the part of an awarding body, this will be referred to the Monitoring and Compliance team.

24. Whilst the report concludes the EPRS (Covid-19) process, we envisage that findings of non-compliance will usually initiate a new workstream to investigate whether regulatory action is required in line with our [Taking Action When Things Go Wrong Policy](#).
25. The EPRS (Covid-19) Panel will submit their report to Qualifications Wales' Regulation Board.