



# Guidelines for UK Appeal/Feedback

## Practical graded music exams

For exams within the UK and Ireland only

### Under what circumstances should I get in touch?

At ABRSM we value all communication with applicants, parents and candidates and welcome any feedback you might like to give. We are aware that, on occasion, our customers may feel it necessary to contact us about a recent exam experience or to query the outcome of an exam. The attached form is intended to make this process as efficient as possible. Please read the following guidelines, which explain the available processes.

Please note that the two processes below are to provide ABRSM with details of any concerns you may have *after* receiving a graded practical exam result. The procedure for reporting any concerns arising on the exam day is separate; if you have any concerns of this nature, please let us know by phone or e-mail within 7 days of the exam. This will enable us to investigate the matter before results are issued.

More information can be found in Regulation 18 here: <http://gb.abrsm.org/en/our-exams/information-and-regulations/>

### Our Processes

There are two post-result routes available. Please note that marks cannot be changed retrospectively so this will not be the outcome of either process:

- **Formal Appeal** – this involves a detailed investigation into the outcome of the exam.
- **Informal Feedback** – if your concern is of a more general nature and you do not wish to make a Formal Appeal but still want ABRSM to know of your concern(s).

A copy of the relevant mark form(s) must be sent with the completed form. Please do not send the original(s).

### Formal Appeal Process

#### Which sections of the form do I need to complete?

To provide us with all the information we need to process a Formal Appeal, all sections must be completed. Please return this to us with copies of the relevant mark form(s).

#### What will happen?

ABRSM aims to acknowledge receipt of correspondence within three working days and to resolve the appeal within four weeks of the acknowledgment.

The investigation includes a:

- Detailed analysis of the examiner's work; including their marking statistics, moderation and reading reports, and any previous concerns.
- Thorough analysis of the mark form to ensure the comments are appropriate and accurately support the marks against ABRSM's marking criteria.
- Statistical analysis of the candidate's results history, if available.

Following these investigations, ABRSM may feel that there is enough evidence to arrive at a decision about your appeal. If, however, the initial investigation is inconclusive, ABRSM will then give you the opportunity to provide further evidence in the form of a recording of the candidate performing their exam pieces and a selection of scales (except for Singing exams). The recording will then be reviewed by a senior examiner before the appeal outcome is decided. For this reason, anyone submitting a Formal Appeal may be requested to provide a recording. If a recording supports the original result, the appeal will not be upheld. If a recording is not submitted at ABRSM's request, we will consider the case closed and no further action will be taken.

#### **What are the possible outcomes of my appeal?**

- If after the detailed investigation the original result is supported, the appeal will not be upheld. From 2016, no appeal fee will be charged.
- When the findings of the investigation support the appeal, depending on the circumstances of each case, ABRSM will issue a full refund of the original exam fee.

#### **Informal Feedback**

##### **Which sections of the form do I need to complete?**

In order to provide us with all the information we need, please fill out the following sections of the form and return it to us with copies of the relevant mark form(s):

1. Reason for correspondence
  - 3a. Correspondent details
  - 3b. Candidate details
  - 3c. Applicant details (if you are not the applicant)
4. Reasons for submitting feedback

##### **What will happen?**

We will register and investigate your concerns but please note that there is no official outcome and a response is not guaranteed. However, all feedback is taken seriously and actively contributes to ABRSM's Quality Assurance procedures.

##### **Timeframe for contacting us**

We ask that all concerns are received by the Quality Assurance Office (details below) as soon as possible, and **no later than 6 weeks after the date of the exam**. Any correspondence received after this will be investigated as part of our internal Quality Assurance processes but we cannot guarantee to provide a response in these circumstances.

**Please send correspondence to:**

E-mail: [qa-grades@abrsn.ac.uk](mailto:qa-grades@abrsn.ac.uk)

Postal: **The Quality Assurance Manager**  
**ABRSM**  
**4 London Wall Place**  
**London**  
**EC2Y 5AU**

## **External review**

If an appellant is unsatisfied with ABRSM's final response regarding an appeal, the appellant may seek an external review as to the correctness of the application of ABRSM's Complaints and Appeals Procedure in the particular case.

A request for this should be made within 14 days of the despatch of ABRSM's final response and must be addressed in writing to the Chief Executive, accompanied by a fee ([www.abrsm.org/fees](http://www.abrsm.org/fees)). ABRSM aims to acknowledge the request within three working days and to respond with the outcome within four weeks of the acknowledgement. If ABRSM is unable to respond within this timeframe, the appellant will be kept informed. An independent person will be involved in the external review process. The findings of the external review will be ratified and issued by the Chief Executive. If the external review is upheld, the review fee will be refunded.

## **Regulatory authorities**

When the candidate has completed all available processes detailed previously, and remains unsatisfied with the outcome, the final course of action is a complaint made directly to the regulatory authorities. Customers should contact the regulator using the following link <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-exam-result>. On request ABRSM will submit a full report to either Ofqual, Qualification Wales or the CCEA (Northern Ireland) (depending on where you are located) relating to previously completed stages as well as any other relevant information. The candidate will be notified directly by the relevant examination regulation body of the outcome.