APPEALS POLICY

1. Scope

This policy outlines how Beyond the Bark Ltd (BTB hereafter) deals with appeals. An appeal is defined as an application for a decision taken by BTB in relation to a learner to be overturned. We are committed to providing a fair and transparent appeals service.

2. Responsibilities

The policy applies to learners and BTB. The BTB Director has the overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

3. Policy Principles

Appeals from learners and/or sub-contractors may be made in relation to a decision where we did not apply procedures consistently or those procedures were not followed properly and fairly, examples may include:

- A decision to decline a request to make reasonable adjustments or give special considerations
- The outcome of assessment, including external verification and certification
- Any action taken by BTB following investigations into incidents of malpractice or maladministration

4. Appeals Process

When submitting an appeal, the following supporting information is required, where applicable:

- Learner(s) name and contact details

- Training/qualification/assessment or event to which the appeal refers
- Date of event to which the appeal refers
- Date(s) learner or service user received notification of BTB decision
- Title and certificate number of the training or qualification affected
- Full nature of the appeal

Appeals should be made as early as possible and must be made in writing within 4 weeks of the date of the event that the appeal refers to. As much detail as possible should be submitted along with any supporting evidence available.

An initial response to appeals will normally be made within 5 working days, and a Director of BTB will appoint a representative of BTB to conduct the investigation. The representative will not have had any involvement in the training and assessment process relating to the learner or service user and will be qualified to make a final decision.

A written response will be given to all reasonable written appeals (letter or email) within a maximum of 10* working days from the date of receipt of the appeal to either:

- Amend our original decision considering the new rationale/evidence being put forward and which has now been reviewed; or

- Confirm we stand by our original decision and in doing so the rationale for this decision and where the appellant is not content with the decision made, they may appeal to the relevant regulatory body (SQA Accreditation, Ofqual, Qualifications Wales).

*If this time needs to be extended the applicant will be advised stating a predicted reply date.

Complaints procedure and contact details for a regulator or a regulated Awarding Organisation can be obtained from the following regulators website or from the relevant awarding organisation or regulator.

- SQA Accreditation http://accreditation.sqa.org.uk/accreditation/home

- Ofqual https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual
- Qualification Wales http://qualificationswales.org/splash?orig=/

Where a referral is made to the regulators, BTB will take appropriate, preventative and/or corrective action to prevent re-occurrence as appropriate, such as:

- Identifying any other learners who have been affected to correct and mitigate, as far as possible, the effect of the failure (e.g., and amend the results for the learner(s) affected following an appropriate investigation)
- Reviewing our associated processes and policies to ensure that the 'failure' does not occur again or mitigate the situation as far as possible if the failure that occurred cannot be corrected
- Cooperating with any follow-up investigations required by the regulators and, if appropriate, agree to any remedial action with them.

Where the appeal relates to the outcome of assessment, we will ensure independent review of any assessment evidence concerned.

Where an appeal against assessment brings the outcome of other results into serious question this would be considered a potential 'adverse effect' as other learners may be affected.

In such cases, we will ensure that:

- Any other learner who has been affected is identified
- Effects are corrected or mitigated as far as possible. This may involve adjusting the outcome of assessments (pass/fail) and re-issuing results, or revoking certificates
- Appropriate action is taken to avoid a re-occurrence. This may involve for example taking action against sub-contractors, assessors, instructors or internal quality assurers, external quality assurers.

BTB ensures that any actions are monitored through its internal reporting process. Trends are identified and action put in place to negate reoccurrence.

5. Reporting

We record appeals via a risk register to identify and monitor any recurrent issues or trends.

This policy is reviewed regularly and updated annually or as and when required.