

## ABRSM Appeals Policy – Theory Exams

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 We are committed to efficiently delivering and marking all ABRSM's Music Exams. This includes significant investment in training and monitoring of our processes to ensure accurate and fair outcomes of our assessments
- 1.2 We take complaints about our exams very seriously and any issues raised will be thoroughly investigated with appropriate follow-up action and or support for examiners where required
- 1.3 The information provided in this policy is intended to be a clear guide for teachers, parents and candidates requiring support relating to the outcome of a music theory exam. For further information, please contact [qa-theory@abrs.ac.uk](mailto:qa-theory@abrs.ac.uk)

## **2. Our Responsibility**

- 2.1 As a regulated awarding organisation, ABRSM must establish, maintain and comply with an appeals process in relation to all qualifications we make available

## **3. Who can appeal and when?**

- 3.1 Only those with a direct interest in the relevant exam may lodge an appeal against the outcome of an exam. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - 3.1.1 The candidate, or where the candidate is under 18, the parent/guardian of the candidate
  - 3.1.2 The Applicant
  - 3.1.3 The Teacher
- 3.2 All appeals must be made through ABRSM's online service
- 3.3 All appeals should be submitted on ABRSM's online service within 30 calendar days of the release of results online
- 3.4 ABRSM will then contact the relevant person to request payment details. Appeals cannot be processed without payment of the relevant fee
- 3.5 Appeals can be submitted prior to the receipt of a physical mark form
- 3.6 ABRSM aims to acknowledge all appeals within three working days and to resolve all appeals within four weeks of this acknowledgement

## **4. Online exams**

- 4.1 ABRSM's online exams contain objective based questions which are marked by a computer
- 4.2 ABRSM provides the answers against which each candidates paper is marked. All marking is verified following each exam session and before results are released
- 4.3 If an appeal is submitted for an online exam, ABRSM will conduct a review to ensure that the automated assessment process has attributed the correct marks to the candidate in relation to the answers they provided in their exam

## **5. Paper based exams**

- 5.1 Grades 1-5. Exams taken on paper contain objective based questions which are human marked. We can conduct a review to ensure:
  - 5.1.1 All questions were marked
  - 5.1.2 All marks were correctly entered onto ABRSM's exam systems and;
  - 5.1.3 The results match the marks on the paper
- 5.2 Grades 6-8. Candidates can request a re-mark of their exam paper. Re-marks are reviewed by an independent senior examiner not involved in the original assessment.

## **6. Fees**

- 6.1 Grades 1-5 (Review) £10 per candidate
- 6.2 Grades 6-8 (Paper Re-mark) 50% of the entry fee for the Grade
- 6.3 All fees are required to be paid in advance of an appeal
  - 6.3.1 Once the appeal has been submitted via ABRSM's online service, you will be contacted with a secure payment link within 3 working days
- 6.4 6.4 External review (all Grades) £60 per candidate

## **7. Possible outcomes**

- 7.1 At all grades, marks may be adjusted up as well as down, or they may remain the same
- 7.2 If the mark is adjusted, ABRSM will refund the appeal fee
- 7.3 If the mark remains the same, the appeal fee will be retained and the outcome relayed via email
- 7.4 At Grades 6-8, a mark form report will be produced providing commentary for the marks awarded and emailed to the appellant
- 7.5 If the outcome of an appeal results in a category of achievement being changed, a revised mark form and certificate will be sent

## **8. Escalation**

- 8.1 Where an appellant remains unsatisfied with the outcome of an appeal, you can request an external review
- 8.2 An external mediator (someone independent of ABRSM who is not currently nor has recently been employed by ABRSM) will review the appeals procedures to ensure the investigation process has been followed correctly
- 8.3 An external review does not investigate the original points of concern, it is in place to confirm ABRSM has followed its published protocols and therefore there will be no possibility for marks to be adjusted
- 8.4 Any request for external reviews need to be made within 14 days of receipt of ABRSM's original appeal outcome notification.
- 8.5 ABRSM aims to acknowledge all requests for external review within three working days and to resolve all appeals within four weeks of this acknowledgement

## **9. Regulatory Authorities**

- 9.1 Once all avenues have been explored, additional escalation can be made directly to ABRSM's regulatory authority: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-exam-result>
- 9.2 On request, ABRSM will supply all information required to Ofqual, Qualification Wales or the CCEA (Northern Ireland)
- 9.3 The outcome will be sent directly from the relevant regulatory authority

## **10. Contact Details**

- 10.1 Please use the following contact details for any further information required:
  - 10.1.1 Music Theory exams: [qa-theory@abrsm.ac.uk](mailto:qa-theory@abrsm.ac.uk)