

# ABRSM Appeals Policy – instrumental and singing, diploma and Music Theory exams

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The information in this policy provides a guide for teachers, parents and candidates who need to contact us about the outcome of an exam.
- 1.2 We take appeals seriously and any issues raised are investigated with appropriate follow-up action and/or support for examiners where required.
- 1.3 We are committed to efficiently delivering and marking all our exams. This includes investment in training and monitoring of our processes to ensure accurate and fair outcomes of our assessments.

## 2. Our responsibility

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

## 3. Who can raise an appeal and when?

- 3.1 To submit an appeal you must be someone with a direct interest in the relevant exam. This includes, but is not limited to:

- The candidate, or where the candidate is under 18, the parent/carer of the candidate
- The applicant
- The teacher

- 3.2 You can submit Music Theory, Practical Grade, Performance Grade and ARSM appeals using our [online service](#) or for DipABRSM, LRSM & FRSM emailing [qa-diplomas@abrsms.ac.uk](mailto:qa-diplomas@abrsms.ac.uk) within the following timescales:

Exam type	Appeal route	Submission	Response
Practical and Performance Grades	Exam delivery concerns, results reviews and mark form feedback	Within 3 weeks from release of results online	Within 6 weeks of receipt of appeal
Music Theory	Result re-mark	Within 4 weeks of exam date	Within 6 weeks of receipt of appeal
DipABRSM, LRSM & FRSM	Exam delivery concerns	Within 1 week of exam date	Within 6 weeks of receipt of appeal
DipABRSM, LRSM & FRSM	Results review	Within 3 weeks of release of result	Within 6 weeks of receipt of appeal

- 3.3 In the case of a results review or Music Theory appeal, we will then contact you to request payment of the fee. We cannot process requests until we have received payment. (There is no fee for DipABRSM, LRSM or FRSM diploma appeals.)
- 3.4 We issue an automatic acknowledgment when an appeal is submitted through our online service. For results reviews we also send a separate email with details of how to pay.
- 3.5 We aim to resolve all appeals within six weeks of receiving successful payment for results reviews and Music Theory appeals.

## **4. What happens: instrumental and singing exams including diplomas**

### **4.1 Exam delivery concerns (face-to-face exams)**

- We review the exam audio recording in relation to the feedback received
- We decide on the validity of the appeal and communicate this to the relevant parties.

### **4.2 Results review**

- An independent member of our reviewer panel (not involved in the original exam) reviews the exam audio recording
- The reviewer decides if the original marks are justified or not.

### **4.3 Mark form feedback**

- We conduct a thorough check of the mark form in relation to the feedback received
- We make a decision on the validity of the appeal and communicate this to the relevant parties.

## **5. What happens: Music Theory exams**

### **5.1 Online exams (Grades 1-5)**

- Our online exams contain objective-based questions which are marked by a computer
- We provide the answers against which each candidate's exam is marked. All marking is verified after each exam session and before we release results
- We do not accept marking appeals for Grades 1 to 5 as the exam is digitally marked.

### **5.2 Paper-based exams (Grades 6-8)**

- Candidates can request a re-mark of their exam paper. An independent senior examiner (not involved in the original assessment) carries out the re-mark.

## **6. Possible outcomes**

- 6.1 Exam delivery concerns – in some cases we may need to amend parts of the mark form, and, on occasion, this may include the marks themselves.
- 6.2 Mark form feedback – in some cases we may need to amend parts of the mark form.

6.3 Results review – at all grades, we may adjust marks up or down, or they may stay the same.

- If we decide that the original result is justified, we retain the appeal fee and email a report providing details of the reviewer’s decision to the relevant parties
- If we decide that the original result is unjustified, we refund the appeal fee, amend the mark, update the mark form and in some cases issue a new certificate. (The original certificate must then be destroyed.) We email a report providing details of the reviewer’s decision to the relevant parties.

6.4 Music Theory appeals – at all grades, we may adjust marks up or down, or they may stay the same.

- If we adjust the mark, we refund the appeal fee
- If the mark stays the same, we retain the appeal fee and email the relevant party with the outcome
- At Grades 6 to 8, we email a mark form report providing commentary for the marks awarded to the person making the appeal
- If the outcome of an appeal results in the achievement category being changed, we send a revised mark form and certificate.

## 7. Escalation

7.1 If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of a appeal (all routes), then you can request an external review.

- An external mediator (someone independent of ABRSM who is not currently, nor has recently been, employed by us) will review the appeals procedures to ensure we have followed the investigation process correctly
- An external review does not investigate the original points of concern. It is in place to confirm that we have followed our published procedures and therefore there is no possibility of marks being adjusted
- Requests for an external review must be addressed to our Chief Executive within 14 days of receiving the original appeal outcome notification
- We aim to acknowledge all requests for an external review within three working days and to resolve all appeals within four weeks of this acknowledgement.

## 8. Regulatory authorities (UK-only)

8.1 If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome of your appeal you can contact our regulatory authority: <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-exam-result>

- On request, we will supply all information required to Ofqual, Qualifications Wales or the CCEA (Northern Ireland)
- The outcome will be sent directly from the relevant regulatory authority

## 9. Contact details

9.1 Please email us if you need any further information:

- Instrumental and singing exams: [qa-grades@abrsms.ac.uk](mailto:qa-grades@abrsms.ac.uk)
- Diploma exams: [qa-diplomas@abrsms.ac.uk](mailto:qa-diplomas@abrsms.ac.uk)
- Music Theory exams: [qa-theory@abrsms.ac.uk](mailto:qa-theory@abrsms.ac.uk)