

NEO — Appeals and Complaints Policy

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Review Date	September 2027
Owner	Director NEO & Head of School
Approved by	Diego Melo, Proprietor
Version	v09.26

A fully online school for learners aged 11–18

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out, in one place, how anyone connected with NEO (Nudge Education Online) can raise a complaint or an appeal, how it will be handled, and what to do if they remain dissatisfied. It is the school's written appeals and complaints policy for the purposes of awarding organisation approval (including Pearson Edexcel centre approval), JCQ requirements and OEAS accreditation expectations.

It is an umbrella document: the detailed procedures it describes are set out in full in the Nudge Education **Complaints Policy** (including its NEO procedure) and the **NEO Appeals Procedure**, both of which are expressly incorporated into this policy by reference and published alongside it. Where this summary and a detailed procedure differ, the detailed procedure prevails.

The policy applies to learners, parents and carers, commissioning bodies and external partners of NEO, a fully online school for learners aged 11–18 operated by Nudge Education Ltd. NEO is not a DfE-registered independent school and is not subject to ISI inspection; it is pursuing accreditation under the DfE Online Education Accreditation Scheme (OEAS), quality-assured through Ofsted inspection under the scheme.

2. Principles

- Concerns are best resolved early, informally and through conversation — the formal routes exist for when that has not worked.
- Every complaint and appeal is handled fairly, thoroughly and without penalty to the person raising it.
- Wherever practicable, investigations and reviews are carried out by someone independent of the matter complained about or the decision under appeal.
- Outcomes are communicated in writing, with reasons, within published timescales.
- Records are kept of every formal complaint and appeal, and the outcomes are used to improve the school's provision and practice.
- Safeguarding concerns are never handled under this policy: they go directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**, and all safeguarding decisions defer to the DSL.

3. Which Route Applies

The concern is about...	The route
Any aspect of NEO's provision, policies, staff conduct or the application of NEO procedures	Complaints route (section 4)
An examination or assessment decision — a centre-assessed mark, an entry or tier decision, an access arrangements decision, or an issued result	Appeals route (section 5)

The concern is about...	The route
The safety or welfare of a young person	Directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead — Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
How personal information has been used	privacy@nudgeeducation.co.uk or any route in this policy — see section 6
Suspected malpractice in examinations or assessment	Reported under the JCQ publication Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments — see the NEO Appeals Procedure

4. Complaints

4.1 How to raise a complaint

Concerns can be raised with the relevant member of staff, the learner's named Practitioner-Mentor, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead — by email, by telephone, at a review meeting, or via neo@nudgeeducation.co.uk.

Complaints may also be made in writing to Complaints at Nudge Education, 2 Sirius House, Amethyst Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7YL, or by email to talktonudge@nudgeeducation.co.uk. Complaints should be raised within three months of the matter concerned. The school does not respond to complaints in public forums such as social media.

4.2 The stages

NEO follows the Nudge Education **Complaints Policy** (September 2026): one formal outcome, then one review.

Stage	What happens
Early resolution	The concern is acknowledged within two working days and resolved as quickly as possible through conversation,

Stage	What happens
	with the family kept informed throughout.
Formal complaint	A written complaint to talktonudge@nudgeeducation.co.uk or by post. Acknowledged within five working days; investigated by someone not directly involved; decided by the Director NEO & Head of School (or a nominated senior colleague). A written outcome, with reasons and any actions, normally within 15 working days.
Review	If still dissatisfied, the complainant may ask for one review, in writing, within 10 working days of the outcome, saying why it should be reviewed. At NEO the review is carried out by a panel of at least three people not involved in the original investigation, at least one of whom is independent of NEO's management and running. The complainant may attend and be accompanied. A written final response normally within 15 working days of the request.
External escalation	Once the review has concluded: the commissioning body (for commissioned places); the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for concerns about the conduct of an adult towards a young person; or the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for data protection matters. During the pre-accreditation period NEO also welcomes concerns being copied to the commissioning authority at any stage.

Where a timescale cannot be met, the complainant is told why and given an expected date.

Complaints about the Proprietor are raised in writing to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who determines independently how the complaint is investigated. Complaints about the Director NEO & Head of School are raised in writing to the Proprietor. Where a complaint concerns the commissioning body itself rather than the school, the complainant is directed to that body.

5. Appeals

Appeals concern examinations and assessment. The **NEO Appeals Procedure** sets out the detail; in summary:

- **Internally assessed work.** Candidates are told their centre-assessed marks before submission and may request a review in writing to the Exams Officer within five working days. The review is carried out by a second member of teaching staff independent of the original marking, with a written, reasoned outcome within ten working days and before the submission deadline.
- **Entries, tiers and access arrangements.** A family who disagrees with a decision on examination entry, tier or access arrangements may appeal in writing to the Director NEO & Head of School within ten working days; a written response with reasons follows within ten working days.
- **Post-results services.** After results are issued, clerical re-checks, reviews of marking or moderation, and access to scripts are available through the host examination centre, co-ordinated by the Exams Officer, with the candidate's written consent and within published deadlines.
- **Awarding organisation and regulator.** Where concerns remain after a review of marking, NEO will submit a preliminary and, if necessary, a full appeal to the awarding organisation at the family's request; the final avenue is Ofqual's Exam Procedures Review Service.

No candidate is treated less favourably for appealing in good faith, and awarding organisation and JCQ deadlines are absolute — NEO's internal deadlines are set to protect them.

6. Complaints About Personal Information

A complaint about how NEO has used a learner's or family member's personal information can be raised electronically at any time, including to privacy@nudgeeducation.co.uk. In line with the Data (Use and Access) Act

2025, data protection complaints are acknowledged within 30 days and answered without undue delay — in practice the faster timescales in section 4 apply. Complainants may also contact the Information Commissioner’s Office (ico.org.uk, 0303 123 1113) at any time.

7. Records, Monitoring and Learning

A written log of all formal complaints and appeals, their handling and their outcomes is maintained on a secure system with restricted access. Outcomes are reviewed by the Director NEO & Head of School and reported to the Proprietor, and themes are used to improve provision. Where an outcome leads to disciplinary or similar action, the response to the complainant may be restricted for confidentiality reasons.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Proprietor	Overall accountability; receives complaints about the Director NEO & Head of School; sighted on outcomes and themes.
Director NEO & Head of School	Owns this policy; decides formal complaints and entry/tier/access-arrangement appeals; convenes review panels.
Designated Safeguarding Lead	Receives safeguarding concerns directly; determines the handling of complaints about the Proprietor.
Exams Officer	First point of contact for all examination and assessment appeals; deadlines, records and post-results co-ordination.
Practitioner-Mentors and staff	First port of call for informal concerns; early, honest resolution wherever possible.

9. Incorporated and Related Documents

- Nudge Education **Complaints Policy** (including the NEO complaints procedure) — incorporated by reference
- **NEO Appeals Procedure** v08.26 — incorporated by reference
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** (NEO Online Addendum)
- **NEO — Examination Venues Policy** v08.26 and **NEO — Examination Contingency Plan** v08.26
- **Whistleblowing Policy** (serious concerns outside the scope of this policy)
- JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres and related JCQ publications (current editions)

This policy and the documents it incorporates are published and available to learners, parents and carers, commissioners, awarding organisations and regulatory bodies.

10. Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Director NEO & Head of School, alongside the Complaints Policy and Appeals Procedure, and whenever the school's procedures, JCQ regulations or awarding organisation requirements change.

11. Document Control

Version	Date	Changes
v08.26	August 2026	First combined appeals and complaints policy.
v09.26	September 2026	Complaints route re-aligned with the Nudge Education Complaints Policy v2.0: one formal outcome and one review replace Stage 1 / Stage 2; outcome and review each normally within 15 working days; 10 working

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		days to request a review. NEO's review keeps a panel with an independent member.