

Skillnet Ireland Appeals Procedure

The purpose of this appeals procedure is to ensure that all decisions taken and procedures followed by Skillnet Ireland in relation to its administration in awarding grants and procuring contracts to supply goods/services are applied fairly and consistently. The recipient of a decision by Skillnet Ireland may appeal this decision as set out below.

Appeals of decisions

There are two types of decision which a client of Skillnet Ireland can appeal:

- a decision we have made in awarding or refusing to award a grant following an assessment of grant proposals. Such decisions regarding grant awards and refusals usually involve several people within our organisation and are customarily subject to review by the Board or a committee of the Board of Skillnet Ireland.
- a decision we have made in awarding a contract to supply goods/services following a procurement process.

Grounds for appeal

Decisions can be appealed on the following grounds:

- Proper procedure was not followed in making the decisions;
- The outcome was unreasonable based on the information made available to Skillnet Ireland;
- Too much or too little weight was given to available evidence;
- The interpretation of the facts and/or information supplied to Skillnet Ireland by the applicant was incorrect.
- The decision was inaccurate based on matters of fact; and/or
- The applicant's opinion was not given due consideration;

How to appeal a decision

The recipient of a decision mentioned above who wishes to appeal their decision must make a request for an appeal in writing.

Requests for appeal should be sent to the following addresses:

- a) By post to: Company Secretary
Skillnet Ireland
Fifth Floor, Q House,
76 Furze Road,
Sandyford,
Dublin 18,
D18 E268.

Or

- b) By email to: complaints@skillnetireland.ie

The request for appeal must state the details of the decision which it is appealing and one or more of the grounds for appeal set out above. Each ground of appeal must be supported by evidence and a detailed explanation of why this ground of appeal is being raised. This will facilitate the reviewers of the decision in conducting a thorough examination of the background to the decision and the surrounding facts and circumstances of the case.

Timeline for appeals

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision should send in a request for appeal within 20 working days of the receipt of their decision. If this time limit has passed, applicants may make a written request for extension to one of the above addresses, stating the reason why an extension of time in which to make the appeal is necessary. It shall be at the sole discretion of Skillnet Ireland as to whether it should grant an extension of time to appeal.

All appeals will be dealt with promptly and in an objective, courteous manner. On receipt of a request for appeal, it will be checked to ensure it is made on one of the grounds of appeal stated above. The appeal will be acknowledged as valid or invalid to the applicant within 10 working days. A decision as to the validity or otherwise of an appeal does not require an explanation and shall be at Skillnet Ireland's sole discretion, acting reasonably.

A substantive response will be issued to you within 10 working days from the date of acknowledgment of your request for appeal. If the complexity of the matter requires more time, a revised response time and a progress report will be issued to you. If we make a mistake or fail to deliver a quality service we will apologise and will endeavour to rectify the situation without delay.

The appeals process

All appeals will be fully and impartially investigated by an officer of Skillnet Ireland who was not involved in making the original decision, who will take into account the information available at the time the original decision was made and the evidence submitted with the request for appeal.

At the conclusion of the investigation the officer conducting the appeal will issue a final decision:

- Rejecting the appeal and confirming the original decision;
- Upholding the appeal and revoking the original decision; or
- Upholding the appeal and varying the original decision.

If you are still not happy with the result

If you feel that you have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with our decision on your appeal, it is open to you to contact the Office of the Ombudsman. By law the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any of our administrative actions or procedures as well as delays or inaction in your dealings with us. The Ombudsman provides an impartial, independent and free dispute resolution service.

Such a course of action is in addition to your right to make an appeal as outlined above.

Contact details are as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman

Dublin 2

D02 W773

Tel: 01 6395600

Complaints email: complaints@ombudsman.ie

Website: www.ombudsman.ie

