



Visit Wales
Croeso Cymru

APPEALS PROCEDURE



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Visit Wales Accreditation schemes

Occasionally, and arising from a business's participation in one of Visit Wales' accreditation schemes, Visit Wales may reach a decision which the business may want to challenge. For example, a business may be awarded a star rating lower than anticipated or accreditation might be completely withdrawn, thereby excluding the business from promotion by Visit Wales and its marketing partners. Such decisions might be reached either following a routine assessment visit or a visit arising from a complaint by a visitor.

These decisions will always be communicated in writing and the business will have a right of appeal. In the case of a decision that approval should be withdrawn or refused, eligibility for promotion by Visit Wales and its partners will be withheld pending the outcome of the appeal. In the case of a decision that the business should have a revised star grade, eligibility for promotion will continue, but at the revised grade.

How to appeal

Informal route –

This is the suggested first step:

Contact the Quality Assurance Department of Visit Wales within 10 working days of the Visit Wales letter of confirmation. Let them know your concerns.

They will then allocate your case to one of the Regional Quality Development Managers who will respond to you within 10 working days from receipt, and will attempt to resolve matters without visiting your premises. If appropriate the Regional Quality Development Manager may approach the Joint Technical Group which oversees the application of common, UK, star criteria.

If, in the opinion of either you or the Regional Quality Development Manager, a visit is deemed essential, then the formal route will need to be followed. The Regional Quality Development Manager will write to you, setting out the outcome of the informal route.

Formal route –

Written notification of the appeal must be received by Visit Wales within 21 days of the official notification of Visit Wales' decision. In the case of an establishment that has taken the 'informal' route first, the period of 21 days commences with the issue of the decision letter by the Regional Quality Development Manager. In all other cases the 21 day period commences with the date of the original decision letter.

The written notification of appeal must include the following:

- brief reason/grounds for appeal
- the appeal fee, which corresponds to the standard Visit Wales assessment fee for the year in which the appeal is made (The appeal fee will be refunded in the event of the appeal being upheld)

Visit Wales will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and will ask the appellant to make a written submission within 60 days of the acceptance of the appeal. Should such a submission not be received, or if the submission is deemed to be invalid (for example, if solely issues unconnected to the quality standards are raised), the appeal will be dismissed.

Following receipt of all documentation and fee, Visit Wales will arrange for an officer to visit the premises as soon as possible. This will be a Quality Adviser that has not been directly involved in assessing the business. The visit may be unannounced.

The officer will prepare a report and a copy will be sent to the appellant, together with the decision. There will be no on site debrief or 'instant' decision made on the day.

If the appellant is still not satisfied with the decision, the appellant must make his or her further written submission of his or her case within a further 60 days of the decision. All recent reports, together with any further written submissions of the appellant and any independent witness will be considered by an Appeals Panel.

The Appeals Panel will dismiss the Appeal if the further written submission is not submitted to Visit Wales within the specified period.

The Appeals Panel will be chaired by a member of the Tourism Advisory Panel (or equivalent) and will additionally comprise three trade representatives nominated by the relevant trade association body –

Serviced Accommodation -	British Hospitality Association WTA Small Serviced Accommodation Forum
Caravan Parks -	Caravan and Camping Forum for Wales
Tourist Attractions -	Wales Association of Visitor Attractions
Self Catering -	Wales Association of Self Catering Operators
Other -	As nominated by the Wales Tourism Alliance

The Appeals Panel may, at its absolute discretion, invite the appellant and/or his/her witness to make an oral submission at its meeting and may require the two advisers to attend (i.e. the adviser who made the original recommendation, and the second adviser who undertook the first stage of the 'formal' appeals process).

In the event of an Appeals Panel being equally divided for and against the appeal, the Chair will have the casting vote. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.

Where an appeal is upheld, the appeal fee will be refunded. Where an appeal is dismissed, the appeal fee will be retained. Visit Wales will officially notify the appellant in writing of the Appeal Panel's decision within 14 working days of the meeting of the Appeals Panel.

The operator of an establishment whose approval has been withdrawn may apply for the establishment to be graded again after a period of 12 months from the date Visit Wales officially notifies the operator that approval has been withdrawn. In such cases, approval will not be granted until a further assessment visit has confirmed that the issues which led to the withdrawing of Visit Wales approval have been rectified. A charge will be made for this grading visit in the normal way.

Address to which appeals, together with the appropriate fee, should be sent:

Quality Assurance Department
Visit Wales
Welsh Assembly Government
Rhodfa Padarn
Llanbadarn Fawr
Aberystwyth
Ceredigion
SY23 3UR

Tel: 0300 062 2000