

Academic Appeals Procedure

Version	Date	Changes	Reason for Changes	By	Date of next review
4	July 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applied latest external reference points and updated internal reference points Corrected minor grammatical errors 	To align with trends in UK HE	Head of Quality	Jul/Aug 2022
5	July 2022	Minor errors	Routine Review	Head of Quality	Jul/Aug 24

External Reference Points

The Appeals Policy is developed based on the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance: Concerns, Complaints and Appeals

Related Policies and Documents

This document may be read together with the following documents:

- Complaints Policy

Academic Appeals Procedure

Students have the right to appeal against assessment decisions to the Assessment Board or Academic Board. They must make their appeals using valid grounds concerning the appropriate assessment regulations and procedures. The grounds for an academic appeal are as follows:

- a) A procedural irregularity (including administrative error) resulted in parts of the assessment procedure not being applied correctly. This irregularity has caused doubt about whether the grade/assessment decision is correct; had this irregularity not occurred, the assessment decision may have been different.
- b) The student could not make the examiner aware of the circumstances that affected their performance when the examiner decided the examination result.
- c) There is evidence of **prejudice or bias** on the part of one or more examiners.

The College will not consider the following as grounds for appeal:

- a) **Academic judgement:** A student may not appeal against a grade/decision (academic judgement) simply because they feel the grade is incorrect and does not reflect their work. Such decisions may only be grounds for an appeal if they fall under procedural irregularity. Students should seek clarification of these grades from their lecturer or personal tutor.
- b) **Competency standards:** Concerns relating to the quality of teaching or the programme's delivery will not be considered grounds for appeal. These should be raised under the Student Complaints Policy as they occur.

Early Resolution

If you are unhappy with an assessment decision, the College encourages you to discuss your marks informally with the assessor or tutor. They will be able to provide you with clarification about the assessment decision, explain the College's marking procedures and address any concerns you have. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can make a formal academic appeal.

Formal Academic Appeal

Timescale: Students should lodge academic appeals within one calendar month of the publication of the assessment decision. Appeals received out of time will not be considered. The Board handling your appeal will communicate its decision to you within six weeks of receiving the appeal.

The appeals should be submitted in writing to the Registrar and must include:

- **Reason for the appeal:** This should explain the type of decision you are appealing against, e.g. a final assessment grade
- **Grounds for the appeal:** You should indicate which grounds for appeal (listed above) apply.
- **Summary:** Please summarise why you wish to appeal. Include any steps you have already taken and the outcome you are hoping for as a result of your appeal. You may also attach any supporting evidence.

The Registrar may ask for more evidence or clarification. Once the Registrar has received sufficient evidence, they will hand the case to the Programme Leader to decide the following steps, including inviting you to attend an appeal hearing if needed. The Programme Leader will convene a panel involving the Registrar and at least two tutors or assessors, excluding the one involved with the assessment you are disputing. The Panel will determine whether to:

- a) **Reject the appeal:** if the Panel decides that you do not have sufficient grounds for appeal, the Programme Leader will communicate with you in writing.
- b) **Accept the appeal:** If this is the case, the Panel may invite you to appear in person.

The Panel will give you a formal, written response with one of the following outcomes, accompanied by an explanation:

- a) A revised assessment decision in light of the appeal
- b) No changes to the original assessment decision

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your appeal, you may request that a higher authority reviews your case.

Review Stage

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your academic appeal, you may request that a higher body reviews it within the College.

Timescale: A request for review must be lodged within one calendar month of the appeal outcome and submitted in writing to the Head of Quality, who will communicate the review's result within six weeks.

The Head of Quality will investigate whether the Programme Leader and the first Panel followed the Appeal procedure correctly and fairly and whether they had reached a reasonable outcome. The Head of Quality will communicate the development of the review to you in writing.

Suppose the Programme Leader and Panel followed the correct procedure. The Head of Quality will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to confirm that the College has completed all processes and closes the appeal.

If the Head of Quality allows the appeal, they will appoint a Panel on behalf of the Assessment Board (Academic Board) to hear your case again. The decision of the Academic Board is final

Suppose you are still dissatisfied with your academic appeal's handling or outcome after all internal procedures have been exhausted. In that case, you may refer it to the relevant awarding organisation, following its guidelines.