

## Academic appeals

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Cross reference/related documents:		1.8 Statutory Bodies 1.8.1 Minutes

### 1.0 Rationale and principles which this policy seeks to uphold

- 1.1 The University will assess the performance of students with probity, according to transparent procedures, against common criteria, and with measures that ensure parity and fairness in actions taken.
- 1.2 The University observes the right of a student to make a formal appeal against actions taken in academic matters that affect their academic status or progression on programmes.
- 1.3 The University equally wishes to circumscribe the grounds and processes of appeal, in order that it retains due authority and jurisdiction over academic matters.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 Applies to all students registered in programmes offered by the University.

### 3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Assessment is understood to include any written, practical or oral assessment, continually assessed coursework, thesis or dissertation, or examination which counts towards the final module or award grade.

## **4.0 Policy**

- 4.1 A student has the right to lodge an appeal against the results of an assessment.
- 4.2 The formal grounds under which an appeal may be considered are:
  - 4.2.1 substantial information directly relevant to the quality of a performance in the assessment which was not available to the Examiners when their decision was taken;
  - 4.2.2 alleged improper conduct of the assessment.
- 4.3 Appeals against academic judgement are not permitted. If appellants have issues with regard to a mark awarded, they must demonstrate that the process by which the mark was approved was flawed.
- 4.4 Factors which may adversely affect a student's performance in an assessment must be drawn to the attention of the Examiners in writing by the student no later than 10 working days after the marks are officially published.
- 4.5 Ignorance of the requirement to report factors which may have adversely affected a student's performance, or failure to report such factors on the basis that the student did not anticipate an unsatisfactory result in the assessment, will not by themselves constitute good reason for not informing the Examiners before their decision was taken.

## **5.0 Structures**

- 5.1 The Appeals Committee is a statutory body of the University.
- 5.2 The membership, role and reporting lines of the Committee are set out in the relevant University policy.

## **6.0 Procedures**

- 6.1 Any appeal must be submitted in writing to the Head of Institutional Effectiveness using the relevant form.
- 6.2 Appellants must specify the formal ground or grounds under which they believe their appeal should be considered. They must also specify the basis on which the formal ground(s) is/are invoked.
- 6.3 The written presentation of the case should contain all the relevant arguments on the basis of which the appeal is being made. Other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. where new information comes to light which was not available at the time of the original appeal) the appellant will not at any point thereafter be permitted to introduce new circumstances into the appeal.
- 6.4 On receipt of an appeal form, the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will:
  - 6.4.1 review the completeness of the application;
  - 6.4.2 review the legitimacy of the application;
  - 6.4.3 determine whether or not there are grounds for the appeal to proceed;

- 6.4.4 notify the Registrar and Chief Administrative Officer for review and approval to proceed or rejection of the appeal based on the evidence provided by the student.
- 6.5 If the appeal is found to have grounds to proceed, the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will pass the appeal to the appropriate Dean.
- 6.6 The Dean will respond to the application in writing, and the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will call a meeting of the Appeals Committee.
- 6.7 The appellant and a representative of the Board of Examiners will be invited to attend part of the meeting to supply information relevant to the Committee's questions.
- 6.8 On hearing the appeal, the Committee has the power either to vary the original decision of the Board of Examiners or to confirm it.
- 6.9 The timeframe of the steps of the appeals process will be as follows:

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
6.9.1	Student sends the complete appeal request to the Head of Institutional Effectiveness	-
6.9.2	The Head of Institutional Effectiveness reviews the form and makes sure it is complete and legitimate	5 working days
6.9.3	If required, the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will contact the student for more information, clarification, or evidence	as long as necessary for the Head of Institutional Effectiveness to gain the clarification(s) sought
6.9.4	The Head of Institutional Effectiveness will determine whether or not there are grounds for the appeal to proceed	2 working days
6.9.5	The Registrar and Chief Administrative Officer will review the application and the decision made by the Head of Institutional Effectiveness and will either approve it or reject it. The Registrar and Chief Administrative Officer will then inform the Head of Institutional Effectiveness of the recommendation	5 working days
6.9.6	The Head of Institutional Effectiveness will take action based on the recommendation made by the Registrar and Chief Administrative Officer. If it is advised that the appeal be rejected, then the process ends here and the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will inform the appellant. If it is advised that the appeal be accepted, then the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will pass the process to the relevant Dean	2 working days
6.9.7	The relevant Dean will review the appeal and respond to the Head of Institutional Effectiveness in writing	5 working days

6.9.8	The Head of Institutional Effectiveness will call a meeting of the Appeals Committee. Based on the nature of the appeal, the appellant may be invited to attend the meeting	10 working days
6.9.9	The Appeals Committee will deliberate after the meeting and pass its verdict	2 working days
6.9.10	The Head of Institutional Effectiveness will inform the appellant of the verdict	2 working days

6.10 The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and may not be the subject of further appeal unless it can be evidenced that:

- 6.10.1 the basis of any further appeal is new information that was not available at the time of the earlier appeal;
- 6.10.2 the new appeal arises from circumstances arising only as a consequence of the earlier appeal;
- 6.10.3 the appeal relates to the implementation of the earlier appeal outcome.

6.11 Appeals against Appeals Committee decisions will be considered by the Academic Board as follows:

- 6.11.1 the revised appeal should be submitted to the Head of Institutional effectiveness within 10 working days of the student's notification of the outcome.
- 6.11.2 the student must provide compelling evidence as to why his case needs to be appealed against the Appeals Committee. This could also include the discovery of new evidence previously not available.
- 6.11.3 the same processes between 6.9.1 and 6.9.7 will follow.
- 6.11.4 the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will call a meeting of the Academic Board. Based on the nature of the appeal, the appellant may be invited to attend the meeting. This should happen within a timeframe of 10 working days.
- 6.11.5 the Academic Board will deliberate after the meeting and pass its verdict. This should happen within a timeframe of 2 working days.
- 6.11.6 the Head of Institutional Effectiveness will inform the appellant of the verdict
- 6.11.7 The decision of Academic Board is final and no further appeal is possible against it.

6.12 Appeals Committee decisions will be reported to the External Examiner(s) at the next meeting of the relevant Board of Examiners.