

THE RECORDING WORKSHOP



Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. Policy

1.1 Right to Appeal

1.1.1 The appeals process is available to students of the Recording Workshop, with the exception of students who have had their registration suspended by the College, other than at their own request under the Voluntary Interruption of Studies procedure.

1.1.2 Students have the right to appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee for a review of a final decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on assessment, progression and awards. This applies to the following decisions:

(a) **Appeal against the conditions imposed on progression to the next stage of a taught course or phase of research study.** This includes appeals against a requirement to take reassessments.

(b) **Appeal against a decision that a student cannot progress to the next stage of a taught course (ie their current programme of study is terminated).** This includes students not allowed to progress on their current course but who are offered transfer to another taught course or research degree (and so their registration with the College is not terminated).

(c) **Appeal against a classification decision.**

(d) **Appeal against a decision not to award the qualification for which a student is registered.** This relates to decisions made at the end of a student's taught course; and includes appeals against decisions not to award any qualification or to award a lower qualification.

1.1.3 An appeal may only be submitted in relation to the final decision of an academic body. Appeals regarding provisional marks will not be considered.

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1.1.4 Appeals will only be accepted if submitted within one calendar month of the student receiving notification of the decision they wish to appeal against (or publication of results in the case of classification appeals).

1.1.5 Only written cases, made using the Appeal form and presented clearly and comprehensibly, in accordance with the requirements set out in the Appeals Procedure, will be accepted.

1.1.6 There may be times when a student submits an appeal, the subject of which is actually a complaint, or vice versa. In these cases, the College may decide to reclassify the appeal or complaint, at whatever stage of the procedure that has been reached, and the College will inform the student of this.

1.2 Grounds for Appeals

1.2.1 It is for the student to establish their case and only claims of one of the following circumstances will be considered as grounds for appeal:

(a) That parts of the documented assessment procedure were not applied and that this **procedural irregularity** which has disadvantaged the student was significant enough to have materially affected the decision/recommendation made, rendering it unsound.

(b) That the decision making body took a **decision which no reasonable person would find comprehensible**. Disagreement with the decision does not make it manifestly unreasonable. To apply this ground you must provide substantive argumentation as to why no reasonable person could have arrived at the decision that was made.

(c) **That prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the Examiners took place and can be proven** (evidence must accompany the submission).

1.2.2 The following circumstances will not be considered grounds for appeal:

(a) Perceived past shortcomings in tuition, supervision or support not previously raised with the college cannot be considered as grounds for appeal. Concerns relating to the quality of teaching or supervision, or other circumstances that

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relate to the delivery of a programme of study before the point of assessment or the submission of a thesis or dissertation should be raised under the Student Complaints Policy as they arise.

(b) An Appeal may not be made to question the academic judgement of a College Board of Examiners or individual, and the student will not be permitted to argue the academic merits of his/her work. The student's feeling that the result unfairly reflects the merit of their work or their ability is not a ground of appeal.

(c) An Appeal may not be made against the actual mark awarded for a piece of assessed work, which is a matter of academic judgement, except where the case rests on a claim of procedural irregularity. If a student wishes to have clarification about a mark received for an individual assessment or module they are advised to contact their College or module convenor directly. Errors in calculating or recording marks on the basis of which the original decision was made cannot be submitted as grounds for appeal, unless these errors have been identified by the student and brought to the College's attention but are not accepted by the College.

(d) A student who has submitted an extenuating circumstances claim to their College and is dissatisfied with the outcome should refer to section 1.13 of the [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](#) and Procedures for information regarding the next steps available.

2 Procedure for Appeal

2.1 The full detail of the procedure should be read in conjunction with this Policy document and before submitting an appeal. The procedure is managed by the college principal. Appellants should ensure they understand the procedure.

2.2 Summary of the procedure:

2.2.1 If it is clear the circumstances claimed by the student do not constitute sufficient grounds for an appeal, the case is rejected immediately. This includes instances where:

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(a) the student has provided no substantial, relevant evidence of a procedural irregularity or of prejudice.

(b) the procedural irregularity claimed by the student clearly could not have affected the decision against which the appeal is being made to an extent that would have led to a different decision.

(c) no substantive reasons have been provided for regarding the decision as manifestly unreasonable.

2.2.2. Where it is believed that there may be grounds, a response from the decision making body (Edexcel) is requested.

2.2.3 If the decision making body decides to make a revised recommendation which is accepted by the College and this achieves the student's preferred outcome (that which is stated on the appeal form), the appeal process will come to an end. If, however, the decision making body's revised recommendation differs from the student's preferred outcome, the student will be given the option of accepting the revised recommendation and ending the appeal process or continuing with the appeal. If the student chooses to continue with the appeal and the appeal is subsequently rejected, the College's revised recommendation will stand.

2.2.4 If the decision making body makes no change to its original decision, the decision making body's written response to the student's appeal will be sent to the student for their comment. The case, including any such comment made by the student, will then be referred to a staff member of the Academic Appeals Committee.

2.2.5 Once a member of the Academic Appeals Committee has been personally involved in the student's case whether at any stage of the appeal process or in circumstances relating to the subject of the appeal, they will take no further part in the appeal process.

2.2.6 If the staff member of the Academic Appeals Committee believes that the case is insufficient and therefore bound to fail a hearing of the Committee, the appeal will be rejected.

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2.2.7 Where a case is rejected, the reasons for the decision will be conveyed by letter to the student and, where appropriate, other parties. This will not prevent the student from submitting a revised case within one calendar month of receiving notification of the outcome of their appeal if s/he has new evidence to make known.

2.2.8 If it is clear to the staff member of the Academic Appeals Committee that the original decision is one that would not have been endorsed on behalf of Quality & Standards Committee (QSC) had the full circumstances been known prior to the appeal, the matter may be considered by a member of QSC to determine whether the acceptance on QSC's behalf of the original recommendation should be reversed and the decision making body required to reconsider it. Where the decision making body is required to reconsider the decision but decides not to change its original recommendation, the Chair of QSC will consider the case and may either uphold the original recommendation or dismiss it and substitute a different decision on behalf of QSC. Where a revised recommendation is received it will be referred to the Head of Student Administration or equivalent to action.

2.2.9 If 2.2.8 does not apply, but the member of the Academic Appeals Committee believes that grounds for an appeal may be established, the case will be heard by a panel.

2.2.10 The Panel will comprise three members; two of which will be academic staff members of the Academic Appeals Committee. The third will be a student delegate or where no student delegate is available, a third staff member of the Academic Appeals Committee.

2.2.11 Panel members, the student and the representative of the decision making body will all have access to the same documentary and verbal evidence. An exceptional arrangement may be made at the discretion of the Chair, if a student wishes to request that additional evidence be made available to the Panel only (eg properly certified medical evidence that the student felt unable to share with the College).

2.2.12 A panel of the Academic Appeals Committee has the power to:

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(a) Require members of staff of the College to make written submissions, attend, give evidence, and answer questions

(b) Review the recommendation of the Examiners or the Quality & Standards Committee

(c) If the panel is satisfied that any of the grounds specified in section 1.2 have been established (whether or not a ground originally specified by the student), it may require that the recommendation be reconsidered in the light of the Panel's findings;

The panel may apply one of the following courses of action:

i. refer the case back to the decision making body to reconsider. Where there has been a procedural irregularity, the case will be referred back to the original decision making body to reconsider. The nature of the irregularity should be made clear and the decision making body required to repeat the decision making process without the irregularity. Where a revised recommendation is made as a result it will be referred to the Head of Student Administration or equivalent to action.

ii. refer the case to the Chair of the Academic Appeals Committee with a revised recommendation in cases where the panel believes that there are good reasons not to refer the case back to the decision making body, eg where there has been a claim of prejudice with respect to the original decision making body or where the original decision is deemed to be manifestly unreasonable. The Chair of AAC may substitute a decision on behalf of the College.

d) Otherwise, the Committee will confirm the decision. The student and decision making body will be notified of the decision.

3 Further steps

3.1 Students who consider that the College has failed to carry out its duty to act fairly in the application of the Academic Appeals Policy may write to the principal to request a review of their case. Such requests should be made within one month of the student being notified of the outcome of their application to

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appeal. The principal will conduct a review of the papers relating to the appeal and any other information supplied by the student. Where necessary, the principal may liaise with the Chair of the Academic Appeals Committee in conducting the review and in determining an appropriate outcome. The Chair may substitute a decision on behalf of the College.

Last amended 31st January 2014