



Writtle  
University  
College

## **Academic Appeals Procedure (for Writtle University College students)**

### **QA158a**

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<b>Access (tick as appropriate)</b>	
Public access (website) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> And/Or Internal access (MyWi) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff and Student access <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Or Staff access only <input type="checkbox"/>

## ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURES

***Procedure for dealing with an appeal by an undergraduate or taught-course postgraduate student who is enrolled on a programme leading to an award of the Writtle University College against substantive decisions of an Examination Board.***

- a. A student who wishes to appeal against the decision of a Board of Examiners must do so in writing on the Academic Appeal Form, stating fully and precisely the grounds for appeal. A student appealing against the progress decision of a First or Second Year Board of Examiners must submit a formal appeal within **two weeks** of the publication of results. In all other cases the appeal must be submitted within four weeks of publication of the results.
- b. **Academic Appeal Form** (SF004) is available from the Quality Office, Room L69 and on all Course Scheme pages on Moodle at <http://moodle.writtle.ac.uk/>.
- c. The main legitimate grounds for appeal are the following:
  - i. Extenuating circumstances of which the Board of Examiners was unaware and of which the student could not reasonably have been expected to inform the Board of Examiners in advance, of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result might have been different had they not occurred.
  - ii. Procedural irregularities in the conduct of the Board of Examiners (including alleged administrative error) of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the result might have been different had they not occurred.
- d. Other grounds will be considered on their merits.
- e. The following are not considered legitimate grounds on which to appeal, and any appeals based exclusively on one or more of these grounds will be rejected automatically, and a Completion of Procedures letter would be issued:
  - i. Disagreement with a mark or grade and/or appeals against the academic judgement of internal or external examiners. Coursework and examinations cannot be remarked, except in cases of procedural irregularities.
  - ii. Any provisional mark or informal assessment of the student's work by a member of staff that is not the final mark approved by the Board of Examiners.
  - iii. The retrospective reporting of extenuating circumstances which a student might reasonably have been expected to disclose to the Board of Examiners before their meeting.
  - iv. Appeals against the judgement of the Board of Examiners in assessing the extenuating circumstances.
  - v. Marginal failure to attain a higher class of degree.
  - vi. Appeals where the grounds of complaint concern the inadequacy of teaching or other arrangements during the period of study; such complaints must be raised, in writing, before the examination board meets.

- f. The form must be returned to the HE Quality Officer who will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within five working days.
- g. The HE Quality Officer may reject the appeal if the student does not cite legitimate grounds for appeal. In that case, the HE Quality Officer will so inform the student in writing within 10 days, sending a copy of the Completion of Procedures letter and the Appeal Form to the Writtle University College Quality Manager.
- h. If there appear to be legitimate grounds for appeal then the HE Quality Officer will forward the Appeal Form, together with all relevant documentation, for consideration by the Academic Appeals Panel consisting of the Quality Manager and a Head of School not directly responsible for the Programme Area covering appealing student's course. The Academic Appeals Panel will consider any appeal that meets the criteria stated above (c and d). The student will be informed by the Quality Manager within 10 days from receipt that the investigation is under way.
- i. Any such appeal will be considered by the Academic Appeals Panel, who may consult such persons as they think fit, including the student who has lodged the appeal, in arriving at a decision as to whether or not the appeal is well-founded.
- j. The Academic Appeals Panel will conduct the investigation as quickly as possible but, particularly during the summer vacation, there may be unavoidable delays. The Quality Manager will write to the student within six weeks of receipt about the progress of the appeal and will let the student know when he or she can expect to receive a decision.

#### **The Quality Manager dismisses the appeal**

- k. If the Academic Appeals Panel decides that there are no sufficient grounds for putting the case to the Board of Examiners, the student will be informed in writing, and the reasons for the decision will be stated. The communication of this decision shall, in such cases, constitute the formal dismissal of the appeal.
- l. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, s/he may request a review on the following grounds:
  - i. procedural irregularity in the appeals process
  - ii. consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable given all the circumstances
  - iii. that new material evidence is now available which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.
- m. The review stage will not normally consider the issues afresh or involve further investigation.
- n. In order to request a review of an appeal, students must complete a Request for Review Form (available from the Quality office in room L69) and submit it back to the HE Quality Officer within four weeks from receiving the decision letter.

The HE Quality Officer will then pass the request to the Director of Academic Services, or his/her nominee for consideration. The Director of Academic Services (or his/her authorised nominee) will review the complaint but will not usually consider the issues afresh or undertake a further investigation. The Director of Academic Services or his/her authorised nominee will then respond in writing within fifteen working days where possible with a copy to the HE Quality Officer who will maintain a record of the appeal. Students will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter at this stage.

## The Academic Appeals Panel upholds the appeal

- o. If the Academic Appeals Panel decides there are sufficient grounds for putting the case to the Board of Examiners, they will forward it, together with their written comments, to the relevant Head of School. The Quality Manager will inform the student, and will subsequently inform the student when the Board of Examiners will meet to reconsider the case. On receipt of the appeal and the Academic Appeals Panel's comments, the Head of School shall instruct the Board of Examiners responsible for the assessment against which the student has appealed to reconvene and put before the Board the student's submission, the Academic Appeals Panel 's comments and any material relevant to the original assessment. The Head of School will then formally ask the Board to review its decision. The Academic Appeals Panel will have the right to attend and to address the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- p. If the Academic Appeals Panel decides to uphold an appeal by a Second Year student on the grounds of extenuating circumstances of which the Board of Examiners was unaware and of which the student could not reasonably have been expected to inform the Board of Examiners in advance, the Academic Appeals Panel will decide whether it is appropriate to ask the Head of School to reconvene the Board of Examiners. If it is the Academic Appeals Panel 's view that the likely outcome of such a meeting would be that the Board of Examiners would decide either that the extenuating circumstances should be carried forward to the final year Board, or that the extenuating circumstances would not have a material effect on the results, then the Academic Appeals Panel will not ask the Head of School to reconvene the Board. However, Academic Appeals Panel will ensure that the Head of School is fully apprised of the extenuating circumstances so that they can be placed before the Board of Examiners in the student's final year.
- q. In causing a Board of Examiners to reconvene, the Head of School/Chair may, at his or her discretion, consult by telephone or in writing any internal or external examiner who is unable to attend the reconvened meeting of the Board.
- r. If, following review of its decision, the Board of Examiners is satisfied that there is no reason to amend its original decision the Head of School/Chair will so inform the Academic Appeals Panel in writing, giving the Board's reasons for reaffirming its original decision and its comments, if any, on the grounds for appeal stated by the student.
- s. If, following review of its decision, the Board of Examiners concludes that its original decision was wholly or partly incorrect to the extent that it decides on a new outcome, the Head of School/Chair will so inform the Academic Appeals Panel in writing and advise them of the amended mark or classification.
- t. The decision of the Board of Examiners following review will be communicated in writing to the student stating the grounds for the decision. The communication of the decision shall in all cases constitute the formal conclusion of action taken in accordance with these procedures, and will take a form of Completion of Procedures letter.

## All appeals

- u. [The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education](#) (OIA) provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints or appeals. When the University's internal procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals have been exhausted, the University College will issue a Completion of Procedures letter. Students wishing to avail themselves of the opportunity of an independent review by the OIA must submit their application to the OIA within **twelve months** of the

issue of the Completion of Procedures letter. Full details of the scheme are available on request and will be enclosed with the Completion of Procedures letter.