Frequently Asked Questions for Appeals

Scope

Common questions raised in relation to requests from students for a review of a decision made by an Assessment Board regarding assessment, progression or award.

To be read in conjunction with the Student Appeals Policy, Appeals flowcharts, Appeals case studies and Appeals forms in Section 6 of the Quality Manual

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When is it possible to appeal?
Before you decide whether or not to appeal, it is a good idea to talk to your personal tutor or relevant lecturer. It may be that you have a question which could be answered that way, rather than by making an appeal. You may also find it helpful to take advice from the Students’ Union Support Service.

If you decide to appeal, this must be done as soon as possible after confirmation of the decision regarding your results, progression or award. For taught programmes the decision is made by the Assessment Board and you must appeal no later than 28 calendar days after the release of your results. Approved results for taught programmes are those which have been agreed by the Assessment Board; you will know that this is the case because you will be reminded when the results are released of the options for appeal. For research programmes an appeal may be made no later than 28 calendar days after official notification of registration status or the outcome of your examination.

What is the difference between a provisional result and a final result?
You can only appeal against the final decision of the Assessment Board regarding your results, award or progression. Any results you receive prior to the final Assessment Board are provisional only and you cannot appeal against them. You may receive provisional results during the year, however, you will need to wait until formal notification from the Assessment Board before considering an appeal.

Can I get help putting my appeal together?
Yes. The Union Support Service (USS) is a free, confidential service for students. They will spend time listening and talking to you in order to understand your situation and how you are being affected. They will then explain all the different options to you and what is involved in each one. Once you have decided on your preferred option they will work with you to make it happen. This may involve assistance in writing, explaining relevant rules and regulations, preparing for meetings or hearings, and attending those meetings or hearings with you.

How and where do I submit my appeal?
An appeal can be sent by email, submitted in person or posted.

A Stage 1 appeal (often referred to as a School-level appeal) should be submitted direct to your School (or the University’s Academic Services Department if you are following a Validated Programme) - you should contact your School/ Validated Institution administration office if you are not sure where to direct your appeal.

A Stage 2 appeal (often known as a University-level review) should be submitted to the appeals team in Academic Services: ace@city.ac.uk or Academic Services, E211, Drysdale Building, City University London, Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0HB
Who will look at my appeal?
Your appeal will be reviewed by senior members of staff within your School (or within the University for Validated Institutions). All appeals go through an Initial Scrutiny process which is undertaken by two members of staff. Some appeals are referred to an Appeal Panel hearing; in which case there are three members of staff on the Panel and there will also normally be an adviser, a secretary and a representative from your programme. You can also choose to attend the Appeal Panel and bring a representative if you wish. During the course of your appeal the reviewers may consult with other staff members who have relevant expertise, knowledge or experience.

Taught students should note that an Appeal Panel is not the same as an Extenuating Circumstances Panel; there are separate arrangements for these which are available in Section 6 of the Quality Manual.

How will my appeal be dealt with?
Academic appeals by students are dealt with under Regulations 20, 20b, 21 and 21b (depending on your student group) and are conducted in accordance with the City University Student Appeals Policy. You can refer to the appeals flowcharts for a quick overview of the procedure. All of these documents are available in Section 6 of the Quality Manual.

How quickly will my appeal be dealt with?
You will receive an acknowledgement telling you when your appeal documentation was received. The initial scrutiny can take up to 28 calendar days from the date of receipt. Some appeals are then referred to an appeals panel which can take up to 28 calendar days following notification of submission to panel. You will be notified if consideration of your appeal is going to take longer than the published time frames. You can also refer to the appeals flowcharts for a full timetable.

Many appeals are delayed because the information given by the student is not accurate, complete, or clear. Staff will do their best to get back to you and ask you to make changes but this will inevitably delay the process. If you don’t provide the right information and evidence then it is likely that your appeal will be rejected.

What is the difference between Stage 1 (School-level appeal) and a Stage 2 (University-level review)?
A School/Validated Institution-level appeal (Stage 1 appeal) is a request for a review of the decision of the Assessment Board for taught students or the decision regarding your registration status or examination results for research students.

A University-level review (Stage 2) is a request for a review of the outcome of the School/Validated Institution-level appeal. You must have submitted and received a response to your School/Validated Institution-level appeal before you can consider submitting a request for University-level review.
I don’t understand the advice I have been given about my appeal. What do I do?

Speak to the School or University appeals administrator in the first instance to seek clarification; your programme administrator may also be able to help with detailed advice specific to your course. You may also wish to contact the Union Support Service who will be able to advise you and help you get the clarification you need.

Union Support Service

What is the difference between an appeal and a complaint?

An appeal is directly related to a decision by an Assessment Board regarding a student’s assessment, progression or award. A complaint may concern any aspect of the student experience or the wider University, including educational aspects, with which a student has a grievance (excepting issues which are covered by appeals).

The appeal regulations require certain grounds to be satisfied in order for an appeal to be considered. The complaints regulation does not specify particular grounds which must be met, although it is expected that all reasonable efforts are made to resolve the matter/s informally.

If you aren't sure, speak to your personal tutor, a member of staff in your School Administration Office or the Union Support Service.

Union Support Service

Can I carry on with my studies while my appeal is considered?

The Assessment Board decision about your award or progression stands unless it is changed as a result of an appeal. This means that you are expected to abide by the original decision regarding your results, award or progression unless they are overturned on appeal.

What can be used as evidence in my appeal?

The Appeals form gives detailed guidance on what can, and what cannot be used in evidence and there are also case studies to assist you. Evidence normally takes the form of written confirmation from an objective, independent, third party. It relates to facts, not personal opinions and will often come from an expert or person in authority. Examples include: a medical certificate; a death certificate; an official doctor’s or counsellor’s report; a police incident report; official notification from a court (e.g. if you are acting as a witness); official confirmation of bankruptcy proceedings; a ticket and compensation claim for disrupted travel. All these documents are official and independent. Evidence that will not normally be considered would include supporting statements from friends or relatives as well as evidence that doesn’t relate to the case you are making (e.g. it covers a different period of time or isn’t relevant to your assessment).
What is a material error?
A material error is one that is relevant and significant to the decision made with regards to your assessment, award or progression. You may find it helpful to refer to the appeals case studies when considering whether you think you have grounds for an appeal.

What will be the outcome if my appeal is successful?
The most likely outcome is that you will be given the opportunity for re-assessment. You will find a detailed list of potential outcomes in the Appeals Regulations as well as in the guidance at the end of the appeals form.

What happens if my appeal is unsuccessful?
If you appeal is unsuccessful the original decision regarding your results, progression or award will stand. If your appeal was at Stage 1 then you may wish to consider whether you have grounds for seeking a University-level review.

If your request was for a University-level review then you may wish to consider whether you have grounds to apply to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

What is the OIA?
The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) is an independent scheme which reviews student complaints against Universities. The Scheme is free for students to use. You can only apply to the OIA once you have exhausted the University’s procedures and received a Completion of Procedures letter. Information on the OIA and the types of cases they will consider can be found at: http://www.oiahe.org.uk/.