

ACADEMIC APPEALS (INCLUDING HE PROGRAMMES)

PROCEDURE

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SCOPE

All learners enrolled on a course of study at Dudley College including those enrolled on our HE provision.

Introduction

This procedure is approved by the College's Senior Leadership Group and informed by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals.

Students enrolled on a course awarded by a partner university are referred to the relevant university's policies and procedures, which can be found at:

- University of Wolverhampton - [Current students - University of Wolverhampton \(wlv.ac.uk\)](http://www.wlv.ac.uk)
- University of Worcester - [University policies and procedures - University Of Worcester](#)
- Coventry University - [Key Information | Coventry University](#)

Purpose

To provide a robust and comprehensive procedure to follow when learners disagree with assessment decision or outcome and wishes to appeal against the decision made by the Assessor/Tutor. This procedure applies to all programmes/course delivered by Dudley College.

Definition

As per the OIA's Good Practice Framework, an academic appeal is defined as: "a challenge to or request for reconsideration of a decision by an academic body that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards. This may include a request to change marks or progressions decisions, or final award classifications".

Learner Notification

The learner is notified of their rights to an appeals procedure via the following mechanisms:

- a) During their Induction Programme.
- b) As identified in the Learner Handbook which is provided to each learner at induction (or in the Higher Education handbook in the case of higher education learners).
- c) Ongoing through liaison with the Assessor/Personal Tutor.

Grounds for Appeal

A learner appeal is only valid if based upon one or more of the following:

- The assessment/examination procedures have not been carried out in accordance with Awarding Organisation/approved regulations, or there has been some material administrative error or irregularity
- The Assessor/Tutor/Assessment Board has given insufficient weight to extenuating circumstances which have adversely impacted the learner's performance
- On special grounds if the Assessor/Tutor/Assessment Board has been unaware of extenuating circumstances which might have adversely impacted the learner's performance
- Other grounds where unfair treatment or discrimination is alleged which is outside the exercise of academic judgement and which for good reason had not been brought to the attention of the assessors/examiners.

An appeal based upon a questioning of the academic judgement of an Examiner/Tutor/Assessor is not valid.

Note: A separate 'Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions' procedure is in operation for compliments and complaints. This procedure is notified to all learners during induction and is used for all complaint situations other than appeals against assessment.

Procedure

Early Resolution

Before raising a formal appeal, and within two calendar weeks of receiving notice of a grade/unit assessment, you are expected to try to resolve concerns locally with the relevant staff member(s) as most problems can be resolved quickly and informally in this way.

If you cannot or do not want to talk to the person directly concerned, you can:

- Talk to a personal tutor.
- Discuss the matter with the student representative body (Students' Union). The Students' Union (SU) can help act as a mediator to help resolve appeals informally and can accompany you to a meeting.

If the appeal is in response to an **external assessment**, the learner and tutor/assessor must ensure they have exhausted all the relevant post-results services – see Examinations Administration (including Post Results Service) procedure. The learner must be made aware at this point, that there may be a fee for some of these services.

You should keep a record of any action taken to resolve an issue and keep copies of all relevant correspondence. If the concern(s) cannot be resolved locally, or there are exceptional circumstances where it may not be appropriate to raise the matters locally, you can raise a formal appeal – see below.

Formal Appeals Procedure: Internal Assessment

Any learner wishing to make a formal appeal should complete the Formal Appeal Form (see appendix 1) within 30 working days from receipt of the written notification of the reported incident and send to the Head of Centre. The individual(s) concerned has/have the right of access to all the evidence used to make the decision, to provide a full response.

The Standards Assurance Co-ordinator will register the appeal and the Head of Centre will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within five working days. All appeals will be dealt with fairly and in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation by the Head of Centre or their designated representative.

The relevant Curriculum Manager will be notified, and an appropriate appeals panel will be set-up to review the appeal. The Appeals Panel will consist of three people, none of whom should have been involved with original assessment in any way and will normally be chaired by the Curriculum Manager or Assistant Principal for that area. One member of the panel will be an independent member of the Quality Team. In the case of a part-time learner, the Appeal Panel may also draw on the advice of the employee's line manager or representative.

The panel meeting will take place within three calendar weeks of receipt of the formal appeal.

Learners will be informed of the Appeal Panel members and invited to attend. The Appeals Panel will give the opportunity to everyone involved in the assessment to present their account of the matter under appeal. This account can be given either verbally or in writing, whichever is preferred.

The Appeals Panel will subsequently notify the learner, relevant staff members, and the Awarding Organisation where applicable, of its decision in writing within five working days. The decision of the Appeals Panel is binding within College.

Possible outcomes from the Appeals Panel

- The appeal is upheld.
- The appeal is declined with reasons and advice on what to do next.
- That the original assessment decision is confirmed.
- That the original work should be re-assessed by the original assessor.
- That the original work should be re-assessed by a different assessor appointed by the panel.

If the learner is not satisfied with the Appeals Panel decision, they have the right to appeal to the relevant Awarding Organisation. Dudley College of Technology will provide contact details at the induction stage of the learner's qualification.

Moreover, if the learner wishes to take their appeal further than the Awarding Organisation, they will be supplied with the contact details for the appropriate regulatory authorities. For HE learners, Dudley College of Technology will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to the learners within 28 days of the Appeals Panel decision, for them to apply for a review with the Office of Independent Adjudicators for Higher Education (OIA). Further details can be found here: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/can-you-complain-to-us/>

Formal Appeals Procedure: External Assessment

Any learner wishing to make a formal appeal should complete the Formal Appeal Form (see appendix 1) within 30 working days from receipt of the written notification of the reported incident and send to the Head of Centre. The individual(s) concerned has/have the right of access to all the evidence used to make the decision, to provide a full response.

The Standards Assurance Co-ordinator will register the appeal and the Head of Centre will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within five working days. All appeals will be dealt with fairly and in accordance with the relevant awarding organisation by a designated Assistant Principal. This decision will be communicated in writing to the learner and the Standards Assurance Co-ordinator. If the appeal is considered valid, it will be submitted to the appropriate Awarding Organisation in accordance with their appeals procedures.

If the learner is not satisfied with the Awarding Organisation's decision, they will be provided with the contact details for the appropriate regulatory authority, where they can take their appeal further.

The procedures have a series of time deadlines. The College reserves the right to extend these timescales should the need arise. If this occurs the learner will be informed of the delay. Circumstances that may cause delay include (but are not limited to) key members of staff being absent, incomplete appeal forms, or college closure days.

Appendix I - Formal Appeal Form

Student Name	
Qualification Title	
Examination Body/Awarding Body	
Module/Course Tutor	
Date	
Reason for Appeal (attach supporting evidence, assessment etc. as applicable)	
Student Signature	
Student Email Address	

If you require any help with completing this form or support during the Appeals process, please contact the Quality and Standards Department.

Please ensure all forms are sent to the Standards Assurance Co-ordinator via Quality@dudleycol.ac.uk