



EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT

Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

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Purpose of Policy/Procedure
This procedure explains how students can make an academic appeal and how this will be considered by the University. This procedure seeks to ensure that all students are treated fairly, are not disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control, and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained in alignment with sector standards and expectations.
Scope of Policy/Procedure
<p>This procedure applies to the following groups of students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All students on taught credit bearing programmes delivered wholly by the University, regardless of mode or location of study;• All students on taught credit bearing programmes delivered jointly by the University for which the University is the administering institution;• All full-time and part-time students on research programmes for which the University is the awarding institution. <p>This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:</p> <p>General Academic Regulations</p> <p>Personal Circumstances Procedure</p> <p>Personal Circumstances Evidence Guide for Students</p>

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

1. This procedure explains how students can make an academic appeal and how this will be considered by the University. The procedure seeks to ensure that all students are treated fairly, are not disadvantaged by circumstances beyond their control, and that the standards of the University's awards are maintained in alignment with sector standards and expectations.
2. Appeals will be considered confidentially, transparently, and respectfully in accordance with the University's [Equality and Diversity policies](#). Where a student has declared a disability the University will put in place any [reasonable adjustments](#) to the appeals processes that may be required.

Governance

3. The University Senate has responsibility for overseeing the Academic Appeals Procedure. All students of the University are subject to the jurisdiction of the Senate. The University's Charter states that the Senate is responsible for the academic work of the University, in teaching, in research, and in knowledge exchange, and for the regulation and superintendence of the education of the students of the University ([Charter 8](#)).
4. The Quality Assurance Committee, a sub-committee of the Senate, monitors the outcome of appeals across the University to feed into and, where appropriate, inform the University's quality assurance and enhancement processes.
5. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the [General Academic Regulations](#) and the [Personal Circumstances Procedure](#).

Scope

6. This procedure applies to the following:
 - a. All students on taught credit bearing programmes delivered wholly by the University, regardless of mode or location of study;
 - b. All students on taught credit bearing programmes delivered jointly by the University for which the University is the administering institution;
 - c. All full-time and part-time students on research programmes for which the University is the awarding institution.

What is an academic appeal?

7. An academic appeal is a formal request for a review of a decision by an academic body responsible for making decisions regarding student assessment, progression, or awards.
8. The academic body responsible for making decisions for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students is a [Board of Examiners](#). More information on Boards of Examiners' decisions can be found on the [Exam Results FAQ](#) webpage.
9. The academic body making award decisions relating to Postgraduate Research students is a [Research Examining Committee](#). The body making progress decisions is the Review Panel. For the purposes of this Procedure, the term Board of Examiners will encompass

the Research Examining Committee and the Review Panel. A student can only appeal a Research Examining Committee or Review Panel decision if this results in a requirement to withdraw or a transfer to an alternative degree programme. More information about Research Examining Committee and Review Panel decisions can be found in the [Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Students](#), [Postgraduate Research Monitoring Framework](#), and [General Academic Regulations: Postgraduate Research Degree Regulations](#).

10. To make an appeal a student must explain and evidence grounds for an appeal; challenging [academic judgement](#) is not a valid ground for an appeal. Valid grounds for appeal are set out in paragraphs 45 and 65 of this procedure.
11. There are two stages of appeal within the University, a Stage 1 [Faculty Appeal](#) and a Stage 2 [Senate Appeal](#). The grounds, timelines, and processes for these two stages are set out in this procedure.

When can an appeal be made?

12. An academic appeal can only be made after a Board of Examiners' decision has been released and is showing on the student's record. An appeal cannot be made against unapproved results. More information on how a student can access their Board of Examiners' decision can be found on the [Exam Results FAQ](#) webpage.
13. A Stage 1 [Faculty Appeal](#) can only be submitted once a Board of Examiners' decision has been released; a Stage 2 [Senate Appeal](#) can only be submitted once an outcome to a Faculty Appeal has been issued.

When can an appeal not be made?

14. An academic appeal cannot be made against the below types of decision, as these are not Board of Examiners' decisions. If a student wishes to challenge such a decision they can do so through the [University Complaints Procedure](#).
 - a. Compulsory withdrawal due to lack of student route visa condition compliance
 - b. Failure to register
 - c. An exit award made as a result of a compulsory withdrawal decision due to lack of compliance with student route visa conditions, or failure to register
15. Any penalty imposed as a result of the procedures listed below cannot be changed via an academic appeal. Each of these procedures have their own appeal processes which are outlined in the procedure documents.
 - a. [Student Discipline Procedures](#)
 - b. [Fitness to Practise](#)
 - c. [Procedure For Managing Students with Criminal Proceedings and Unspent Criminal Convictions](#)

How can an appeal be submitted?

16. Students must submit an academic appeal using the relevant form and within the appropriate [timelines](#). Further information on how to do this can be found on the [Academic Appeals](#) web page.

17. Any communication relating to an appeal, including the outcome, will be sent to the student's University email address. If a student no longer has access to their University email account, they must contact their relevant [Faculty Office](#) or the [Senate Office](#) to inform them of an appropriate alternative email address.

Academic Judgement

18. An appeal cannot be made against academic judgement. Academic judgements are the decisions made by academic staff regarding a student's academic performance, using their expert knowledge and understanding of their subject area.
19. The University has robust [marking and moderation](#), and [external examination](#) procedures in place to ensure that appropriate (fair, valid, and reliable) and rigorous standards are applied to assessment marking, and that these standards are applied consistently across a cohort and in line with published assessment criteria.
20. A student cannot make an appeal because they believe that they deserve a higher mark, or because they disagree with the mark given.

Appeal Outcomes

21. The outcome of the appeals process will not normally lead to assessments being re-marked, a change to any mark awarded, or an increase in an award classification. This is because it is not possible to equitably quantify the effect a specific set of circumstances may have had on a student's individual performance.
22. Normally, an upheld or partially upheld appeal will lead to an attempt at an assessment being discounted, or a student being offered the opportunity to repeat one or more modules. An Appeals Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, request that a Board of Examiners reconsider a case in light of new information.
23. An appeal outcome can have funding and finance implications, more information can be found on the following webpages: [Registration Status & Funding Implications](#), [Implications for Visa Holders](#).
24. Making an appeal or an appeal outcome can have visa implications. If a student has concerns about the impact of an appeal or appeal outcome on their visa status, they should contact the [Visa Compliance Team](#).

SUPPORT

25. A student may wish to speak to a member of staff in their Department before they make an appeal, for example their Adviser of Studies, Programme Leader, Year Leader, or Director of Postgraduate Research/Graduate School.
26. The Strath Union Advice Hub can provide students with free, impartial, and confidential advice on the appeals process. More information can be found on the [Strath Union Advice Hub](#) webpage.

27. The University understands that a student engaging with the Academic Appeals Procedure can be stressful. Students are encouraged to engage with the University's wider [support services](#) if they are experiencing distress.
28. If the grounds of an appeal relate to reasonable adjustments made in relation to a disability or long-term health condition, a student may wish to speak to their [Disability Adviser](#) before they make an appeal.

COMPLAINTS

29. The Academic Appeals Procedure is distinct and separate from the [University Complaints Procedure](#). An academic appeal is about decisions made by Boards of Examiners, a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standard of services or the University's action or lack of action on a particular issue. If the content of an appeal is considered to be a complaint matter, then the appeal will be paused until the outcome of a complaint investigation is finalised.
30. More information, including timescales, can be found on the [University Complaints Procedure](#) webpage.

FALSE DECLARATION AND STUDENT MISCONDUCT

31. When a student submits an academic appeal, they declare that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge. If information or documentation submitted with an appeal is found to be false, the appeal will be paused, and the case will be investigated via the [Student Discipline Procedures](#).

WHILE AN APPEAL IS IN PROGRESS

32. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students may be able to continue with their studies while an appeal is under consideration, in order not to disrupt their studies if their appeal is upheld. Students should speak to their Department to understand what is permissible while their appeal is in progress. This could be the Adviser of Studies, Programme Leader, Year Leader, or Director of Postgraduate Research/Graduate School as appropriate. Continuing with studies while an appeal is under consideration is not a guarantee that an appeal will be upheld.
33. Students who have been withdrawn or received an exit award from the Board of Examiners will not normally be able to undertake assessments while their appeal is under consideration. Students should speak to their Department to understand what is permissible while their appeal is in progress. This could be the Adviser of Studies, Programme Leader, Year Leader, or Director of Postgraduate Research/Graduate School as appropriate.
34. A student who has not met the credit or accreditation body requirements to progress into their next year of study will not be permitted to continue with their next year of study while their appeal is under consideration.

35. Students who have been withdrawn, received an exit award, or received a decision that prevents progression to the next year of study from the Board of Examiners will not normally be permitted to attend a placement while an appeal is under consideration.
36. For students who are continuing on their programmes, any Board of Examiners decision that is scheduled to take place while a student has an appeal under consideration will be deferred until the appeals process is complete.
37. Postgraduate Research students may be able to engage with taught elements of their programme, if there are any, while an appeal is under consideration. This should be discussed with the supervisory team and relevant departmental Director of Postgraduate Research/Graduate School when an appeal is submitted. However, for students who have been withdrawn, all research and research related activity would normally be suspended until the appeal is resolved.

TIMELINES AND LATE APPEALS

38. If a student does not submit their appeal within the appropriate timeline their appeal will not be considered unless there are compelling and evidenced reasons for the late appeal. The deadlines for submitting a Faculty Appeal and Senate Appeal are set out in paragraphs 47 and 67 of this procedure.
39. Appeals received twelve months or more after the relevant Board of Examiners' decision will not be considered in any circumstances.
40. Submitting a late appeal can have practical implications on progression and the outcomes that are possible within the appeals process. Students are strongly encouraged to submit appeals within the stated timelines for each stage.
41. This procedure outlines timelines for the University's response to academic appeals. Where it is not possible to meet these timelines, students will be informed of any delay beyond the standard timelines.

GRADUATION

42. Submitting an appeal can have an impact on the timescale for graduation.
43. If a student submits an appeal and then graduates either, in person or in absentia, before the appeal process is completed the University will consider this as the student having withdrawn their appeal.
44. If a student is making an appeal against their final award, they must inform the [Graduations Team](#). Graduation is considered to be acceptance of a final award and an appeal submitted after a student has graduated will not be heard.

STAGE 1 – FACULTY ACADEMIC APPEAL

Grounds for a Faculty Appeal

45. Faculty Appeals must be made under one, or both, of the following grounds, [appropriate evidence](#) must be provided for all grounds:

- a. Medical, personal, or other circumstances which affected a student's academic performance, that the student was unable, for good reason, to tell the University about prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- b. A significant administrative error or breach of policy or procedure.

Submitting a Faculty Appeal

46. After a student has received their [Board of Examiners](#)' decision, they can submit a Faculty Appeal to the appropriate Faculty Office. An appeal should be submitted via the Faculty Appeal Form, which can be found on the [Academic Appeals](#) webpage.
47. A Faculty Appeal should be submitted no later than 2 weeks after the "Results Released" date which is visible on a student's results letter confirming their Board of Examiners' decision. This letter is available on PEGASUS, more information on how a student can access their Board of Examiners' decision can be found on the [Exam Results FAQ](#) webpage. Late appeals will only be considered where a compelling and evidenced reason is provided for the late submission.
48. Within the appeal form students should clearly explain their circumstances, the impact this has had on their academic performance, and the grounds they have for making an appeal. Students must submit the evidence they wish to be considered as part of their appeal with their appeal form and by the deadline. The University will not seek evidence on a student's behalf.
49. Evidence submitted should align with the [Personal Circumstances Evidence Guidelines](#). Evidence may not be accepted if it does not meet the standards described in the document linked above.
50. An appeal submitted by the deadline will normally be considered within 30 working days of the deadline. If there is a delay in responding to an appeal the student will be informed of the reason for this as soon as possible.
51. Each Faculty Office can be contacted at the following email address:
 - a. Faculty of Engineering – eng-appealscomplaints@strath.ac.uk
 - b. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences – hass-appeals@strath.ac.uk
 - c. Faculty of Science – science-appealscomplaints@strath.ac.uk
 - d. Strathclyde Business School – sbs-appealscomplaints@strath.ac.uk

Procedure for Faculty Appeal Consideration

52. There are three stages to the consideration of a Faculty Appeal:
 - a. [Initial Review](#)
 - b. [Pre-Committee Assessment](#)
 - c. [Faculty Appeals Committee Assessment](#)
53. An appeal cannot be considered until all relevant sections of the appeal form have been completed.

Initial Review

54. When a Faculty Appeal is submitted, the Faculty Office will undertake an initial review of the appeal.

55. An appeal may not be heard at this stage for the following reasons:
- a. A Board of Examiners' decision has not been released;
 - b. If the appeal is considered to be a complaint (see paragraph 29);
 - c. The appeal has been submitted on the incorrect form, or the form is not complete;
 - d. The appeal is late, unless there is an evidenced and compelling reason.
56. If an appeal is not heard at this stage, the Faculty Office will inform the student within 5 working days. Depending on the reason for not hearing the appeal at this stage, the Faculty Office may allow the student to resubmit their appeal and will provide the student with a timeline for doing so. If the student resubmits their revised appeal outside of this timeline it will not be heard.

Pre-Committee Assessment

57. The Faculty Office, in consultation with the Vice Dean Academic (or nominee) will then undertake a pre-committee assessment of the appeal. The following aspects of a student's appeal will be considered at this stage:
- a. Has the student submitted appropriate evidence to support their grounds for appeal?
 - b. Is the evidence acceptable in accordance with the [Evidence Guidelines](#)?
 - c. If the appeal contains details of [personal circumstances](#) how was the University made aware of these at the time?
 - d. Can the outcome the student is asking for, or an appropriate alternative outcome, be granted under the [General Academic Regulations](#), or relevant programme regulations?
58. As part of the assessment of a Faculty Appeal a comment on the appeal will be requested from the relevant Department.
59. The final decision on the outcome of the pre-committee assessment will be made by the Vice Dean (Academic) (or nominee) following review of all information provided.
60. In this pre-committee assessment, a decision to uphold, not hear, or progress to full Faculty Appeals Committee consideration will be made. The Faculty Office will send the student a formal letter clearly outlining the reason(s) for the decision. Students will be informed of their right to make a Senate Appeal if there are grounds as outlined in paragraph 65, and the process and timeline for submitting a Stage 2 appeal to Senate will be explained. If an appeal has not been upheld the student will also receive a copy of the departmental response.

Faculty Appeals Committee

61. The Faculty Appeals Committee is made up of members of academic and teaching staff from the student's Faculty and is chaired by the Vice Dean (Academic) (or nominee). To ensure impartiality, any member of the Committee from the student's Department, or who has been previously involved in the student's case, will not be involved in the decision making of an appeal.
62. The Committee will review the Faculty Appeal Form and evidence submitted by the student, the Department's comments on the appeal, the General Academic Regulations

and programme regulations, Personal Circumstances, and any University policies and procedures as relevant to the appeal.

63. Students do not have the opportunity to present in person to the Faculty Appeals Committee.
64. Within 7 working days of assessment by the Faculty Appeals Committee, the Faculty Office will send the student a formal letter clearly explaining the outcome and the reason(s) for the decision. Students will be informed of their right to make a Senate Appeal if there are grounds as outlined in paragraph 65, and the process and timeline for submitting a Stage 2 appeal to Senate will be explained. If an appeal has not been upheld the student will also receive a copy of the departmental response as part of the formal outcome.

STAGE 2 – SENATE ACADEMIC APPEAL

Grounds for a Senate Appeal

65. Senate Appeals must be made under one, or both, of the following grounds, [appropriate evidence](#) must be provided for all grounds:
 - a. Substantial new information which was not available, for good reason, at the Faculty Appeal stage.
 - b. A breach of the appeals procedure in the consideration of the Faculty Appeal.

Submitting a Senate Appeal

66. After a student has received their Faculty Appeal outcome they can submit a Senate Appeal to the Senate Office if they have grounds to do so. A Senate Appeal should be submitted via the Senate Appeal Form, which can be found on the [Academic Appeals](#) webpage.
67. A Senate Appeal should be submitted no later than 3 weeks from the date of the Faculty Appeal outcome letter. Late appeals will only be considered where a compelling and evidenced reason is provided for the late submission.
68. Within the appeal form students should explain their grounds for making a Senate Appeal. They should provide any evidence that they want to be considered as part of their appeal with their appeal form. The University will not seek evidence on a student's behalf.
69. Evidence submitted should align with the [Personal Circumstances Evidence Guidelines](#). Evidence may not be accepted if it does not meet the standards described in the document linked above.
70. A student does not need to submit any documentation that was submitted with their Faculty Appeal. All Faculty Appeal documentation will be considered as part of the Senate Appeal process.
71. An appeal submitted by the deadline will normally be considered within 30 working days. If there is a delay in responding to an appeal the student will be informed of the reason for this as soon as possible.

72. The Senate Office can be contacted at the following email address:

- a. senate-appeals@strath.ac.uk

Procedure for Senate Appeal Consideration

73. There are three stages to the consideration of a Senate Appeal

- a. [Initial Review](#)
- b. [Pre-Committee Assessment](#)
- c. [Senate Appeals Committee Assessment](#)

74. An appeal cannot be considered until all relevant sections of the appeal form have been completed.

Initial Review

75. When a Senate Appeal is submitted, the Senate Office will undertake an initial review of the appeal, checking to ensure the appeal is valid and addresses all the points required within this Procedure.

76. An appeal may not be heard at this stage for the following reasons:

- a. A Faculty Appeal outcome has not been made.
- b. The appeal has been submitted on the incorrect form, or the form is not complete.
- c. The appeal is late, unless there is an evidenced and compelling reason.

77. If an appeal is not heard at this stage, the Senate Office will inform the student within 5 working days. Depending on the reason for not hearing the appeal at this stage, the Senate Office may allow the student to resubmit their appeal and will provide the student with a timeline for doing so. If the student resubmits their revised appeal outside of this timeline it will not be heard.

Pre-Committee Assessment

78. The Vice Principal (or nominee), in consultation with the Senate Office, will then undertake a pre-committee assessment of the appeal. The following aspects of a student's appeal will be considered at this stage:

- a. Has the student submitted appropriate evidence to support their grounds for appeal?
- b. Is the evidence acceptable in accordance with the [Evidence Guidelines](#)?
- c. Can the outcome the student is seeking be granted under the [General Academic Regulations](#) or relevant programme regulations?
- d. Are there any further outcomes possible, beyond what has been granted by the Faculty Appeals Committee?

79. In this pre-committee assessment, a decision not to progress to a full Senate Appeals Committee consideration can be made.

80. The final decision on the outcome of the pre-committee assessment will be made by the Vice Principal (or nominee).

81. If an appeal is not upheld at this stage, the Senate Office will send the student a formal letter clearly explaining the outcome and the reason(s) for the decision. Students will be informed that they have now exhausted the University's appeal process, and that there is

no further opportunity to reconsider the Senate Appeal. Students will be informed of their right to take their case forward for external review, in line with paragraph 87.

Senate Appeals Committee

82. If grounds for an appeal are established, and the case is not resolved at the pre-committee stage, then the appeal will progress for assessment by the Senate Appeals Committee.
83. The Senate Appeals Committee is comprised of the Vice Principal (or nominee) and one, or more, Deputy Associate Principals.
84. The Committee will review all of the documents relevant to the Faculty and Senate Appeals. This will include all information submitted by the student and may include the [General Academic Regulations](#) and programme regulations, and any University policies and procedures as relevant to the appeal.
85. Students do not have the opportunity to present in person to the Senate Appeal Committee.
86. Following assessment by the Senate Appeal Committee, the Senate Office will send the student a formal letter clearly explaining the outcome and the reason(s) for the decision. Students will be informed that they have now exhausted the University's appeal process, and that there is no further opportunity to reconsider the Senate Appeal. Students will be informed of their right to take their case forward for external review, in line with paragraph 87.

SCOTTISH PUBLIC SERVICES OMBUDSMAN (SPSO)

87. The SPSO is the final stage for complaints about most organisations that provide public services in Scotland, including Universities. Their service is independent, free and confidential.
88. If a student has completed the internal stages of an academic appeal, they have the right to apply to the SPSO for external review of the handling of their appeal by the University. The SPSO will consider how the University handled the appeal in the context of its internal procedures. The SPSO will not change the outcome of an appeal or consider issues of academic judgement.
89. Further information is available here: [SPSO](#).

DATA PROTECTION

90. The University recognises that the difficulties students face may be personal and private, and that students may be reluctant to disclose them to a member of University staff, however students are encouraged to do so for their own benefit. The University will deal with personal information sensitively and will ensure the information is not disclosed unnecessarily.
91. When a student submits personal data (including special category data – for example, about health) that they wish to be considered by the University for the purpose of an

appeal, they will be asked for their explicit consent to process this data. Students should note that if they provide evidence for any other living individual, e.g. for a relative, then where possible the student must explain to them how their data will be used and obtain their permission to submit this to the University.

92. The University handles personal data in compliance with Data Protection legislation. Personal information may be shared with members of staff who can assist with the investigation of an appeal. At the end of the Appeal process, the University will retain a full record of information that students have provided, including any sensitive or special category data, in order to meet its public task and contractual responsibilities and, where necessary, to respond to legal claims.
93. By submitting evidence as part of an academic appeal, a student is declaring that the evidence is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge. They are declaring that they have permission to share the evidence with the University for the purpose of managing their appeal. The University reserves the right to verify any evidence that is provided with an academic appeal.
94. Details about the University's processing of personal data can be found on the [Data Protection webpages](#). Students may also wish to refer to the University's [privacy notice](#).

APPENDIX 1 – ROLES

Roles and responsibilities related to academic appeals:

Role/Team	Responsibilities
Principal	Under Statute 5.2 the Principal is responsible for maintaining and promoting the efficiency and good order of the University.
	The Principal chairs the University Senate.
Vice-Principal	In the absence of the Principal the Vice-Principal undertakes the duties of the Principal.
	The Vice-Principal has a specific decision-making role under the Academic Appeal Procedure.
Deputy Associate Principal	Deputy Associate Principals have a specific decision-making role under the Academic Appeals Procedure.
Vice Dean (Academic)	Vice Deans have a specific decision-making role under the Academic Appeals Procedure.
Board of Examiners	An academic body with responsibility for determination of student assessment, progression and awards. Can refer to a General Board of Examiners, an Honours Board of Examiners, an Integrated Masters Board of Examiners, a Taught Postgraduate Taught Board of Examiners.
Research Examining Committee/Review Panel	An academic body with responsibility for determination of Postgraduate Research student awards and progression.
Faculty Office	Professional Services Office located within each Faculty that manages the appeals process at Faculty Appeal stage.
Senate Office	Professional Services Office in the Directorate of Education Enhancement that manages the appeals process at Senate Appeal stage. The Senate Office provides advice to University staff members on the Academic Appeals Procedure, and additionally supports the University Senate, the Principal and the Vice-Principal.
Student Support Services	
Advice Hub – Strath Union	Provides confidential and impartial advice and support to students on the academic appeals process.
Disability and Wellbeing Service	Provides a broad range of support to students with any disability, mental health, or wellbeing related need.
International Student Support/Visa Compliance	Provides guidance and information to International Student on student related visa and immigration matters.

APPENDIX 2 – QUICK GUIDE TO ACADEMIC APPEALS

