

Academic Assessment Appeals Policy

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Date Agreed at LMT - AFTER Consultation Period (<i>if required</i>)			

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1. INTRODUCTION

The College is committed to student-centred delivery and assessment provision. Every effort is made to ensure that all candidates receive fair treatment in all aspects of assessment. The aim of this policy is to ensure a fair and consistent approach is available for students who have grounds for appeal. The main body of the policy covers appeals for normal processes. This policy works in conjunction with the Centre Assessment Policy.

This appeals procedure is divided into two sections;

- **SECTION A** applies to all Non-University Further and Higher Education courses.
- **SECTION B** applies to all University Validated Courses

The student must exhaust each stage in the internal procedure before proceeding to the next stage. Appeals regarding assessments/examinations that are externally set and externally assessed/marked by the Awarding Body must follow the College's appeals process. If the appeal is upheld the College will appeal to the Awarding Body on behalf of the student. This policy complies with Awarding Body guidelines and the JCQ "A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes".

For all other assessments, the College procedures should be exhausted before using awarding body procedures. The College will submit an appeal on the student's behalf, only after an appeal has been completed in full and if requested to do so by the student.

The College policy for students' academic assessment appeals may be reviewed and alternative processes put in place as a result of the Covid19 circumstances. In such cases the College will follow regulatory and Awarding Body/Organisation (AO) guidelines.

Note: For consortium partnerships, the relevant information/evidence required to carry out an appeal will be sent to the centre where the student is registered to allow them to carry out their appeals process.

2. GROUNDS FOR MAKING ACADEMIC APPEALS

Academic appeals are only permitted on the grounds of

- I. challenges to academic results: the awarding body post results service checker must be followed in the first instance within the timeline specified by the relevant awarding body. If an appeal is still required after conclusion of the post results check, the appeal must be submitted through the College within the timelines set out in this document.
- II. procedural irregularities (for example Awarding Body procedures not being followed, assessment regulations not followed, assessment conditions that have unfairly disadvantaged a student(s)) and/or an administrative error.
or
- III. new evidence of extenuating circumstances that could not be submitted prior to the assessment decision.

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In the latter case the student will be required to provide a satisfactory explanation as to why such information could not be submitted prior to the assessment decision taking place. It is not normal practice for late evidence to be considered. **Only in exceptional circumstances will such evidence be considered.**

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SECTION A: THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL NON-UNIVERSITY FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION COURSES.

3. PROCEDURE

- 3.1 The student should register his/her appeal by completing the Assessment Appeal form (AA1 form, Appendix 1) and emailing it directly to the Quality Enhancement Unit (QEU) using email QEU@nwrc.ac.uk within 5 working days of receiving the assessment/examination result. Should the awarding body timeline differ from that set out above, the Awarding Body Regulations must be adhered to.
- 3.2 QEU will forward to the curriculum manager/course coordinator and the relevant department's Administrator – Curriculum, who will set up the meeting within 3 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 3.3 QEU will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 3 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 3.4 The appeals panel will consist of the following:
- A Curriculum Manager (from a different curriculum area) (chair)
 - the course coordinator (from a different course)
 - the internal verifier/moderator for the course
 - Head of Department or Deputy Head of Department
 - the Head of QEU or QEU HE Curriculum Lead or QEU Quality Manager
- 3.5 The appeals procedure will focus on whether the College
- used procedures that were consistent with the requirements of the awarding body
 - applied the procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgments.
 - considered evidence of extenuating circumstances that could not be submitted prior to the assessment decision.
- 3.6 In respect of assessment outcomes, the appeals procedure investigates procedures and is not concerned with making judgments about the student's work. The outcome is recorded on the AA2 form (Appendix 2).
- 3.7 Students may be entitled to be heard in person and to be accompanied by a fellow student or member of Student Union. However, panels have discretion not to interview students where written evidence is deemed sufficient.
- 3.8 The Curriculum Manager will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the decision normally within 1 working day of the appeal decision being made.
- 3.9 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, and College processes have been exhausted, an appeal can be submitted to the Awarding Body on their behalf. This should be communicated to the College within 3 working days and providing permission to the College to pursue an appeal with the Awarding Body. In this instance Appendix 1 of the JCQ 'A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes' will be used.

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3.10 If the student is dissatisfied with the response from the awarding body they may next appeal to the regulator of qualifications for Northern Ireland

CCEA
29 Clarendon Road
Clarendon Dock
Belfast
BT1 3BG
www.ccea.org.uk

3.11 If the student remains dissatisfied after exhausting all other options, they may apply to the NI Public Services Ombudsman

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN
www.nipso.org.uk

Key Dates for Results: - please note any change to these will be published by the Awarding Organisation.

AWARDING ORGANISATION	DATE ISSUED TO CANDIDATES
RSL	Thursday 17 August 2023
Pearson BTEC (Nationals)	Thursday 17 August 2023
UAL	Thursday 17 August 2023
Pearson BTEC (Level 1/2)	Thursday 24 August 2023
GCSEs	Thursday 24 August 2023
Essential Skills	8 weeks approximately after last date of exam series
All other qualifications	As and when received from the awarding body

Note: All formal appeals should be sent to QEU by email (QEU@nwrc.ac.uk) within 5 working days of receipt of the assessment/examination result for procedural irregularities or Extenuating Circumstances, and 5 working days of the post results service checker for results.

Note: All appeals to Awarding Bodies will be sent to the relevant Awarding Body per Awarding Body/JCQ guidelines by the College once College processes have been exhausted.

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SECTION B: THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL UNIVERSITY VALIDATED COURSES

There are matters which are not open to review through the appeals procedure. These include:

- a) challenges to the academic judgement of the examiners on your performance (i.e., marks awarded cannot be appealed); or
- b) complaints about the delivery or management of a course after you have presented yourself for examination; you should raise such concerns through the College’s complaints procedures at an earlier stage as soon as they arise.

An Appeals Panel cannot make academic judgements, that is, it cannot change student marks to enable an assessment to be passed or the classification of an award to be changed. Instead, if the appeal is upheld the student will be permitted to complete, take, or repeat the assessment which, if the student is successful, will enable them to proceed to the next stage of the course or to complete it.

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4. PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The student should register his/her appeal by completing the Assessment Appeal form (AA1, see appendix 1) and forwarding it to QEU by email to QEU@nwrc.ac.uk within 10 working days of receiving the assessment/examination result.
- 4.2 The Course Director receives the appeal and forwards it to their department's Administrator – Curriculum to set the meeting up within 5 working days.
- 4.3 The appeals panel will consist of the following:
- Member of Quality Enhancement Unit (chair)
 - Course Director
 - A Curriculum Manager
- 4.4 The appeals procedure will focus on whether the College
- used procedures that were consistent with the requirements of the awarding body
 - applied the procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgments.
 - considered evidence of extenuating circumstances that could not be submitted prior to the assessment decision
- 4.5 In respect of assessment outcomes, the appeals procedure investigates procedures and is not concerned with making judgments about the student's work. The outcome is recorded on form AA2.
- 4.6 Students are may be entitled to be heard in person and to be accompanied by a fellow student or member of Student Union. However, panels have discretion not to interview students where written evidence is convincing.
- 4.7 The Course Director will notify the student in writing of the outcome of the decision normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal form.
- 4.8 The decision of the Appeals Review Panel is the final stage of the College's internal appeals procedure.
- 4.9 Ulster University validated courses; the Course Director should inform the FPM of appeals and outcomes.
- 4.10 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal he/she may refer to the University.
- 4.11 If the student remains dissatisfied after exhausting all other options, they may apply to the NI Public Services Ombudsman

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
Progressive House
33 Wellington Place
Belfast
BT1 6HN
www.nipso.org.uk

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APPENDIX 1: ASSESSMENT APPEAL FORM AA1 FOR ALL COURSES

This form should be completed and returned to the course coordinator within 10 working days of receiving your mark/grade.

Student Name	
Course and Year	
Campus	
Module/Unit Tutor	
Date of assessment/ Assessment (or Exam) Board Decision	

Explain in detail the basis of your appeal. Please attach copies of any evidence to clarify your points. Only information relating to the assessment procedures can be considered **or** evidence of extenuating circumstances not known to the Assessment Board/Board of Examiners-together with explanation of why these circumstances were not submitted within required time frame.

Has evidence been submitted with this form?	Yes/No (<i>Please delete as appropriate</i>)

PRIVACY NOTICE: Information gathered on this form will be processed within the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and used for the purpose of investigating your complaint. The College is permitted to process personal data where there is a 'lawful basis' to do so. This processing is necessary for the performance of a **public task** or in the exercise of official authority vested in the College as a Data Controller, e.g. Public Authorities are subject to the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO). Your information may be shared with relevant College staff for the purpose of investigating your complaint. It may also be shared with authorised third parties such as NIPSO, legal professionals where there is a lawful basis to do so. All personal data will be held in line with the Sector Retention & Disposal Schedule. For further information on your individual rights and to access our Data Protection Policy, please visit www.nwrc.ac.uk/policies

I realise that if I choose not to agree to these terms, the College will be unable to investigate my complaint.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date appeal received	
Signed (QEU)	

APPENDIX 2: STATEMENT FROM THE APPEALS PANEL AA2

Date, Time, Venue of Panel meeting	
Panel Members attending	
Student Name:	Student ID:
Student in attendance yes/no	State if student accompanied yes/no
Module/Unit Name:	Module/Unit Code:
Please comment on the evidence presented by the student:	
Appeal Upheld / Not Upheld (delete as appropriate)	
Actions required	
Signed (chair)	
Date	

A copy of this completed form should be retained by the relevant Head of Department and a copy must be sent to the Quality Manager as it is a requirement that the College maintain a central register of appeals.



APPENDIX 3: APPEALS LETTER

Name
Address

Date

Student Name and ID:
Course:
Unit:

Dear **name**

I wish to inform you that your appeal re Unit **name and number** has been upheld/not been upheld (**delete as appropriate**). This decision was made at the Appeals Panel Meeting on **date** where it was verified that **reason for appeal being upheld/not upheld**.

Unit **add unit number and name**
Add summary from appeal board, as appropriate.

The decision of the Appeal Panel Board is final.
Add any additional advice here e.g. "You have the opportunity to resit/resubmit this exam/coursework, in line with College enrolment procedures."

If you are unhappy with the outcome you may appeal to the Awarding Body through the College. Please advise within 3 working days of receipt of this letter. Email to geu@nwrc.ac.uk.

You may contact **name**, Curriculum Manager for **Vocational Area** if you wish to discuss the options available for your progression.

Yours sincerely

Name
Department
Email