

**UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM**

**GUIDANCE NOTE ON ACADEMIC APPEALS**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Guidance Note should be read in conjunction with the Code of Practice on Academic Appeals.
- 1.2 Students are encouraged to liaise directly with their School throughout their study and if they intend to submit an appeal in order to allow the School the opportunity to assess whether an appropriate course of action is available outside of the appeals process and within University Regulations. Students undertaking this opportunity will still need to meet appeal deadlines if the School is not forthcoming in providing a response.
- 1.3 Schools may permit a student to continue in temporary attendance on their programme, depending on the circumstances of the particular programme and progress requirements for the programme. Students wishing to do this must consult with their School and understand that any such arrangement is at the discretion of the School.
- 1.4 A range of support and advice is available to students with regard to the Academic Appeals process, including 'Guild Advice' in the Guild of Students, and Personal and Welfare Tutors.

## 2. Academic Appeal Stage

- 2.1 Appeals must be submitted on the appropriate form, a copy of which is available on the University's web pages at <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/complaint-appeal/appeals/appeal.aspx>

### Deadlines

- 2.2 Undergraduate and postgraduate taught students receive their results on the 'My Exams' tab of their 'my.bham.ac.uk' portal. The deadline date to submit an appeal is **10 working days** from the 'results release date' on the 'My Exams' tab.
- 2.3 Postgraduate Research students will receive an email from Registry confirming their progress decision and state a personal deadline date which will be **10 working days** from the date of the email.

### Evidence

- 2.4 Supporting evidence should be relevant to show what circumstances it corroborates. For example, any appeals based on medical grounds should be supported by medical evidence to demonstrate the impact the circumstances had on the student. Evidence that does not demonstrate the impact on the student but supports the circumstances specified can also be submitted. Some examples of the types of evidence that can be submitted include but are not limited to the following:
  - (a) a signed and dated medical letter/certificate or statement by an independent medical practitioner which is on letter headed paper;

- (b) a letter from a counsellor detailing the impact of the circumstances on letter headed paper which is signed and dated;
  - (c) evidence of prescriptions dated and signed;
  - (d) family statements that are signed and dated (although these are not as strong as independent evidence);
  - (e) bank statements;
  - (f) statements from police or court.
- 2.5 It is the student's responsibility to provide all supporting evidence.
- 2.6 It is the student's responsibility to obtain the necessary consent for the disclosure of relevant information relating to third parties.
- 2.7 All evidence listed in the appeal submission must be submitted. If any evidence is not available in time for the deadline date, the submission form must still be submitted. Outstanding evidence should be identified in the submission and when it will be available. The Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team has the discretion to deem an appeal ineligible if evidence is not submitted with a reasonable timeframe. It also has the discretion to process an appeal if remaining evidence is not received within a reasonable timeframe.
- 2.8 All submissions should be submitted by email to The Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team and students will receive confirmation of receipt of their academic appeal by email.

### **3. Senate Review Stage**

- 3.1 A student may request the review of a decision taken at the initial Academic Appeal stage on the grounds specified in Section 3.3 in the Code of Practice on Academic Appeals.
- 3.2 A copy of the appropriate submission form can be found on the web. The form must be completed for written submissions with accompanying evidence. Please refer to Section 4 above for information about submitting supporting evidence.
- 3.3 It is important to note that the grounds for seeking a Senate Review are narrowly defined. The Senate Review is not simply an opportunity to have a case rejected at the initial appeal stage reconsidered.

#### School responses

- 3.4 Schools are provided with an opportunity to respond to eligible student submissions. All student submissions are sent to the relevant School that will consider the submission and submit a School response to the Complaints and Appeals Team. A copy of the School response will be forwarded to the student before the Panel meets.
- 3.5 When a School response is received, the appeal will be forwarded to a Senate Review Panel for consideration at this stage.

**4. Grievance to Council**

A student whose appeal has been rejected by a Senate Review Panel may be able to submit a Grievance to Council. Students should be aware that the grounds for making a Grievance to Council are extremely rare. If a student has previously received a Completion of Procedures letter, this will be rescinded and a fresh one issued in the event of the Grievance being deemed ineligible or if it is unsuccessful.

**5. Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)**

A student who is unhappy at the outcome of an appeal may be able to submit a Complaint to the OIA. The OIA will normally expect a student to have exhausted the University's internal processes and to have received a Completion of Procedures letter from the University. A Complaint must be submitted to the OIA no later than **12 months** after the issuing of a Completion of Procedures letter.

Advice on these procedures is available from the OIA; from Guild Advice at the Guild of Students, School Personal and Welfare Tutors and from the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals Team in the University Registry.