



Appeals: Frequently Asked Questions

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What is an appeal?

Appeals are submissions by students seeking the amendment, or reversal, of a decision taken by the Board of Examiners because of their academic performance. Students have the right to make representations against any progress decision that has had a negative effect upon them.

This is done by completing and submitting an Academic Appeal form. For more information on how to complete this form, please refer to [Guidance for completing the Academic Appeal Form](#).

Extenuating Circumstances are submissions by students to their School, drawing attention to circumstances which may affect, or have affected, their academic performance, submitted prior to meetings of the relevant Board of Examiners.

If you are unclear why a progress decision has been made you should discuss the situation with your School and/or Personal Tutor first. Please note that if your extenuating circumstances have already been considered by your School, the same circumstances cannot normally be considered through the Appeals process unless you are able to provide new additional evidence that has not been considered by your School.

Can I use the appeal process to request to be changed from external to internal student status?

If you are due to repeat modules as an External Student (repeating assessments only, with no access to teaching and no fee paying) but wish to return instead as an Internal Student (attending teaching, paying fees) please speak with your School prior to submitting your appeal. There is a School-level process that can be used for this request instead of the appeals process.

Please note that, if it is too late in the semester to return as an Internal Student immediately, you may have to wait until the next academic year to return, to enable you to access all the teaching for which you will be paying. In this situation, you may be placed on a Leave of Absence until you return to attend teaching.

Where can I go to get help and advice?

A range of sources of help and advice are available to you including those listed on the [Sources of Help and Advice](#) page or you can contact [Guild Advice](#) in the Guild of Students, which has experienced staff that will be able to provide you with advice and support regarding the appeals process.



Can I appeal if I disagree with the marks I have received?

No, you cannot appeal on the grounds that you are dissatisfied with your results and that you believe that you deserve higher marks.

Furthermore, this is not an outcome that can be granted through the appeals process, as the process is designed to enable the dispute of progression decisions, rather than to adjust individual marks. The process is not a mechanism through which the academic judgement of a marker can be challenged or circumvented.

The University has procedures in place to ensure that marking and moderation is undertaken in a fair and consistent manner, and this is why marks cannot be amended once they have been considered by a departmental Board of Examiners.

For examples of what you can appeal against whilst on a taught programme, please see the the [Additional Information](#) section of this FAQ, particularly the [Notes to consider when choosing your desired outcome section](#).

When can I appeal?

You can appeal after your marks have been ratified by the Board of Examiners and your results are available for you to view on the [Student Gateway](#). This is also where you will find your progress decision.

Your appeal cannot and will not be accepted until your final marks and current progress decision are available to you on the Student Gateway. It is not possible to appeal against any provisional marks that are released early.

The deadline for submitting your appeal is 10 University working days following the release of your marks on the Student Gateway.

How do I find out what my progress decision is?

Your progress decision is the decision made by the Board of Examiners. After your assessments take place, the Board of Examiners will meet to ratify your marks.

For Undergraduate students this is usually after the main summer exams and after the supplementary exams.

For Post Graduate Taught students, this usually takes place in late October. After this has taken place your results along with your progress decision will be formally released to you on the [Student Gateway](#).

For Postgraduate Research students, you will receive an email from the Research Student Administration team in Registry with details of your progress decision.



What can I appeal against?

You may appeal on either or both of the following grounds:

- (a) There were circumstances unknown to the Board of Examiners that affected your academic performance and you can present good reason for these circumstances not being made known prior to the meeting of the Board of Examiners.
- (b) There was an administrative irregularity or failure in procedure giving rise to a reasonable doubt as to whether the progress decision would have been different if it had not occurred.

Postgraduate Research students can also appeal on a third ground:

- (a) That there has been bias in the assessment of your thesis on the part of one or more of the examiners.

Note that the University's definition of bias is as follows:

An apparent prevention of objective judgement by one or more of the examiners. This means that bias only exists where there is a material and negative connection between the examiner and the student which, in the opinion of a fair-minded person, prevents the examiner from exercising objective judgement.

For a full outline of the grounds for appeal please read section 4 of the [Code of Practice on Academic Appeals](#).

What are the chances of my appeal being successful?

Unfortunately, it is not possible to say what the outcome will be. Each case is dealt with on an individual basis, with your situation and all submitted evidence taken into consideration.

What is the deadline to submit my appeal?

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students

Your deadline to submit an appeal will be 10 University working days from the 'results release date' of your marks on the Student Gateway.

Please note, this is different from the date any provisional marks are available. Appeals submitted when only your provisional marks are available will not be accepted.

Postgraduate Research Students



You will receive an email from Registry confirming your progress decision and clearly stating a personal appeal deadline. Your deadline to submit an appeal will be 10 University working days from the date of the email.

If your submission reaches the office after the advertised deadline, unless you provide an explanation for why your appeal is late, accompanied with evidence, your submission will not be accepted. This means the decision of the Board of Examiners will stand.

Can I send in a late appeal?

Please contact Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (SCCA) if you require an extension to your deadline, which may be granted in exceptional circumstances. If you intend to submit a late appeal, please contact SCCA for advice and guidance.

Do I need to submit evidence?

Yes—the appeals process is evidence-based, and it is important that any circumstances that you mention in your appeal are supported by independent, third-party evidence. The evidence you submit must show the impact of the circumstances cited in your form and must be relevant to the date or period cited.

All evidence should be submitted in English. If your evidence is provided in a foreign language, it is your responsibility to have it translated before submission.

Appeals based on medical grounds must be accompanied by signed medical certificates or statements/letters written on headed paper.

All evidence should be clearly named and listed in Section 5 of your form and must be submitted with your form, with clear identifying file names, by your deadline date.

Appeals without supporting evidence are likely to be declared ineligible and will not be processed.

If your evidence is not available in time for you to meet your deadline, please contact SCCA to request an extension. Your appeal cannot be processed until all supporting evidence is received along with your submission form. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all evidence is sent in with the submission. SCCA cannot contact third parties to request evidence on behalf of a student.

SCCA and the Appeals Committee do not have access to evidence or information that may be held about you within your School. If you have previously submitted evidence to your School or College Wellbeing Officer/Team that you wish to be considered with your appeal, please ensure that you send additional copies to SCCA.

Evidence will be shared with employees of the University who will process and review your



submission. If at the conclusion of these processes you choose to submit a Complaint to the OIA, information may also be shared with that body. You should therefore ensure that where evidence relates to third parties you have their permission for this information to be disclosed.

How do I complete the form?

Written submissions on the appropriate form are required in all cases. Forms can be found at the [Academic Appeals](#) webpage.

The written submission form must clearly identify:

- The decision which you are appealing against.
- Your progress decision. This should be visible by visiting the [Student Gateway](#). Postgraduate Research decisions should be clearly stated in your letter from Registry. If the decision is not clear, please contact your School.
- The outcome that you desire if your appeal is successful. Taught students should consider the notes in the [Additional Information](#) section, under [notes to consider when choosing your desired outcome](#) or the appeals guidance document when thinking about the outcome that you desire.
- The grounds upon which your appeal is made.
- Full details of your case, in chronological order.

You should ensure that you include the module(s)/assessment(s) that have been affected and the date(s) on which the incidents occurred.

- If your appeal is based on the grounds that there were circumstances unknown to the Board of Examiners, please ensure that you include details of why you did not bring this information forward through the extenuating circumstances process in Section 6b of the form.
- You should ensure that you make direct reference to the grounds that you are appealing on and only provide information that is relevant to your case.
- A summary of your case in no more than 200 words, or 300 words for Postgraduate Researchers. This summary must be completed as the Academic Appeal Committee uses the information in your summary as a starting point in considering your Academic Appeal. Your form will only be processed if a summary is provided in Section 6 of the submission form.



What should I check before submitting my form?

Before submitting your appeal, you should ensure that:

- Your form has been completed in full.
- You have attached all the evidence you wish to be considered.
- You submit your form by your deadline.

If your appeal submission is not complete, it may not be accepted. If it is not accepted, you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter. Please see the [Next steps](#) document for an explanation of the Completion of Procedures letter and the options available to you.

Where do I submit my appeal?

Once you have completed the form in full and have gathered your evidence, your appeal submission should be submitted by email to appeals@contacts.bham.ac.uk

If you have any problems submitting your form or evidence by email, please contact the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeal team.

You will receive confirmation of receipt of your appeal submission by email within three working days.

I wish to withdraw my appeal, what should I do?

You will need to confirm this in writing at: appeals@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Can I continue with my programme whilst awaiting the outcome of my appeal?

You may be permitted to continue, in temporary attendance, depending on the circumstances of the programme. If you wish to do this, you must consult with your School. Any such arrangement is at the discretion of the School.

Full time Undergraduate students must achieve at least 100 credits in any year of study for immediate progression into the next year of study. Where less than 100 credits have been achieved, a student will be required to undertake any further assessments that might be awarded as the result of a successful academic appeal prior to continuing onto the next year of study.



Some programmes of study may have additional pre-requisite requirements for progression into the next year, such as the successful completion of assessments relating to professional practice requirements on externally accredited programmes.

Can I still attend my graduation ceremony if I am appealing?

If you wish to appeal against your degree classification, by default you will still graduate under your existing award even if your appeal has not been resolved.

If your appeal is successful and you have a change of degree classification, you will be required to return the certificate and transcript that you receive at your congregation ceremony (or you received after the ceremony if conferred in Absentia) before the updated documents will be forwarded to you.

You can choose to defer your graduation provided that the ceremony date for your programme has not yet passed.

If you wish to defer your graduation until after your appeal has been resolved, please contact Student Services through [Student Help](#). Please note that it will then not be possible for you to have your degree conferred until the next congregation period. If you defer your summer graduation the next opportunity to graduate is December.

Further information can be found on the [Congregation and Awards](#) office web pages.

How long does the appeals process take?

During the main summer appeals period (July – October), the appeals process usually takes 8 – 10 weeks from the date that your submission form and all supporting evidence is sent in. Please do note that delays can happen and that your appeal cannot be processed until all documentation is received.

What happens next?

Your appeal form and evidence will be forwarded to your School with a request to provide a response back to SCCA. When a School response is received and processed, your appeal will go forward to be considered by the Academic Appeal Committee.

An Academic Appeal Committee is a small group of experienced academic staff and a student representative who considers all appeals. To avoid a conflict of interest, the members of the Committee will not be from your School.

The Academic Appeal Committee can confirm the support of your School, reject your appeal, or refer your case to an Academic Appeal Committee hearing if they determine that



further information is required.

It will take a minimum of 8 weeks from the date on which you submitted your appeal until you hear an outcome or an update if your case is referred to a hearing. The outcome of the AAC will be communicated via email to the personal address provided on your submission form.

What happens at an Academic Appeal Committee hearing?

An Academic Appeal Committee hearing involves a panel of three academic members of staff and a student representative, who will discuss and review your case and evidence. If your case is referred to this hearing, you will be invited to attend and a representative from your School will also be invited to attend.

A 'Friend' can accompany you to your hearing. A Friend means a member of the staff of the University, a registered student of the University, a Sabbatical Officer of the Guild of Students, or a Guild Advisor of the Guild of Students.

Please contact [Guild Advice](#) in the Guild of Students if you wish to be accompanied by a Sabbatical Officer or Guild Advisor. Please let us know at least one working day in advance of the hearing who you wish to bring with you. Further information about the role of a friend during a hearing can be found in the [Additional Information](#) section, under [The Role of a Friend during an Academic Appeal Hearing](#).

The procedures followed by the Academic Appeal Committee hearing are outlined in Appendix A of the [Code of Practice on Academic Appeals](#). The hearing may take place in person or virtually online.

What if I cannot/do not wish to attend the Academic Appeal Committee hearing?

If you are unable to attend the hearing you may consider the following options:

- The hearing may go ahead in your absence.
- You may send a statement to be read during the hearing.
- You may send a Friend to make a statement on your behalf. Your friend must be a registered student or member of staff of the University, or a representative from the Guild of Students.

Can I choose a date for my hearing?

No; unfortunately, this is not possible. You will be notified by email of the date of your



hearing at least two weeks before the hearing takes place.

Will my I.D. card still work?

It depends—if you cease to be a registered student, you may experience problems in trying to use University facilities. Your student record will not be amended until the outcome of the appeal is known.

I am due to take re-sits, but I have not heard the outcome of my appeal, should I still revise?

Yes—you should not delay any preparations for re-sit examinations.

How will I find out the outcome of my appeal?

You will receive notification of the outcome of your appeal by email. Your outcome letter will not be sent to your University email address, it will be sent to the email address you have indicated in Section 1 of your appeal submission form.

If dissatisfied with the outcome of my appeal, what are my options?

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your appeal, you may wish to consider the options available to you as outlined in the Next Steps document that is included with your outcome email. You can also find this information on this [Appeals](#) page.

Additional information

Notes to consider when choosing your desired outcome

If you are submitting Extenuating Circumstances to have another attempt at a module that you have already passed, in an attempt to improve your mark, you should be aware that if you achieve a lower mark, or a fail, this will be the mark that will be used to calculate your weighted mean mark and final degree classification.

If you fail the module, any previously achieved credit will not stand. It is advised that you discuss this with your personal tutor so that you understand the risks of repeating a module for which you have already achieved credit.

If you wish to register as an internal student, you will have full access to all campus facilities, will attend all teaching and will pay fees. The amount you pay will depend on the number of modules you are taking.



If you wish to register as an external student, you will have access to the library, library e-resources and to Canvas if required. You will not attend teaching and will not pay fees.

A 'sit' or 'first attempt'	<p>You will sit exam(s) or submit coursework as if for the first time (due to extenuating circumstances) at the next available examination period.</p> <p>The mark you obtain will not be capped at the pass mark.</p>
A 're-sit'	<p>You will sit exam(s) or submit coursework at the next available examination period.</p> <p>The mark obtained will be capped at the pass mark for the purposes of calculating degree classification; the full mark is shown on transcripts.</p>
A 'repeat'	<p>To repeat means that you will complete all assessments for a module (exams and coursework) and attend all teaching sessions.</p> <p>The mark may be capped (if the repeat is due to failure) or not (if the repeat is due to extenuating circumstances.)</p>

Useful webpages

[Student Appeals - main webpage](#)

[Codes of Practice, Policies and Guidance on Academic Procedures](#)

[Senate Review Details and Submission Form](#)

[Guild Advice - Guild of Students](#)

[Sources of Help and Advice](#)



The Role of a Friend during an Academic Appeal Hearing

This guidance provides information for those who are acting as a Friend to a student who is participating in certain University processes. These processes could include:

- Appeals procedures
- Academic Integrity Meetings
- Student Conduct Meetings
- College Misconduct and Fitness to Practice Committees
- University Misconduct and Fitness to Practice Committees
- Meetings held under the Code of Practice on Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study
- The informal route of the Harassment and Bullying Policy

Who can be a Friend?

A Friend is defined in the University Regulations as:

- A member of staff of the University, or
- A registered student at the University of Birmingham, or
- A Guild Advisor at the Guild of Students, or
- A Sabbatical Officer of the Guild of Students.

However, a Friend **cannot** be someone who may be a witness to an alleged incident or who has some other involvement in the proceedings. For instance, a committee member or person who has another role within the meeting.

What is the role of a Friend?

The role of the Friend is to support the student participating in the University processes outlined above.

As a Friend you cannot answer questions on behalf of the student. The role of a Friend is to support the student but not to function as a representative or to put forward a case on their behalf.



Before a meeting

When attending a meeting, you should take your University ID with you so that it can be confirmed that you are eligible to function as a Friend.

If, as a Guild advisor or officer, you do not have a University ID, you should ensure that the Guild confirms your identity with the meeting secretary (or in the absence of a secretary, the Chair) in advance of the meeting.

If you realise before the meeting that you cannot function as a Friend, you will need to tell the student you are supporting as soon as possible so that they can find another Friend to accompany them.

Please note that the University will not normally postpone a meeting due to the unavailability of a Friend.

During the meeting

The process for each meeting will normally be explained to you at the start of the meeting.

You are allowed to take ~~can~~ take written notes on behalf of the student you are supporting, although for many of the processes outlined above, the student will be provided with notes or a report of the meeting shortly afterwards.

The proceedings are conducted in English and if you wish to speak with the student during the meeting, this should be in English. A Friend cannot translate questions or answers during the meeting. If the student is unsure about a question, they can ask a member of staff to repeat or rephrase the question.

During some proceedings you will normally be allowed to make statements and ask questions (via the Chair) on behalf of the student you are accompanying.
If making statements or asking questions is not expressly permitted within the appropriate Code of Practice or Guidance notes, the chair/staff member may allow you to make statements and ask questions (via the Chair) on behalf of the student you are accompanying.

All participants in a meeting are expected to behave civilly and with courteousness throughout.