

Academic Registry

Student Academic Appeals

Grounds and Invalid Grounds for Appeal

Grounds for appeal are as follows:

An academic appeal may be made where there is evidence to show one or more of the following:

- Performance was affected by mitigating circumstances that a student could not report at the time for valid reasons, and that mitigating circumstances have not been taken into account in making the relevant academic decision or before the deliberations of the relevant Board of Examiners;
- Staff or bodies have not followed approved regulations and procedures;
- There has been a material lack of clarity on the part of the University which has affected the performance of the student;
- Staff or bodies have not acted fairly towards a student by showing bias in the way they have made the relevant academic decision.

Invalid Grounds for Appeal

The University **will not** consider an academic appeal where it can be shown that:

- The academic decision against which the appeal is directed has yet to be made or, if made, has yet to be confirmed or published;
- The student did not understand or was not aware of the published assessment regulations and procedures for a course or programme, as relevant to the case;
- The student was not aware of the published procedures for presenting mitigating circumstances to the Board of Examiners which the University provides for all students;
- The appeal has been made on the grounds of mitigating circumstances without there being any relevant written medical or other evidence to show why it should be considered (e.g. medical or death certificates, counsellor's letter, crime report); Evidence from parents or friends is not considered to be independent, and may not be deemed sufficient to verify the circumstances claimed;
- The academic appeal is based on evidence that relates to alleged ill-health or other mitigating circumstances that could have been reported to the University at the time they occurred, but were not, and the student is unable to provide a valid reason for not having provided the evidence at the time; Circumstances that would **not** normally be considered grounds for appeal include:
 - holidays or other events that were planned or could have reasonably been expected to coincide with assessments;
 - assessments that were scheduled close together or on the same day, or that clash due to incorrect enrolment by the student;
 - misreading the timetable for examinations or otherwise misunderstanding the requirements for assessment;
 - inadequate planning or time management;
 - last-minute or careless travel arrangements;
 - consequences of paid employment;
 - examination stress or panic attacks not supported by medical evidence;
 - grounds of an unspecific or general nature or uncorroborated nature such as no medical evidence being presented;

Students are instructed to bring evidence of mitigating circumstances to the attention of the relevant body prior to assessment in relation to the relevant course or programme. **In order to establish mitigating circumstances as grounds for an appeal there must be a compelling and substantiated reason why the student had been unable to comply with this procedure;**

- The student, when claiming he or she suffered disturbance or illness during an examination, did not report the circumstances to the Invigilator before leaving the examination hall, nor did he or she report the circumstances in writing before the meeting of the Board of Examiners;
- The appeal is a disagreement with the academic judgement of a Board of Examiners in assessing the merits of academic work, or in reaching a decision on progression, or on the final classification

for an award, which has been reached in accordance with the published regulations and procedures;

- The appeal is on the grounds that the provision of teaching or guidance affected academic performance. In such circumstances a student must submit a complaint in accordance with the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures;
- Grounds considered at a subsequent stage in the process differ from those submitted at the first stage or the same case is raised again at the first stage with different grounds (unless the grounds relate to procedural irregularities in the conduct of the appeal at a previous stage);
- Evidence put forward to support the appeal can be shown to have been dishonestly acquired or is itself dishonest;
- The substance of the appeal can be shown to relate to a matter that is in progress or has already been the subject of an academic appeal by the student ;
- The appeal is received after the deadline without good cause. An appeal which is rejected on the grounds that it was received after the deadline may not then be escalated to the next stage of appeal. Failure on the part of a student to keep the University informed of address details, thereby causing delay or failure in the delivery of examination results, does not constitute grounds for appeal;
- The appeal is not submitted on the relevant Appeal Form;
- The appeal is considered to be vexatious or frivolous. In such cases the University will provide reasons in writing to the student as to why the appeal is considered an abuse of the process but will not enter into lengthy correspondence about such cases. Any appeal considered vexatious or frivolous may lead to disciplinary action being taken by the University