

LEARNER APPEALS AGAINST ASSESSMENTS

Purpose and Scope

- To describe the mechanism for appeals against academic assessment decisions where assessment has taken place within the centre.
- To set out clearly the grounds for appeals.
- To indicate the possible outcomes of an appeal.

Applies to:

All learners on courses which include centre-based assessments – which is currently all courses run by The Business School.

Responsibilities

- Operations Director:** for maintaining an overview of appeals and their satisfactory resolution, in line with regulatory body and Awarding Organisation requirements and our own Quality Policy. As well for logging, monitoring and recording the outcome of appeals.
- Lead Internal Verifier:** for ensuring that informal mechanisms to resolve appeals have been exhausted before this procedure is invoked, and for representing the assessors and internal verifiers in cases of appeal.
- VLE Administrator (in support to Operations Director) :** for ensuring that learners are aware of this Appeals Procedure and their right to access its provision.
- Internal Verifiers:** for evaluating the validity and consistency of assessments that are subject to appeal.
- Assessors:** for ensuring that their own practice meets requirements, responding to requests and feedback and for fully engaging with any appeals investigation.

General

Appeals may be dealt with effectively through informal, as well as formal means. This is in line with our Assessment Policy and process of feedback and resubmission of assignments.

This procedure should be invoked by a learner if informal negotiations have failed to resolve the appeal to her/his satisfaction.

A learner should be encouraged to pursue our internal process in the first instance but will be advised that s/he may appeal to the awarding organisation should s/he so wish.

Any appeal will be lodged on at least one of the grounds identified under Appeals Mechanism.

Appeals Mechanism

1. The learner will make an appeal in writing to the Operations Director within three weeks of receiving the assessment results, clearly stating the grounds on which the appeal is lodged.
2. The Operations Director will acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 5 working days.
3. Admissible grounds for appeals are:
 - Assessment based on misinterpretation of assessment criteria
 - Improper or inappropriate assessment process used
 - Assessment subjective due to personal bias or prejudice
 - Assessment more rigorous than required by national standards
 - Refusal to assess an assignment that was submitted late for a legitimate reason
 - Rejection of assignment based on return of plagiarism checks through software.
4. The appeals process as it relates to grading is summarised in the flowchart on page 4.

Appeals Panel

Once notified of the need, the Operations Director will, as soon as possible and no longer than 20 working days, set up an Appeals Panel comprising at least an independent Internal Verifier and her/himself as Chair. All members of the Panel will have access to all documentation prior to any further stage.

The Appeals Panel will consider the evidence and discuss their initial outcome decision. This will be emailed to the learner within 25 days of the initial appeal.

Final Appeal

The learner will be given an option of one final appeal. This should be made in writing to the Operations Director within 20 days of the notification of the Appeals Decision being communicated.

Within 10 days of the receipt of the final appeal in writing, the learner will be invited to a meeting with the Appeals Panel:

1. The Appeals Panel will meet to hear the learner, who may be accompanied by a friend, put his/her case for final appeal. The Operations Director will be present at the appeal, and may be accompanied by the Assessor, Internal Verifier/Internal Quality Assurer or an appropriate person. This meeting will be conducted through Virtual means, where possible.

2. The Chair will ensure all parties understand the mechanism of the Appeals Panel.
3. The learner will put their case for appeal and then respond to any questions from the Appeals Panel. The Chair of the Appeals Panel should ensure that there is an agreed understanding on the nature of the appeal.
4. The Appeals Panel will then seek clarification, from either party, of any matters relating to the appeal.
5. The Appeals Panel will consider their decision in camera.
6. The Appeals Panel has no power directly to alter the assessment but will decide whether
 - the original assessment decision will stand
 - reassessment will be offered to the learner without undue delay
 - work that has been submitted late will be assessed.
7. The decision of the Appeals Panel will be final.
8. Once the investigations are complete the learner will be informed in writing of the decision of the Appeals Panel including the reasons for reaching the decision, and how the decision will be implemented. Advice should be included of any relevant external procedures to which the learner may have recourse if they remain dissatisfied with the final outcome or response to their appeal.

Appeals to Awarding Organisations

Learners who are dissatisfied with the outcome of an assessment decision and appeal will be made aware of their right to appeal to the awarding organisation.

The learner will be provided with details of the awarding organisation's appeals procedure.

Related Documents

Assessment Policy
Internal Verification/Internal Quality Assurance Policy