

QuEST

Quality Enhancement and Standards Team

UWS Student Appeals Procedure

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND

UWS

Contents

Introduction	3
Grounds for appeal	5
Submissions of appeal	8
Advice	8
Students' status during an Academic Appeal	9
Records and Publication	9
The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	9
Appendix A Procedures for each stage of the Appeal process	10

Introduction

An academic appeal is defined as a request to review a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student engagement, assessment, progression, awards, withdrawal from programme and student disciplinary cases. [See Chapter 6 of the Regulatory Framework.](#)

This covers an academic appeal made by a student against a decision of:

- The Senate Disciplinary Committee
- A Fitness to Practice Committee
- A School Plagiarism Panel
- A School Assessment Board (SAB)
- A School Board of Examiners (SBE)
- An Extenuating Circumstances Submission (ECS) Deadline
- A Research Progression & Awards Board (PAB)
- The Research Degree Examiners
- A School (for engagement/attendance)
- Any other Committee, Board or Panel of the University which is empowered to make decisions on the matters listed in 1 above.

An academic appeal may be made only by students directly affected; third parties such as parents or other representatives are not allowed to lodge an appeal. The only exception would be for students with permanent or temporary disabilities which prevent them from submitting the appeal independently.

The privacy and confidentiality of students will be respected at all stages of the appeals process. The circulation of personal or medical evidence provided by students submitting an appeal will be restricted to staff directly involved in the appeal decision process.

Where an academic appeal also contains within it a complaint and vice versa, it is possible for the appeal or complaint to be reclassified either by the student or the University (at whatever stage they may have reached) and processed under the most relevant regulation or procedure if this is likely to lead to a more appropriate outcome for the students appealing or complaining.

An academic appeal may not be lodged after the conferment/receipt of a University award. This is in line with the [UWS Regulatory Framework, Chapter 6.](#)

Grounds for an Appeal

Students are allowed to appeal a decision and/or penalty from:

- The Senate Disciplinary Committee
- A Fitness to Practise Committee
- A School Academic Integrity Panel

on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	There is new substantial information directly relevant to the case, which was for good reason not available when the original decision was made.
Excess of jurisdiction	The decision was made in excess of the jurisdiction conferred on one of the committees/panel noted above.
Defect in procedures	There was a defect in the procedures employed by one of the committees/panel noted above such as to render the decision unfair.
Unreasonable decision	The decision made by one of the committees/panel noted above was unreasonable, in that the committee/panel reached a decision by taking into consideration something which they ought to have disregarded or disregarded something which they ought to have considered.
Excessive or unreasonable penalty	The penalty applied by one of the committees/panel noted was excessive or unreasonable.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision of a School Assessment Board (SAB) or School Board of Examiners (SBE) on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
Defect in procedures	There is evidence that there has been a computational or administrative error in the recording or processing of their marks.
	An examination or assessment related to the decision was not conducted in accordance with the University's recognised procedures.

The following are NOT grounds for an appeal against a decision of a SAB or SBE:

- Students question the academic or professional judgement of the examiners.
- Students are disappointed with a result where marks have been accurately recorded, assessment regulations correctly followed and there is no evidence of material irregularity.
- An academic appeal may NOT be lodged against a 'Defer' decision of an SAB or a 'Defer Chair' decision of a SBE since this is not a final decision on progress or status.

Students are allowed to submit an appeal against an ECS deadline prior to the sitting of the School Assessment Board (SAB):

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	Students may submit an appeal against an ECS deadline prior to the sitting of the School Assessment Board (SAB) (in line with Regulation 3.36-3.38) - if a valid reason for not meeting this deadline and evidence is provided to support the appeal.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision from a Research Progression & Awards Board (Research PAB) on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	There is new substantial information directly relevant to the case, which was for good reason not available when the original decision was made.
Defect in procedures	There was a defect in the procedures employed by the Research PAB such as to render the decision unfair.

Please note that, where students are not able to attend scheduled sessions, they are expected to take responsibility for making arrangements to catch up with missed work and/or to consider whether they wish to request a period of interruption until they are fit to resume their studies.

The following are NOT grounds for an appeal against a decision of a Research Progression & Awards Board:

- Any complaint made by students for alleged inadequacy in the supervision or other arrangements during the period of registration, since procedures exist for such complaints which can be instigated during the period of registration and before submission.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision from the Research Degree Examiners on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	Students were adversely affected by circumstances, such as illness or other factors, which impacted on their performance and the examiners were unaware of these at the oral examination as students were unable, or, for valid reasons, unwilling to divulge before the examiners reached their decision. The appeal must be supported by relevant documentary evidence.
Defect in procedures	There is evidence of administrative, procedural or other irregularity in the conduct of the examination of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity.

The following are NOT considered grounds for an appeal against a decision of the Research Examiners:

- Any complaint made by students for alleged inadequacy in the supervision or other arrangements during the period of registration, since procedures exist for such complaints which can be instigated during the period of registration and before submission.
- Any disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners in assessing the merits of the thesis and the programme of supervised research, or in reaching any assessment decision based on students' performance in the oral or approved alternative form of examination.



Students can are allowed to appeal a decision of a School to remove them from a module or programme for non-engagement on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	<p>Students can provide additional extenuating circumstance information which was not originally available to the School.</p> <p>Where students could have reported this additional information to the School prior to its meeting, the extenuating circumstances cannot then be cited as grounds for appeal unless there is a compelling reason why these were not disclosed in the first instance.</p>
Defect in procedures	<p>There is evidence of a procedural irregularity in relation to the implementation of the University's Academic Engagement Procedure.</p>

The following are NOT grounds for appeal against a decision of a School:

- Students have not achieved the minimum level of engagement set out in the University's Academic Engagement Procedure and they cannot provide extenuating circumstances evidence.
- Students have not responded to any of the University's attempts to contact them regarding poor engagement, as set out in the University's Academic Engagement Procedure.



Submission of an Appeal

Students must submit their academic appeal in writing on the relevant form within 10 working days from the notification date which informed them of the decision which is being appealed. The form is online available from the Student Link/Hub on any campus.

Students are expected to complete the Appeal Form and indicate on the form:

- If they will be attending the Appeal meeting.
- If they are attending the Appeal meeting they should also give details of the name and status of any representative, or witnesses who will also attend.

Students must submit their appeal electronically to appeals@uws.ac.uk, including any evidence or documents supporting their appeal.

The operation of any penalty decided by one of the committees/panel noted above may be suspended pending the determination of the appeal. Students will be notified in writing if the penalty is to be suspended.

An academic appeal submitted in one term must relate to a decision from one of the committees/panels noted above from the same or the previous term.

If students fail to submit an academic appeal within the timescale set out above, the appeal may exceptionally be considered at a later date. (Provided there are compelling reasons why it could not be submitted on time and these are detailed in full with supporting evidence at the time of submission).

Advice

Students intending to lodge an appeal against a decision of one of the committees or panels noted above, can obtain appropriate advice and counselling within the University. In particular, students are encouraged to seek appropriate support from [The Hub](#) or advice from the [Students' Union](#).



The Senate Appeals Committee

The constitution, terms of reference and standing orders of the Senate Appeals Committee are set out in the University Committee Handbook.

Students' Status during an Academic Appeal

Where students submit an academic appeal part way through the level or year, they may be permitted to continue provisionally until such time as a decision has been reached. This is to ensure that the students are not academically disadvantaged if the appeal is subsequently upheld. Continued attendance on placements will be at the discretion of the relevant School.

Where students submit an academic appeal at the end of a level or year of study they may be permitted to enrol on the next level but only on a conditional basis. If their appeal is subsequently upheld, their enrolment would be confirmed. If their academic appeal is not upheld enrolment may be terminated immediately.

Where students are deemed to be eligible for an award and they subsequently submit an appeal they will be permitted to graduate and to receive the award agreed by the appropriate School Board of Examiners. If the appeal is successful and results in achieving a different award, they will be required to return any degree parchment before the new award is sent to them.

An appeal cannot be submitted after a student has graduated, either in person or in absentia.

Records and Publication

The Secretary to the Senate Appeals Committee keeps a record of all appeals.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

All students of The University of the West of Scotland are entitled to refer cases to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman when the UWS appeals procedure has completed.

Title	
Procedure Author	Academic Conduct Officer
Procedure Owner	Head of QuEST
Parent Policy Statement	Student Experience Policy Statement
Public Access or Staff Only Access	Public
Version Number & Date	Version 6, August 2024
Changes and Reason for Changes	Minor changes to align to new University Style Guide for Regulation and Policy.

Appendix A – Procedures for each stage of the Appeal process

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Informing the students	Students are notified of the date and time of the appeals meeting by email (UWS student email account) with at least 5 working days' notice. (The meeting may be sooner if students request this).
Location of the meeting	The meeting of the Senate Appeals Committee is held online.
Additional support requirements	Students with additional support requirements may arrange this in advance of the meeting support e.g. a BSL Interpreter.
Staff attending the meeting	The University may be represented by the Chair (or nominee) from the committee/panel which made the original decision which the student is appealing – this person will hereafter be referred to as the University's representative.
	The Senate Appeals Committee has the right to invite any relevant member of staff to attend the meeting.
Student attending the meeting	<p>Students will be entitled to be accompanied by a supporter, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an advice worker from the Students' Union, • a friend, • a relative, • Accompanying supports should not be a legal representative unless approved by the Chair in advance of the meeting. Approval will be at the Chair's discretion based on the circumstances of the appeal and will take into account matters such as the seriousness of the alleged offence and potential penalty, the ability of the student to present their case; and the procedural complexity of the case. <p>Where students fail to attend, the Senate Appeals Committee proceeds with the meeting considering the appeal and reaching a decision.</p>

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Hearing the case	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Senate Appeals Committee considers the appeal together with any submitted evidence, provided by the student or the University. • Exceptionally, a member of the Committee may need to send their apologies to the meeting once the date has been confirmed. In such cases they submit their considerations to the Chair. • Students may present written or oral evidence in support of their case. Written evidence must be supplied in advance along with the Appeal form. • The University's representative may question students or any witness they have called. • The student may only question any witnesses through the chair. • Any member of the Senate Appeals Committee has the right to question those in attendance, with the exception of student supporters. • In its sole discretion and in the interests of justice and fairness, the Senate Appeals Committee may hear evidence on the part of the student not given at a previous panel or committee.
Chair's Action	<p>If an appeal is received, with evidence, this can be forwarded to one of the Chairs for Chair's action. However, if the appeal is rejected via Chair's action, a meeting will be arranged with an alternative Chair, which students will be invited to attend.</p>
Reaching a decision	<p>The Senate Appeals Committee considers the matter and reaches its decision in private.</p>
	<p>The Senate Appeals Committee decides whether to decline or uphold the appeal.</p>

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>The Senate Appeals Committee may decide as follows:</p> <p>Appeal is not upheld</p> <p>The existing decision and any penalty will be confirmed by the committee.</p> <p>Appeal is upheld (or partly upheld)</p> <p>If an appeal is upheld or partially upheld then depending on what decision is being appealed, the Senate Appeals Committee can apply one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reverse the original decision and rescind any penalty previously imposed. 2. Review the level of penalty and choose to reduce or rescind it. 3. Refer the case back to the original committee/panel with a judgement that the original committee/panel should review their decision and/or penalty. The Senate Appeals Committee can provide a recommended decision/penalty. 4. In the case of an appeal against a decision from examiners related to a research qualification, require that the examiners reconsider their decisions or that new examiners be appointed to re-assess the thesis and conduct a re-examination. <p>The Senate Appeals Committee is not an examination board and does not have the authority to alter the decision of a School Assessment Board or School Board of Examiners, nor to recommend an academic award.</p>
<p>Communicate the decision</p>	<p>The decision of the Senate Appeals Committee and any effect on an existing decision and penalty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be communicated to the student by the Chair of the committee at the meeting, giving reasons for the committee's decision. • Will be sent to the student by e-mail within 5 Working Days of the meeting. • The decision of the Senate Appeals Committee is final and will indicate the end of UWS processes. • Students are advised of the right of appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. • The decision and any effect on an existing penalty or award will also be reported to the Chair of the committee/panel which the appeal was against. • Depending on the decision and any change to a penalty or award, Registry may alter the student's record.

Dream.
Believe.
Achieve.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST *of* SCOTLAND

UWS