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University of
South Wales
Prifysgol
De Cymru

ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURES FOR TAUGHT COURSES 2024/2025

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SECTION ONE: ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- 1.1 The University is committed to safeguarding the emotional, mental and physical well-being of all parties involved during the operation of its Academic Appeals Procedure. Confidential advice and support are available from:
- The Students' Union - <https://www.uswsu.com/academic>
 The University's Wellbeing Services - <http://thewellbeingservice.southwales.ac.uk/>
 The Chaplaincy - <http://chaplaincy.southwales.ac.uk/>
 Immigration and International Student Advice - <https://intadvice.southwales.ac.uk/>
- 1.2 The Student Casework Unit provides authoritative, formal guidance on the applicability and operation of the Academic Appeals Regulations and Procedure.
- 1.3 If you attend a meeting, you are allowed to have a support person with you, for example an officer from the Students' Union or a friend. The role of the support person is to provide support to you during the meeting. Their role is normally not to represent you, or to advocate on your behalf or to speak for you, unless this has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment due to a disability. You cannot send any other person to the meeting on your behalf. At least 48 hours before the meeting, you must advise the University of the name and status of the person accompanying you. It is strongly recommended that you seek support from the Students' Union or Chaplaincy, as they are independent and familiar with the regulations and procedures of the University.
- 1.4 The Head of Student Casework (or nominee) reserves the right to refuse the attendance of a support person if it is determined that there is a conflict of interest relating to the nominated person, in which case, you will be given the opportunity to nominate a different support person.
- 1.5 The University of South Wales' procedures are not legal in nature and consequently, you should not need to have a legal support person or representative at hearings/meetings. However, you are able to seek preliminary advice, without prejudice, on the scope and nature of evidence you intend to submit in support of a case that is particularly complex.
- 1.6 While you do not have an automatic right to a legally qualified support person or representative, if you wish to be supported/represented at a hearing/meeting, you must apply for permission in writing to the Student Casework Unit (studentcasework@southwales.ac.uk) at least five working days before the scheduled date of the hearing/meeting. You must include in your representation the name of the proposed legally qualified support person/representative and the rationale for your request.
- 1.7 The University reserves the right to accept or refuse a request for a legally qualified support person or representative to attend, depending on whether a good reason is provided and the complexity and seriousness of the case. Should such a request be approved, the University reserves the right to also have a legally qualified person/representative in attendance. Legal qualified support persons/representatives will be clearly informed of the nature of the proceedings, ie, that they are not a legal process and will not be conducted as such.

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SECTION TWO: PROCEDURE FOR STAGE 1 - EARLY RESOLUTION

- 2.1 You will be given the opportunity to discuss your end of year outcomes following publication of your results.
- 2.2 Prior to submitting an appeal for consideration you are advised to discuss any concerns you have regarding your results or the decision of the Award and Progression Assessment Board with the appropriate member of staff. This may be your Module Leader or Course Leader, or if you believe that there has been an administrative error you should contact the Advice Zone. If it has not been possible to resolve all of your concerns then you may submit an academic appeal.

SECTION THREE: PROCEDURE FOR STAGE 2 – CONSIDERATION OF YOUR APPEAL BY THE FACULTY

Timescales

- 3.1 You must submit your appeal within 10 working days of publication of results, regardless of any early resolution that is being attempted within your faculty, using the 'Stage 2 Appeal Form' **and include appropriate supporting evidence**. This could include, for example, email correspondence from your tutors/supervisors to support your allegation or copies of assessments that include unclear guidance. Appeal forms are available at: <https://registry.southwales.ac.uk/student-regulations/academic-appeals/>.
- 3.2 We will only accept late appeals if you can provide good reason, supported by written independent evidence, for submitting an appeal outside of the specified timescale. Visa implications will need to be taken into account when considering any appeals submitted, with good reason, outside of the specified timeframe. We cannot accept appeals more than two months after the publication of your results by the relevant assessment board.
- 3.3 Where it is identified that swift consideration of your appeal is required, for example when progress or delays will affect your health, the University will ensure this is highlighted to the staff considering the appeal (see also the document [Support for Students with Disabilities](#)).

Ground for appeal

- 3.4 Appeals can only be submitted on the following ground:

Material procedural defect or irregularity, which is relevant to the outcome of the academic decision.

Students must demonstrate one or more of the following categories:

- a) there has been an administrative error;
- b) proper process has not been followed in relation to assessments;
- c) there were defects in the advice provided in relation to assessments;

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- d) an academic decision was not arrived at in accordance with the regulations of the course.
- 3.5 An appeal will not be accepted on the basis of a disagreement with the academic or professional judgement of the assessment board, ie, you believe you deserve a higher mark or different outcome. Academic and professional judgement includes assessing a specific piece of work, and/or reaching a decision on your progression, or on the final level of the award, based on the marks, grades and other information relating to your performance.
- 3.6 Extenuating circumstances will not be considered as a ground for appeal against an outcome from the award and progression board. A post-board extenuating circumstances claim should be submitted under the [Extenuating Circumstances Regulations and Procedure](#) within the permitted timeframe.

Processing your appeal

- 3.7 Upon receipt of your stage 2 appeal, and within five working days, the Student Casework Unit will check that your appeal is admissible; that is:
- it does not question the academic or professional judgement of the assessment board;
 - the appeal is based on the permitted grounds;
 - the issue raised should not be referred to another procedure;
 - the form has been correctly completed, includes all appropriate evidence and was submitted within 10 working days of the publication of the assessment results or is permissible under 3.2.

If this is the case, your appeal will be referred to the faculty for consideration.

- 3.8 If your appeal does not meet the requirements set out in 3.4 it will be returned to you along with a University Completion of Procedures Letter (see 6.1). If your academic appeal has been submitted too early, you will not be provided with a Completion of Procedures Letter but will be advised on when your results are likely to be published so that you can consider whether you would like to resubmit your academic appeal within the appropriate timeframe.
- 3.9 If your academic appeal concerns a straightforward administrative error, the Head of Student Casework (or nominee) will request that the appropriate corrections to be made.
- 3.10 All other academic appeals that are eligible for consideration will be referred to a nominee within the faculty (the Nominee). The Nominee will not have been involved in the consideration of your results.
- 3.11 Stage 2 appeals will be dealt with on the basis of the documentation that you have provided. Exceptionally, you may be invited to a meeting to clarify details of your appeal. If the Nominee requires additional information to assist them in reaching a decision on the outcome of your appeal, you will be given five working days in which to confirm that you intend to provide the additional information and the timeframe in which the information will be submitted. Evidence or further clarification may also be required from other persons and/or departments within the University. If the information is not submitted within the timeframe and a rationale for the delay is not provided a decision will be made on the appeal without the additional information.

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- 3.12 The Nominee has 15 working days, from the date that you provide the final relevant piece of documentation, to review the appeal and provide a response to the Student Casework Unit. The Student Casework Unit will write to you with the outcome of the appeal within five working days of receipt of the faculty response.
- 3.13 Where it is not possible for the University to adhere to the specified timescales, for example due to the complexity of the case, the University will write to you providing a rationale for the delay and a revised date for the outcome of your appeal.

Outcome

- 3.14 Marks for assessments, modules or degree classifications cannot be raised or amended unless there has been an administrative error, for example a mark has been incorrectly calculated.
- 3.15 If your appeal is upheld, the outcome letter will detail what happens next and whether you need to contact anyone further. Your outcome will be determined in line with the Regulations for Taught Courses and reported to the Award and Progression Board for ratification.
- 3.16 If your appeal is not upheld, the original decision of the Award and Progression Board against which you appealed will still stand.

SECTION FOUR: PROCEDURE FOR STAGE 3 – REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Grounds for review

- 4.1 You are entitled to submit a stage 3 request for review of the stage 2 decision on the following grounds:
- a) You have evidence that the procedures at stage 2 were not conducted in line with the regulations and this has materially disadvantaged you.
 - b) You have new and relevant evidence that **for good reason** was not available at the time your stage 2 appeal was submitted. *(NB Sensitive personal, family or cultural reasons will not be accepted as good reason as they should have been drawn to the University's attention at stage 2).*

This information should not have been accessible or known to you when the stage 2 appeal was submitted. Information that was available and not provided with the stage 2 appeal will not be considered valid grounds for a request for review.
 - c) You have evidence that the outcome at stage 2 was not reasonable in the circumstances.
- 4.2 You are only entitled to access stage 3 once stage 2 has been completed.
- 4.3 You are not able to introduce any new issues at stage 3.

Timescales

- 4.4 You must submit your stage 3 request for review within 10 working days of notification of the outcome of stage 2 using the 'Stage 3 – Request for Review

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Form' and include appropriate evidence. Request for review forms are available at <https://registry.southwales.ac.uk/student-regulations/academic-appeals/>.

- 4.5 Late requests for review will only be accepted if you can provide good reason, supported by written independent evidence, for submitting your request outside of the timescales specified in 4.4. Particular consideration will need to be given to timeframes where visa implications are concerned.
- 4.6 Where it is identified that swift consideration of your request for review is required, for example, when progress or delays will affect your health, the University will ensure this is highlighted to the relevant staff.
- 4.7 Where it is not possible for the University to adhere to the specified timescales, for example due to the complexity of the case, the University will write to you providing a rationale for the delay and a revised date for the outcome of your review.

Initial consideration of case

- 4.8 The University Secretary (or nominee) will consider your request for review within 10 working days of submission of the request.
- 4.9 If the University Secretary (or nominee), after considering the stage 3 request for review, concludes that:
- a) it does not meet the grounds above set out in 4.1;
 - b) it was submitted outside the 10-working day deadline;
 - c) it does not include the appropriate evidence;

the request for review will be disallowed and the original decision will stand. You will be issued with a University Completion of Procedures Letter within five working days from receipt of the decision of the University Secretary (or nominee) by the Student Casework Unit.

- 4.10 If the University Secretary (or nominee) decides that the request for review meets one or more of the grounds, the following action may be taken:
- a) If there is an administrative error, the University Secretary (or nominee) will request that this be corrected and this will be reported back to the Award and Progression Board.
 - b) If the case is straightforward, it will be referred back to the relevant Award and Progression Assessment Board for reconsideration.
 - c) If the case is complex, it will be referred to a Review Panel, which will be comprised of members from the Review Board.

Review Board

- 4.11 The Review Board will consist of:
- four members appointed by Academic Board;
 - four academic representatives of each faculty (as a minimum).

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Review Panel

4.12 The Review Panel will consist of:

- one of the members of the Review Board appointed by Academic Board (Chair);
- one of the academic representatives on the Review Board, drawn from faculties unconnected with the appeal under consideration;
- President of the Students' Union (or nominee), who will be independent and have no prior knowledge your case.

Members of the Review Panel will be independent and the Students' Union representative will not have previously supported you during your case.

A member of the Student Casework Unit will provide administrative support.

4.13 The Review Panel will be convened within 20 working days from the date of referral by the University Secretary (or nominee).

4.14 In order to permit full consideration of the request for review the Student Casework Unit may request relevant information from the faculty. The purpose of the Review Panel is to review the procedures at stage 2 or consider whether it was reasonable that evidence was not provided at stage 2 and not to rehear the case.

4.15 The Review Panel will make one of the following decisions:

- a) That the appeal is rejected and no further action will be taken.

In this case, the decision of the Review Panel will be communicated to you within five working days of the meeting. The decision will be final and the matter will be regarded as closed.

- b) That a more proportionate outcome is substituted in line with the Regulations for Taught Courses and the matter is referred back to the Chair of the Award and Progression Board for ratification.

In this case, the decision of the Review Panel will be communicated to you within five working days of the meeting. The decision of the Chair of the Award and Progression Board will be provided to the University Secretary (or nominee) within 10 working days and the decision will be communicated to you within a further five working days.

4.16 In exceptional cases, the Review Panel may require that the full Award and Progression Board be reconvened. Where this is the case, the Review Panel may require an officer of the Student Casework Unit to attend the meeting of the Award and Progression Board as an observer. You will be kept informed of any resultant necessary amendments to timescales.

4.17 Any meeting of the Review Panel will normally be held in private; however, you will be given the opportunity to request attendance at the meeting. Exceptionally, you may be invited to meet with the Review Panel to clarify details of your request for review. The Chair of the Review Panel will confirm whether your request will be upheld.

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- 4.18 There is no appeal against the decision of the Review Panel.
- 4.19 The Review Panel may make recommendations for consideration by the Regulations Sub-Committee or Academic Board as appropriate on any matters arising from the consideration of appeals.

SECTION FIVE: OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION (OIA)

- 5.1 If you are unhappy with the outcome of the University's internal procedures you may, following issue of a University Completion of Procedures Letter, lodge a complaint with the OIA.
- 5.2 Details of the OIA and the relevant information in relation to the Scheme can be accessed at www.oiahe.org.uk. Further information and advice can be obtained from the Student Casework Unit.