Academic Appeals

An Overview for Students

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Introduction

This guide outlines the procedures involved in the appeals process and how you can make a submission.

Full details of the procedures and processes of an academic appeal are found in the Academic Regulations Appendix 22 – Academic Appeals.

The procedures apply to you if you are enrolled or registered for an award made by Edge Hill University. They apply whether the programme is delivered directly by the University or through a collaborative arrangement with a partner institution.

We operate the academic appeals procedures in a climate of mutual respect, following the principles outlined in appendix one: principles.

What is an academic appeal?

An academic appeal is a request to review a decision made by an academic body responsible for deciding student progression, assessments and awards. At Edge Hill these bodies are: assessment and award boards, academic malpractice panels, and fitness to practise panels.

Do I have grounds for an appeal?

You may wish to submit an academic appeal if you believe one of the following has happened:

- there has been procedural irregularity in the assessment process
- there is bias or perception of bias in the assessment process

There are definitions of these grounds of appeal in appendix two: glossary.

If you are submitting an appeal on the grounds of exceptional mitigating circumstances (EMC), you need to read the specific information and complete an EMC form.

You cannot submit an appeal if you

- disagree with a mark or grade, regardless of the reason
- disagree with a degree classification awarded. To understand how degree classifications are calculated, please read the classification information on the Academic Registry webpages
- want to challenge the academic judgement of examiners on an assessment outcome or on the level of award recommended or granted
- believe your academic performance was adversely affected by factors such as ill-health, where there is no independent, medical or other evidence to substantiate this
- want to complain about the delivery of teaching and/or methods of assessment
- do not have any new circumstances to present or have failed to present new circumstances to the original board or panel

You can only submit an appeal once you have received formal notification of a decision from the relevant academic body. When you get your results you will also receive information on the right of appeal and associated deadlines.

If a number of you have been affected, you may submit a group appeal. The group must nominate one student to act as the group representative. All those included in the group must sign the notification form to verify to the University that the submission fairly represents the views of all group members.

Before entering the appeals process you should read the principles within which the academic appeal procedures operate. These are detailed in appendix one.

How do I make an appeal?

1. Starting the appeal process

- You must ensure you have the correct grounds for appeal. This is known as 'establishing a case'
- Complete the academic appeal form and remember to include a factual statement, your results letter and evidence to support your case
- Your results notification will include a deadline date for making an appeal. You will have at least 10 days to submit your appeal.
- The Student Casework team will acknowledge your application within 10 working days of receiving your appeal form
- Your application will be reviewed.
    - If a case is established, your appeal will progress to stage one
    - If a case is not established, the case will be dismissed. You will be informed of this outcome within 20 days of receipt and advised of your right to review

Please see Appendix 22 – Academic Appeals for more information on starting the appeals process. This includes what happens if you are late submitting an appeal and your right to appeal rejection at this stage.

2. Stage one - review of case

- Your case will be reviewed by the relevant academic body and/or faculty Dean. Any new information or evidence is taken into account
- The Academic Appeals Officer will inform you, in writing, of the outcome of the review, normally within 20 working days of the decision being made
- If you are not satisfied with the decision, you have the right to appeal to an academic appeal panel (stage two of the appeals process)

Please see Appendix 22 – Academic Appeals for more information on stage one of the appeals process and who is involved in reviewing your case.

3. Stage two – academic appeal panel

- The panel will normally meet within 20 working days of receiving the request
- You will be notified, in writing, of the date, time and place of the panel meeting and given at least 10 working days' notice
- You can provide additional written material for the panel's consideration and may attend the meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting on the date originally specified, the meeting may be reconvened
- You may be accompanied to the academic appeal panel by a friend. This would normally be a member of the Edge Hill community. For more information on the role

of a friend at an academic appeal panel, please read Appendix 23 of the Academic Regulations.

- The outcome of the academic appeal panel will be to either dismiss or uphold the appeal
- This decision will be reported to you verbally as soon as possible after the meeting and in writing within 10 working days of the panel

Please see Appendix 22 – Academic Appeals for more details on stage two of the appeals process and information on redress, monitoring and enhancement.

Appendix one: principles

We believe you should be able to seek amendments or corrective action from the University

- if an irregularity has occurred, or
- if we have made a decision without full view of all the relevant circumstances.

We operate the academic appeals procedures in a climate of mutual respect, following these principles:

1. You should feel able to submit an academic appeal without fear of reprisal.

2. Proper submission of an academic appeal must not disadvantage you.

3. You are responsible for raising all relevant issues and providing all supporting documentation, including evidence, when you submit an academic appeal. This includes explaining the reason for any delays in obtaining evidence.

4. We will manage your expectations about possible outcomes appropriately. If your expectations appear to go beyond what the University can reasonably provide, we will advise you in writing.

5. We will keep all information relating to academic appeals confidential, except where it is directly necessary to progress, investigate or respond to the matter.

6. Objective decisions will be made at all stages of the process by people with no conflict of interest. If a conflict of interest is declared by an officer considering an academic appeal, another officer of equivalent standing, will undertake that stage of the process. Throughout the process, the Head of Student Casework may nominate an alternative member of staff to act on behalf of any staff member assigned a role within this procedure.

7. We encourage you to obtain advice and support throughout the process. The Student Casework team can provide advice on the application and operation of these regulations and the Students' Union Advice Centre can provide independent support, advocacy and advice.

8. We prioritise academic appeals that require particularly swift action. This includes, but is not limited to, cases where the impact of the issues raised is detrimental to your mental health. It also includes cases where external time limits apply, for example in meeting regulatory requirements for the completion of professional courses.

9. The Head of Student Casework may suspend an appeal if you behave unreasonably or make unacceptable demands. We know the appeals process can be stressful and this may cause people to act out of character and become persistent, angry or upset. Should the Head of Student Casework decide to suspend an appeal, you will receive a written explanation of the reasons for doing so.

If your appeal does not meet the criteria for an academic appeal, but could be reviewed through a different channel (eg the complaints procedure), we will advise you of the correct procedure to follow.

Where a professional body is included in the academic appeal, our decisions are made within the boundaries of the relevant professional body requirements.

All academic appeals are considered within our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

Appendix two: glossary

Grounds for appeal

Specific ground for appeal	**What this means** **(Definition sourced from the OIA)**
Procedural irregularity in the assessment process.	There has been an inconsistency or a variance from the prescribed set of procedures that are usually followed.
There is bias or perception of bias in the assessment process.	Bias is a tendency to favour one person or group, thing or point of view over another, especially in a way considered to be unfair.

Establishing a case

This means that your appeal submission meets one of the above criteria. If your submission does not, your appeal will be rejected.