The Academic Regulations Appendix 22:

Academic Appeal Procedure

2026-27

Edge Hill University

Contents

Contents 2
Summary 3
Glossary of terms 3
Purpose 3
Regulation 4
1. Introduction and scope 4
2. Principles 5
3. Establishing a case 6
4. Stage 1: Faculty Consideration 8
5. Stage 2: Appeal Review 9
6. Academic appeal outcomes 10
7. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) 11
8. Support for you 11
9. Key to relevant documents 13
Annex A: Academic Appeal Panel Agenda 14
End matter 15

Summary

This policy provides details of the process for students to follow if they wish to make an academic appeal. It explains the conditions that apply, steps to follow and gives full details about the process that will be applied by the University.

Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict lawful freedom of speech or academic freedom as protected under the Education (No.2) Act 1986 and the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. However, all individuals are expected to express their views in ways that are consistent with professional standards and the law.

Glossary of terms

Term	Meaning
Academic appeal	A request to review a decision made by an academic body responsible for deciding student progression, assessment and/or awards.
Assessment Board	The meetings at which students' assessment results and overall progression or status are confirmed.
Personal circumstances panel	The process by which the University considers claims from students who believe their performance has been adversely affected by personal circumstances.
Procedural irregularity in the assessment process	Where an element of a documented assessment process has not happened as it should have done.
Results notification	This is the formal notification of your results, initially available online, following confirmation at an Assessment Board.
Senior member of university staff	Cases are considered by a range of senior university staff as appropriate to the circumstances. This term includes directors, faculty deans and associate deans, heads and associate heads of departments or support areas.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out how academic appeals should be made and considered. It provides staff with a process to follow and gives students complete transparency about the University's approach.

Regulation

1. Introduction and scope

1. An academic appeal is a request to review a decision made by an academic body responsible for deciding student progression, assessment and/or awards. At Edge Hill these bodies are
    - assessment and award boards
    - personal circumstances panels

2. An academic appeal cannot be submitted against:
    - decisions made under other formal procedures decisions made by bodies other than those listed in 1.1
    - complaints about the student learning experience
    - provisional assessment outcomes/results

    Separate procedures apply in these cases and a list of associated policies is provided in the Key to Relevant Documents.

3. A student may only submit an academic appeal on one or more of the following grounds:
    i. Procedural irregularity in the assessment process
    ii. Bias or perceptions of bias
    iii. Exceptional mitigating circumstances, details which were, for good reason, not previously available to the appropriate assessment boards.

    Students who wish to appeal the outcome of a personal circumstances decision may also use this process.

4. The following matters do not, of themselves, form grounds for an appeal:
    - Disagreement with a mark or grade
    - Dispute of a degree classification awarded
    - Challenges to academic judgements of examiners regarding assessment outcomes or the level of award recommended or granted

    Please note, the above matters do not constitute procedural irregularities
    - Complaints concerning the delivery of teaching and methods of assessment
    - Appeals submitted with no new circumstances presented or where there is no justification for failing to present the circumstances to the original board/panel
    - Appeals against progression decisions which have been properly made under the University Regulations
    - Appeals based on speculative circumstances

5. An academic appeal can only be submitted once the relevant results decision has been confirmed at an assessment or award board and the result formally communicated to the student. All formal results notifications to students include information and deadlines on the right of appeal.

6. Where the issue raised affects multiple students, a group appeal may be submitted, provided the group nominates one student to act as the group representative. All students included within a group appeal must sign the appeal request form so that the University can be confident that the submission fairly represents the views of all members of the group. Please contact the Student Casework Team if you wish to submit a group appeal.

7. These procedures apply to all students 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.

2. Principles

1. The Academic Appeal Procedure gives all Edge Hill students the opportunity to seek redress if there are grounds to indicate an irregularity has occurred. The procedures also enable corrective action to be taken where there is good reason why the University made a decision without full knowledge or awareness of all relevant circumstances.

2. These procedures operate in a climate of mutual respect, where:
    i. Students have the right to submit an academic appeal without fear of reprisal.
    ii. Proper submission of an academic appeal does not disadvantage the student.
    iii. The student is responsible for raising all relevant issues and providing all supporting documentation, including evidence where appropriate, when they submit an academic appeal.
    iv. Student expectations regarding possible outcomes are managed appropriately. If their expectations appear to go beyond what the University can reasonably provide, the student will be advised of this in writing.
    v. The details of an academic appeal are not generally shared beyond those directly involved. However, there may be instances where sharing information is necessary to progress, investigate or respond to the matter.
    vi. Decisions are made objectively at all stages of the process by university staff who are independent of the case. The Student Casework Team will check there is no conflict of interest before

designating a member of university staff to undertake any stage of the process.

vii. Students are encouraged to obtain advice and support throughout the process. The Student Casework Team can provide advice on the operation of these regulations, the Students' Union Advice Centre can provide independent support, advocacy and advice.

viii. Particular attention is given to academic appeals requiring expediated consideration. This includes, but is not limited to, cases where the impact of the issues raised may be detrimental to the student's mental health. It also includes cases where external time limits apply, for example in meeting regulatory requirements for the completion of regulated programmes.

3. The University accepts that the circumstances of an appeal process may cause people to act out of character and become persistent, angry or upset. However, an academic appeal may be suspended by the Head of Student Casework if a student behaves unreasonably or makes unacceptable demands. Should the Head of Student Casework decide to suspend an appeal, the student will receive a written explanation of the reasons for doing so.

4. When considering an academic appeal, the University will take note of matters that do not fall into the category of an academic appeal. Where such matters are identified, students will be advised about next steps for progressing matters through the alternative relevant procedures.

5. In some instances, the University will also be required to comply with the requirements of the relevant professional body when making decisions on academic appeals. In all relevant cases professional body standards will be upheld. Similarly, the University must comply with UKVI requirements which may alter timelines for student visa holders.

6. The Equality Act 2010 overarches all stages of the academic appeal procedures.

3. Establishing a case

1. All requests for an academic appeal must be submitted on an academic appeal form and should:
   i. indicate which of the grounds set out in 1.3 the request is based on
   ii. include clearly stated facts that support the appeal
   iii. provide sufficient evidence to support the case being made
   iv. be submitted by the stipulated deadline.

2. All academic appeals must be received, in full, within 10 working days of the decision being published. All formal results notifications include a specific deadline for students to submit an academic appeal.

3. Academic appeals submitted after the specified deadline will normally be ruled invalid. Where a student has been unable to meet the specified deadline, they should provide sufficient evidence to explain their reasons for submitting a late appeal. The Head of Student Casework reserves the right to extend the submission deadline, negotiate a new deadline with the student or to reject a late application.

4. All academic appeals are recorded by the University and will be acknowledged by receipt to the student within 10 working days of the University receiving the appeal.

5. Upon receiving an academic appeal, the Student Casework Team will consider whether an appeal meets the criteria for appeal and assess if the application is coherent, timely and complete. This is known as 'establishing a case'.

6. If a case for appeal is established, the Student Casework Team will progress the appeal to Stage 1 and the process described under Section 4 will be followed.

7. If the academic appeal does not meet the criteria stated under 3.1 the appeal will not be progressed to Stage 1 and the case will be dismissed. Within 20 working days of receipt, the Student Casework Team will inform the student of the reasons for this decision and advise them of their right of review.

8. If a student is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Student Casework Team under 3.5, they may request a review by the Director of Academic Registry or their nominee. Such a request must:
    i. be in writing to the Director of Academic Registry or their nominee via the Student Casework Team
    ii. be submitted within 10 working days of the date of the Student Casework Team's response
    iii. set out the full reasons why they believe the decision of the Student Casework Team is incorrect.

9. The student's request will be acknowledged in writing within 10 working days from receipt. The Student Casework Team's decision will be reviewed to ensure it was made in accordance with paragraph 3.1. The student will be informed in writing of the outcome and the reasons for it, normally within 20 working days of the request being received.

10. If the decision of the Student Casework Team is upheld, the student will receive a letter clearly stating that the University's internal appeal procedure has now been completed. A completion of procedures letter will be issued which informs the student of their right to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review if they remain dissatisfied.

11. If the decision of the Student Casework Team is overturned, the student will be advised in writing that the academic appeal has progressed to Stage 1: Faculty Consideration.

4. Stage 1: Faculty Consideration

1. Where a case has been established the Student Casework Team will refer the appeal to the Faculty for consideration. Local arrangements will define who considers the appeal but it would normally be the Dean or Associate Dean, Chair of the relevant academic body, or their nominee.

2. Where a case questions the operation of an academic body, the case will be considered by a Dean, Associate Dean or nominee who was not involved in the panel or board proceedings.

3. The academic appeal will be considered in consultation with others as deemed appropriate and a decision will be reported to the Student Casework Team.

4. The Student Casework Team will notify the student of the decision in writing, normally within 20 working days from the date of the referral to Stage 1. The notification will summarise the issues considered, the decision taken, the reasons for that decision and the student's next steps if they are dissatisfied with the outcome.

5. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1, they may request escalation to Stage 2: Appeal Review. In doing so, the request must meet and provide evidence to support one or more of the following grounds:
    i. Procedural irregularity in the academic appeal process
    ii. Bias or the perception of bias at any point in the process
    iii. New evidence has come to light which, for good reason, was not available at Stage 1 of the process and which may undermine that decision
    iv. The Stage 1 decision was unreasonable or disproportionate in all the circumstances

5. Stage 2: Appeal Review

1. The Head of Student Casework, or their nominee, assesses all requests for review to determine their eligibility and most appropriate way forward, that is
    i. Whether the student's preferred outcome is within the remit of a panel
    ii. Whether the student is seeking a reasonable outcome

2. Where an academic appeal panel is convened, the panel will normally meet within 20 working days of receipt of the request.

3. A panel secretary will be nominated by the Head of Student Casework.

4. The panel secretary is responsible for making administrative arrangements and will inform the student, in writing, of the date, time and place of the panel meeting. At least 10 working days' notice must be given.

5. The panel will be constituted as follows:
    - Chair: A senior member of university staff from a different faculty or department to the student.
    - One member of academic staff from the student's faculty but not their specific programme.
    - A representative of the Students' Union

    The Head of Student Casework (or their nominee) may attend to provide procedural advice and guidance to the panel. The Director of Academic Registry or other senior or executive member of the University has the right to attend any student casework panel.

    For regulated programmes only. Where an external representative of the profession concerned was involved in the original decision-making process, the appeal panel will also include an equivalent independent professional who has no conflict of interest with the student.

6. The Faculty will be represented by a Stage 1 presenting officer who will present a report of proceedings to date for the panel and student's consideration. A member of academic staff from the student's department will also attend to provide relevant programme information to the panel.

7. The student may provide additional written material for the panel's consideration and is required to attend the panel meeting to present their case. The student may also be accompanied to the meeting by a friend. Appendix 23 to the Academic Regulations provides further details on the role of a student's friend in academic conduct procedures.

8. Any additional written material and the name and standing of any friend must be submitted to the panel secretary no later than five working days before the meeting.

9. At the panel meeting both the student and the reviewing officer from Stage 1 (or their nominated representative) will be invited to present their case. Both parties may be questioned by members of the appeal panel. Each party will be given the opportunity to question the other under the guidance of the panel Chair.

10. If, for good reason, the student is unable to attend the meeting, the Head of Student Casework may agree to defer the meeting to an alternative date. If the student declines the invitation to attend the meeting for voluntary reasons or fails to attend without prior notification, the panel may proceed in the student's absence.

11. The terms of reference for reviewing an academic appeal are to consider:
    i. were the relevant procedures followed during the formal stage?
    ii. was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
    iii. has new material evidence been provided?
    iv. if new material evidence has been provided, has the student given valid reasons for not supplying this earlier?

12. The outcome of an academic appeal review will be to either:
    i. Dismiss the academic appeal, or
    ii. Uphold the appeal and return *a recommendation* to the Chair of the original board or panel for the implementation of the panel's decision.

    Where a student is enrolled on a regulated programme leading to professional registration, the implementation of the appeal panel decision will be subject to consultation with the relevant professional body.

13. The Student Casework team will inform the student in writing of the outcome within 10 working days of the decision being made. A completion of procedures letter will be issued which informs the student of their right to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for review if they remain dissatisfied.

6. Academic appeal outcomes

1. In all cases where an appeal is upheld the University will undertake to restore the student's original position, as far as is practicably and reasonably possible.

2. The outcome of an appeal will relate only to the assessment component, module, under appeal. Any consequential decisions regarding progression, conferment of an award, fitness to practise, or the maximum period of registration, where these are determined in accordance with the Academic Regulations and/or Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements, will be considered separately through the appropriate University processes and are not determined through the appeal process itself.

3. The University will not normally amend or uplift marks or grades as an outcome of an appeal. Where an appeal is upheld, the outcome may instead include permitting a further attempt, reassessment opportunity, or other appropriate academic remedy in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

4. The University disclaims all responsibility for any financial or other implications relating to the student, or any party acting on their behalf, as a result of a decision properly made by the University. Where it is accepted that fault rests with the University, we may meet reasonable and proportionate expenses necessarily incurred by a successful appellant.

7. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

1. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your appeal, you have the right to refer the matter to the OIA, provided your referral meets the OIA's rules and requirements. Matters concerning academic or professional judgement are not normally accepted by the OIA.

2. Please note, the OIA will normally only review issues that have been dealt with through the University's internal procedures and where a Completion of Procedures letter has been issued. You must take your complaint to the OIA within 12 months of receiving your Completion of Procedures letter.

8. Support for you

Reasonable adjustments

1. If you decide to share information about a disability or condition, we can talk about any reasonable adjustments which may make it easier for you to participate fully in this process.

2. The kinds of reasonable adjustments we can make include, for example:
    - Extending a deadline or changing a panel date if your condition prevents you from meeting the original commitments
    - Holding a meeting (including a panel meeting) online rather than in person

- Accepting a written statement from you instead of attending a meeting
- Pausing the process and re-starting it when you are well
- Providing documents to you in your preferred format, font, colour or size

3. If you wish to request any reasonable adjustments, you must do so by emailing the Head of Student Casework with your request at least five working days before the meeting takes place. We cannot guarantee that all requests will be met.

4. Adjustments we cannot make, or which we deem to be unreasonable include, for example:
    - Exempting you from adhering to any element of the procedure which fundamentally changes the procedure or challenges its validity.
    - Altering any element of the existing procedure which fundamentally changes the procedure or challenges its validity or which sets a precedent that may disadvantage other students now or in the future
    - Deviations from the procedure which would invalidate the procedure itself.

Sources of support

5. Support is available to you when concerns arise and at all stages of the academic misconduct process, University sources of support include the following:
    - Edge Hill Students' Union Advice Centre (SU). The SU can help you navigate the fitness to practise process and can also accompany you to panel meetings. Please read Role of the Student's Friend for more details and information regarding on the University's position on legal representation during an internal processes.
    - Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, who can provide emotional support during this process.
    - Student Support Team
    - Inclusion Team or SpLD if you require any reasonable adjustments throughout the process.
    - Student Services, who can provide money advice and careers support
    - Disability support services/Occupational Health services
    - Your personal tutor
    - Immediate confidential and professional support is also available from the Edge Well 24/7 student assistance programme.

9. Key to relevant documents

The following is a list of policies, procedures and guidance that students may wish to refer to when considering whether the matter of their circumstances constitutes an academic appeal:

- Appendix 7 - Personal Circumstances Procedure
- Appendix 12 - Assessment Board Operation of Discretion
- Student Complaints Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Student Debt Policy

Annex A: Academic Appeal Panel Agenda

1. The Chair will call for the student and university representatives to enter the room, will welcome both parties to the meeting and will then
    a. Introduce each member of the panel
    b. Outline the panel's remit and the procedure which will be followed

2. The Chair will clarify that the panel's remit is to ascertain
    a. Were the relevant procedures followed during the formal stage?
    b. Was the outcome reasonable in all the circumstances?
    c. Has new material evidence been provided?
    d. If there is new material evidence, has the student given valid reasons for not supplying this earlier?

3. The Chair will clarify the possible outcomes of the appeal panel. That is, the panel will either
    a. Dismiss the academic appeal, or
    b. Uphold the appeal and return a recommendation to the Chair of the original board or panel to implement the appeal panel's decision.

    Note that in the case of professional programmes, any outcome will be subject to consultation with the relevant professional body

4. The Chair will invite the student to present their case, and state why they disagree with the faculty's decision.

5. The Chair will invite the faculty representative(s) to respond.

6. Both parties may be questioned by members of the appeal panel. Each party will be given the opportunity to question the other under the guidance of the Chair.

7. When the Chair is satisfied that all relevant information has been provided, and there are no further questions, they will ask the student whether they feel they have experienced a fair hearing.

8. The Chair will then explain that the panel will deliberate and notify the student of the outcome in writing within 10 working days of the panel taking place.

9. The Chair will then ask both parties to leave the meeting.

10. The panel will deliberate in private, consider the evidence and confirm an outcome in line with point (3) above.

11. The meeting will close.

End matter

Item	Information
Title	Appendix 22: Academic Appeal Procedure
Policy Owner	Director of Academic Registry
Policy Manager	Head of Student Casework
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of Approval	July 2026
Date for Review	July 2027