

**Title:** Academic Appeals Procedure (Not HE)

**TYPE:** Procedure

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**PURPOSE:** To outline the procedure for students to appeal against an Assessor/Tutor's decision with regards to assessment.

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**SCOPE:** All FE students

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**RESPONSIBILITY:** Rebecca Gater

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## **Academic Appeals Procedure (Not HE)**

### **1. Purpose**

The following details the procedure to follow when a student disagrees with assessment outcomes or progression and wishes to appeal against the Assessor/Tutor's decision. This procedure applies to all Solihull College & University Centre programmes/courses, with the exception of Higher Education, for which the HE Academic Appeals Procedure should be used.

### **2. Responsibility**

Overall responsibility lies with the College's Quality Contact for the relevant awarding body.

Responsibilities of Heads of Schools, Course Leaders, Course Tutors, Assessors and Internal Verifiers are defined within the procedure.

### **3. Scope**

This procedure applies to appeals on academic matters only. If a student is dissatisfied with regard to any other matter they should utilise the relevant College policy, for example, the College's Complaints Procedure.

An academic appeal differs from a complaint and therefore appeals and complaints are considered under different procedures. A complaint is defined as a formal expression of dissatisfaction made by a student about either:

- The provision of their programme of study or related academic service/facility.

- Any other service provided by the College.

Therefore the Academic Appeals Procedure should not be used to bring complaints.

In most situations it is hoped that the issues raised will be resolved in the informal stage of the appeals procedure (stage 1). Appeals relating directly to the academic judgement of College staff cannot progress to the formal stage of the appeals procedure (stage 2).

An appeal against a grade cannot be made following the outcome of the final Examination Board, unless the appeal is based upon extenuating circumstances or an administrative error.

An independent member of College staff will be made available to support and advise students through the Formal Appeals Procedure. Students can obtain contact details on request from the Quality Department ([quality@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:quality@solihull.ac.uk)).

An appeal can be made about a decision to permit entry on a course. See the relevant Admissions Policy with regards to this type of appeal.

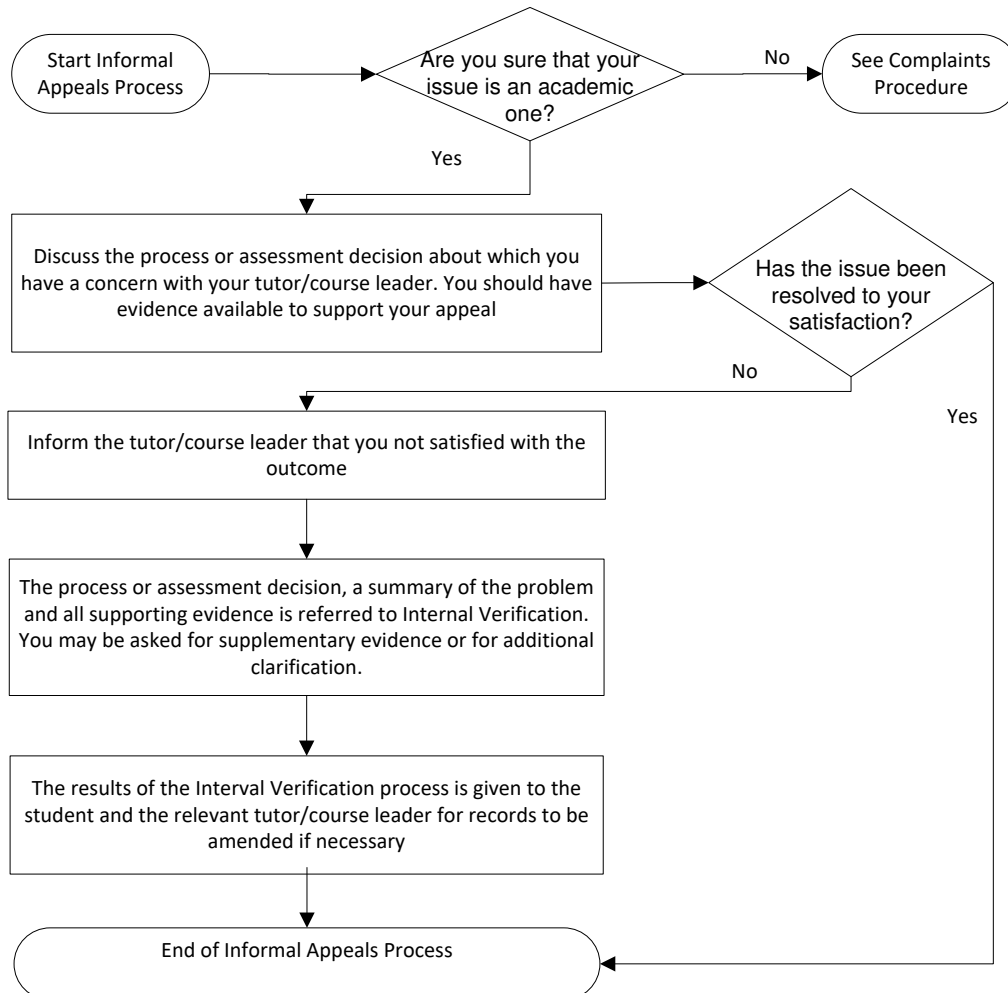
The Formal Appeals Procedure can be found on the Student Hub. The Course Leader or Head of School can offer further advice on how to make an academic appeal.

If the circumstances above apply, you should follow the procedure outlined below:

#### **4. Process**

##### **4.1 Stage 1 – Informal Appeals Process**

An informal appeal against a grade must be made within **5 working days** after receiving a grade. Please follow the process outlined below:



If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Informal Appeals Procedure outlined above, in some cases a formal appeal can be made. This will be a formal request for a decision to be made regarding student progression, assessment or awards to be reviewed and may only be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- Your performance was affected by factors outside your control, for example, sickness or accident (known as “extenuating circumstances”) which you do not consider to have been sufficiently, or fairly, taken into account.
- There has been an administrative error, examinations were not conducted according to regulations, or there has been some other material irregularity in conduct of assessment which has affected the student’s results and/or classification.
- Other grounds where unfair treatment or discrimination is alleged which is outside the exercise of academic judgement and which for good reason had not been brought to the attention of the boards of examiners.

Appeals relating directly to the academic judgement of College staff cannot progress to the formal stage of the appeals procedure (stage 2).

#### **4.2 Stage 2 – Formal Appeals Procedure**

1. Complete a College Formal Appeal Form (attached) and attach relevant evidence documents within 5 working days of the informal appeal decision notification.
2. Email the Appeals Form to the Quality Team ([quality@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:quality@solihull.ac.uk)).
3. A date will be set for the Appeals Panel\* to meet within 10 working days of receiving the Appeal Form.
4. Students will be notified when the Appeals Panel will meet and who will hear the appeal.
5. The Appeals Panel will give the opportunity to everyone involved in the assessment to present his or her account of the matter under appeal. This account can be given either verbally or in writing, whichever is preferred.
6. The Appeals Panel will notify you, the Assessor and the Internal Verifier (if appropriate) of its decision in writing within 5 working days. The decision of the Appeals Panel is binding within College.
7. Records of the appeal decision will be filed by the Course Leader and made available to the External Examiner.

If the centre or a candidate (or his/her parent/carer) has a concern and believes a result may not be accurate, an enquiry about the result may be requested.

Enquiries about results (EARs) offers three services:

- Service 1 – clerical re-check
- Service 2 – review of marking
- Service 3 – review of moderation (this service is not available to an individual candidate)

Following the EAR outcome, an external appeals process is available if the head of centre remains dissatisfied with the outcome and believes there are grounds for appeal. The JCQ publications Post-Results Services and JCQ Appeals Booklet (A guide to the awarding bodies' appeals processes) will be consulted to determine the acceptable grounds for a preliminary appeal.

Where the head of centre is satisfied after receiving the EAR outcome, but the candidate (or his/her parent/carer) believes there are grounds for a preliminary appeal to the awarding body, a further internal appeal may be made to the head of centre. Following this, the head of centre's decision as to whether to proceed with a preliminary appeal will be based upon the acceptable grounds as detailed in the JCQ Appeals Booklet. Candidates or parents/carers are not permitted to make direct representations to an awarding body.

The Academic Appeals Procedure should be completed and submitted to the centre within 5 working days of the notification of the outcome of the EAR. Subject to the head of centre's decision, this will allow the centre to process the preliminary appeal and submit to the awarding body within the required 30 calendar days of receiving the outcome of the enquiry about results process. Awarding body fees which may be charged for the preliminary appeal must be paid to the centre by the appellant before the preliminary appeal is submitted to the awarding body (fees are available from the exams officer). If the appeal is upheld by the awarding body, this fee will be refunded by the awarding body and repaid to the appellant by the centre.

*\*Note - The Appeals Panel will consist of three people, none of whom should have been involved with original assessment in any way, and will normally be chaired by the Assistant Principal for the qualification. One member of the panel will be an independent manager outside of the Curriculum Area. The Quality Contact for the relevant awarding body must be informed of the panel and of the outcome of the appeal. The appeal is made on the process as whole rather than the grade submitted.*

#### **Possible outcomes from the Appeals Panel:**

- The appeal is upheld
- The appeal is declined with reasons and advice on what to do next
- That the original assessment decision is confirmed
- That the original work should be re-assessed by the original assessor
- That the original work should be re-assessed by a different assessor appointed by the panel

#### **4.3 Stage 3 – External Provider**

If you are unhappy with the Appeals Panel decision you have the right to appeal to the Qualification Awarding Body. Details on who to contact and relevant procedures can be obtained from the Quality Department ([quality@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:quality@solihull.ac.uk)).



## Formal Appeal Form

Student Name:	
Qualification Title:	
Examination Board/Awarding Body:	
Assessor's Name:	
Internal Verifier's Name:	
Course Leader's Name:	
Date:	
Reason for Appeal: (attach supporting evidence, assessment etc. as applicable)	

Student Signature	
Student email address	
Assessor's Signature	
Internal Verifier's Signature	

*If you require help with completing this form or support during the Appeals Process, please contact the Quality Department ([quality@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:quality@solihull.ac.uk))*

*Please ensure that completed forms are returned to the Quality Department or emailed to [quality@solihull.ac.uk](mailto:quality@solihull.ac.uk)*

Author	Created	Approved by	Last Reviewed	Next Review Date
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