



HIGHER EDUCATION

Chichester College Group Academic Appeals Procedure for Open University validated programmes 2018-2019



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Quality Code Part B Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality (B8, B9 and B10), ESG Standards (1.1, 1.3, 1.7, 1.9), Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and Office for Independent Adjudicator (OIA) as at June 2017.

Chichester College Group

Higher Education

Academic Appeals Procedure for Open University validated programmes

Aim

The HE Academic Appeals policy ensures that Chichester College Group has fair, accessible and timely procedures for handling student appeals about against assessment decisions. The outcome from these procedures will facilitate enhancement of the learning opportunities provided. The policy is designed to comply with the Quality Code chapters B8 Programme Monitoring and Review (October 2013), B9 Academic Appeals and Student Complaints (April 2013) and B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others (December 2012), with due reference to ESG. It also complies with Quality Code chapter B10 Managing Higher Education Provision with Others (December 2012). The Office of the Independent Adjudicator's Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals Good Practice guides (December 2016 and March 2017) have been used in the production of this policy.

Objectives

1. Chichester College Group will make available opportunities for students to raise academic appeals without risk of disadvantage.
2. Chichester College Group will encourage constructive engagement with the appeals process which offers opportunities for early and informal resolution.
3. Chichester College Group will make its appeals procedures easily available to all higher education students through college communication systems, supported by the college's HE Student Advisor. The college will make clear distinctions so that students know which procedure to follow depending upon where the responsibility for appeals lies.
4. The policy is intended to provide clear and accurate advice and guidance for students appealing against an assessment decision, and for staff involved in handling or supporting complaints.
5. Appeals procedures will be conducted in a timely and fair manner.

6. The academic appeals process is monitored by the college's senior HE Deliberative Body (the HE Board) which will review policy and operations following appeals and will require changes to practice where appropriate.
7. The HE Board will monitor and evaluate the appeals procedure and reflect outcomes from appeals in order to enhance learning opportunities.

Definitions of roles

For Open University courses, internal college processes will be followed (unless specified otherwise) and after the third and final internal stage, the student will have a right of appeal to the Open University. The student retains the right to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, if the University has not resolved the complaint to the student's satisfaction

Grounds for appeals against assessment decisions

The only grounds on which an appeal may be based are as follows:

1. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of
2. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative errors)
3. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment
4. There is evidence of assessment malpractice

The College is committed to open and fair assessment. Students should be involved in the process of assessment. The purpose of the assessment and what is required to achieve a particular grade or level of competence should be clearly explained to the students. Similarly, constructive feedback should be provided, which clearly explains why a particular mark/grade has been awarded and what the student needs to do to improve the standard of his/her work. There may occasionally be times when the students and assessor have differing views about an assessment decision. The process described below covers such situations. This procedure should be completed before the final Board of Examiners for the academic year, if there are appeals against the decisions reached in the final

Board of Examiners they must be lodged within 5 working days of the results being issued.

The Higher Education Quality Manager and college staff will make every effort to ensure that meetings are arranged at the student's convenience. Appropriate technologies such as Skype or telephone meetings should be used especially for learners who are unable to get into college easily.

Students wishing to appeal must provide a clear explanation of the nature of the appeal and the grounds on which they are appealing.

Stage One

If a student disagrees with an assessment decision, the Student Appeal Form (SAF - appendix A), should be completed and submitted to the HE dropbox:

HE@chichester.ac.uk within 10 working days of receiving their grades. The appeal will be logged by the Quality Co-ordinator and passed to the Higher Education Quality Manager who will oversee the process. Stage 1 will be facilitated by the Higher Education Quality Manager.

The student will be invited to explain the reasons for concern as soon as possible (within a maximum of 10 working days), and to re-examine the work / evidence with the assessor. The assessor should explain fully the reasons for the grade and listen carefully to the points made by the student, taking due account of them in his/her consideration of whether there is a case for changing the grade. It is expected that most appeals will proceed no further than this. Where a student has claimed prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment the appeal will proceed directly to stage 2.

Stage Two

If the student is still unhappy about an assessment decision after stage one has been carried out, he/she should note this in the relevant section of their original Student Appeal Form (stage one - student's response). The updated Student Appeal Form should then be re-submitted to HE@chichester.ac.uk, along with the student work or evidence and any explanation the student may wish to include at this

stage. This must be done within five working days of receiving the stage 1 decision.

The internal verifier will reconsider the decision and inform the student of his/her decision within five working days. If the assignment has already been internally verified, the study programme leader will ask another colleague to blind double mark it. The decision will also be entered on the Student Appeal Form. The Higher Education Quality Manager will oversee Stage 2 appeals.

In the event that, the student is unhappy about the reconsidered assessment the appeal will move to stage three

Stage Three

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two, they have 10 working days to escalate their appeal to Stage Three. At this **Stage**, the Student Appeal Form and relevant evidence will be sent to an Appeal Panel, which will include the student, a friend (if the student so wishes), the original assessor, the internal verifier (from Stage Two) and two independent members appointed by the Director of Higher Education, one of whom will be appointed as Chair. The Panel will meet at a time convenient to the student (within one month of the appeal being escalated to Stage Three.)

The Panel will reach a decision within ten working days of the meeting of the Panel and will make recommendations to the Vice Principal in writing.

The Vice Principal will make the decision on the appeal. This decision will be communicated to the student in a letter within 5 working days. This letter will advise the student of their right to, and process of, submitting a complaint to the Open University.

The Open University will make their decision regarding the complaint, and communicate it to the student in a Completion of Procedures letter within 20 working days. This will letter will advise students of their right to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for review, the time limit for doing so (12 months) and where and how to access advice and support.

A summary report of all appeals against assessment decisions will be considered by the Higher Education Board to inform policy and procedure and to enhance student achievement.

For appeals for Open University qualifications.

There shall be a final right of appeal to The Open University against a decision of a Board of Examiners only if the appeal is against a decision related to either:

- (a) progression from one stage to another of the programme to the next; or
- (b) a final award;

and both of the following criteria are met:

- (a) all appropriate internal procedures at the College have been exhausted;
- (b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the College's internal procedures and regulations for dealing with appeals were not implemented correctly or fairly.

The procedure for appealing to The Open University is set out in The Open University Handbook for Validated Awards which students should have access to through the College.

Appendix A

STUDENT APPEAL AGAINST ASSESSMENT DECISIONS FORM CONFIDENTIAL

Name of Student	
Programme Title	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Name of Assessor	
Name of Internal Verifier	

Unit Assessed	
Nature/Title of Assessment	
Date of Assessment	

Appeals will be considered for the following reasons

1. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of (for examples please see page 2 of this form)
2. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative error)
3. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment
4. There is evidence of assessment misconduct

Student's reasons for appeal	
▪ Please summarise below the reasons for your appeal	
Signature	Date

Stage 1

Assessor's comments			
Assessor should present a brief response / comment on the student's stated reasons for appeal			
Signature		Date	
Student's response			
Student to comment on assessor's decision.			
Agree	Disagree	Signature	Date

Stage 2

Internal verifier's comments and decision			
▪ IV should briefly comment on the student's appeal and record his/her decision			
Date appeal received		Date of reply	
IV signature		Date	
Student's response			
Student to comment on internal verifier's decision.			
Agree	Disagree	Signature	Date

Appeal panel's comments and decision			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair of appeal panel should briefly comment on the student's appeal and record the panel's decision 			
Date appeal received		Date of reply	
Signature		Date	

Please submit your completed appeal form to HE@chichester.ac.uk

Do I have mitigating circumstances?

The circumstances you are seeking to mitigate must be unforeseeable or unpreventable and you must be able to demonstrate how these circumstances could have a significant impact upon your academic performance. For the purposes of appeal you must show that the assessor was not aware of these problems.

Common examples include:

- Significant personal illness or injury (where a Doctor certifies that you should not work or study)
- The critical illness or death of a close family member/dependent
- Significant family crises or financial problems leading to acute stress
- Absence for public service (e.g. Jury Service)

Circumstances not normally considered:

- Events that were planned in advance or could reasonably be foreseen (e.g. booked holiday) - arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader once known
- Failure, loss or theft of a computer, printer or storage medium
- Non-diagnosed illness (e.g. exam stress)
- Inadequate time management/planning
- Paid employment or volunteering commitments- arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader
- Rejection of EHCP DSA advice and guidance
- Pre-existing circumstances disclosed at interview (e.g. ongoing diagnosed illness)

Appendix B - Appeal against assessment decisions process

