

## University College Birmingham Assessment Appeals Procedure

Reviewed May 2024

Date of Next Review May 2025

### Introduction

The Assessment Appeals Procedure is available to all students enrolled at UCB. This document will use “student” to refer to all further education, Sixth Form, undergraduate, taught postgraduate and Block students (for example, Hong Kong Block students) and apprentices who are enrolled and registered at UCB.

If you are unhappy with the outcomes of an assessment and believe your published result is unfair or if there are extenuating circumstances that for good reasons were not submitted to the Examination Board, then you should refer to this [Assessment Appeals Procedure](#). For other complaints of a service-related nature, then the Student Complaints Procedure is the most appropriate way to resolve your concern.

For more information about the best way to make a complaint or appeal and which procedure may be more appropriate, you may refer to the Academic Registry, Student Services or an employee of the Guild of Students for advice. A key principle is to identify what you seek as an outcome to your concern; if you are seeking a reconsideration of a mark for a particular assessment, this Assessment Appeals Procedure should be used.

**FE/Sixth Form students only** – This procedure applies to UCB-set and marked assessments only. FE students wishing to appeal against an assessment decision should, in the first instance, speak to their Senior lecturer or Head of Department, Subject/Curriculum lead or the Lead Internal Verifier. Sixth Form students should speak initially to the Subject Lead or Curriculum Lead. If still unhappy, they may use this Assessment Appeals Procedure. If an FE/Sixth Form student wishes to appeal a mark for an externally marked or awarded assessment, they should seek advice from the relevant UCB staff as stated above, who will follow the exam board’s post-results’ services and appeals procedures to determine there is a valid reason to challenge a result.

An appeal for the purposes of this Assessment Appeals Procedure is:

*‘A request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards. (Quality Assurance Agency)*

A student has the right to appeal against an assessment decision to the Assessment Appeals Committee (of the Academic Board). An appeal that questions academic judgement in awarding a mark is **not** eligible. The basis of an appeal may only be made on one or more of the following grounds:

1. That the student's performance was affected by illness or other factors which they were, for valid reasons, unable to divulge before the assessment decision, or the Examination Board's decision was taken. An appeal must be supported by medical or other documentary evidence acceptable to the Assessment Appeals Committee.
2. That there is new and relevant evidence not previously considered.
3. That the correct procedures for determining the student's assessment outcome had not been followed, resulting in an unfair decision taken.

### **Stage One - Early Resolution Process**

In the first instance, where relevant, you should discuss your concerns with your assessor or Senior Lecturer/Head of Department/Subject Lead/Curriculum Lead who will explain the reasons for the assessment decision. It is the expectation of UCB that its staff will deal thoughtfully and empathetically with your concerns so that most are resolved successfully at this stage, minimising the extent to which referrals are made to the formal process. You may also contact the Academic Registry or an employee of the Guild of Students for advice in making an assessment appeal.

### **Stage Two - Formal Student Assessment Appeals Procedure**

Put your appeal in writing using the Assessment Appeal Form and forward this to [registry@ucb.ac.uk](mailto:registry@ucb.ac.uk) within 10 working days of the notification of the decision stating the grounds for the appeal.

<https://www.ucb.ac.uk/media/xh3pxvy3/assessment-appeal-form.pdf>

A full justification for the appeal should be given, including detailed information which supports the grounds for the appeal. Evidence to support the appeal should also be attached to the Form or included as a separate attachment.

On receipt of the student's completed Assessment Appeal Form and evidence, the Head of Student Records and Academic Registry shall consider the case and decide whether the minimum requirements for reconsideration of the decision have been established. If so, the Head of Student Records and Academic Registry will convene a meeting of the Assessment Appeals Committee at the earliest opportunity (normally within 10 working days).

The Assessment Appeals Committee may confirm the original decision, or if they decide that the appeal is justified, request the Board of Examiners or other relevant body to reconsider the original decision.

The Assessment Appeals Committee may confirm the Stage Three decision under the Code of Practice on Student Engagement and Reasonable Diligence, or, in the case of a student withdrawal, it may suspend the withdrawal decision with the requirement that the student complies with a time-limited condition of improvement. If this requirement is not met, the student has no further right to appeal to Stage Two of this Procedure.

## **The Assessment Appeals Committee**

### **Membership**

1. The Head of Student Records and Academic Registry (who will Chair the meeting)
2. An Executive Dean not from the School concerned.
3. Deputy Dean (Quality Assurance and Enhancement).
4. The Committee may co-opt a fourth member if it recognises that it would benefit from a person with a particular specialism.

No person will be allowed to be a member of the Committee who has been involved in the original assessment decision or has any significant acquaintance with the student concerned.

No member of UCB staff shall be allowed to sit on the Committee where matters concerning their own subject area are to be considered.

No Committee shall include more than one member inexperienced in the appeals hearing.

The Head of Student Records and Academic Registry shall present the relevant information to the Committee and shall advise on Regulations.

### **Terms of Reference**

The role of the Assessment Appeals Committee is:

1. To consider appeals against the decision of the Board of Examiners that a student has failed to meet the minimum requirement to continue their programme. In this case, the Committee may uphold the appeal and recommend to the Chair of the Board of Examiners that the original decision to withdraw the student is reversed. Alternatively, the Committee may reject the appeal, concluding that no grounds for the reconsideration of the decision have been established.

2. To consider appeals against assessment or Board of Examiners' decisions. In this case the Committee may uphold the appeal and recommend to the Chair of the Board of Examiners that the original assessment decision is reconsidered. In appropriate circumstances the decision may be to repeat the assessment with a different assessor. Alternatively, the Committee may reject the appeal, concluding that no grounds for the reconsideration of the decision have been established.

### **Stage Three - Appealing the Outcome from previous stages**

A student may appeal against the decision of the Assessment Appeals Committee to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Digital) if they can identify that some procedural irregularity has occurred in the handling of their appeal by the Assessment Appeals Committee.

The student must complete an Assessment Appeal Form within 10 working days of the notification of the decision of the Assessment Appeals Committee to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Digital), who will convene a meeting at the earliest opportunity (usually within 10 working days) to hear the appeal.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Digital) may uphold the appeal and require the Assessment Appeals Committee to review the original decision, or they may reject the appeal, concluding that no grounds for the reconsideration of the original decision have been established.

Further Education/Sixth Form students may have recourse to the Awarding Body for their programme via the External Verifier or directly to the Awarding Body. However, internal processes must be completed before this can be undertaken. Please contact the Lead Internal Verifier who will assist you with your appeal to an awarding body. In addition, UCB's Academic Registry will advise the student based on the relevant Awarding Body Regulations.

If the outcome of Stage Three is that your appeal is not justified, you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter which confirms that you have now exhausted the UCB Formal Assessment Appeals Procedure.

Should you choose to, you still have recourse for an independent review of your Assessment Appeal by applying to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) within their stated time limit. OIA will first ensure the student has exhausted all UCB appeal procedures before reviewing their case. In addition, the OIA will not consider appeals based on academic judgement. For advice and information concerning the OIA, please contact the Academic Registry, an employee of the Guild of Students or at the OIA website: [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk)

Following receipt of a Completion of Procedures Letter and, if your programme of study is a University of Birmingham (UoB) degree, you may then also refer your appeal to the relevant UoB office. Go to <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/registry/policy/complaint-appeal/index.aspx> for advice on which forms to complete. If your programme of study is a University of Warwick degree award, you may refer your appeal to the University's Student Complaints and Academic Casework Team via email to [complaints@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:complaints@warwick.ac.uk).

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