

HIGHER EDUCATION ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

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Related Documents: Complaints Procedure for HE Students

Principles

The College is committed to ensuring that whenever staff assess students' work for external qualifications, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the qualification concerned.

Assessments will be conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity.

The College is committed to ensuring that assessment evidence provided by candidates is produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the relevant specifications for each subject.

Where a set of work is divided between staff, internal verification and standardisation will ensure consistency.

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

- I. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the student which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of
- II. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative errors)
- III. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment
- IV. There is evidence of assessment malpractice

1.1 Appeal Against Assessment

If a student believes that they have grounds for appeal in relation to assessment of his/her work, s/he may make use of this appeals policy.

A student studying at the College on a partner university programme can submit an appeal directly to the university. There is a separate form to use when submitting an appeal of this kind. If on receipt of the form the University thinks the matter should be dealt with by us, they will tell you and explain why.

In the first instance a discussion should take place between the assessor and the student. If a student continues to believe that the assessment does not reflect the standard of work then the matter should be referred to the Director of Professional Performance who will consult with the Internal Verifier, where appropriate. The Director of Professional Performance* will respond to the student within 7 working days. The response will be formally

recorded and will be discussed and minuted at the next Assessment Panel meeting. If a student is still not satisfied with the outcome the formal appeals procedure below should be applied. *Where the Director of Professional Performance is the assessor the issue should be referred to the Director of Curriculum Operations.

The procedure is available from the Examinations' Officer and via the College virtual learning environment, *JCC Connect/ JCC HE*

- 1.2 Formal appeals should be made as early as possible and within 10 working days after the assessment decision appeal is made known to the student. After this point, unless the student can demonstrate extenuating circumstances that had a material impact on his or her ability to make an appeal, the appeal will not be considered.
- 1.3 Appeals should be made in writing by the student to the Examinations' Officer (EO), who will investigate the appeal with at least one other member of curriculum staff who have not been involved in the assessment decision and who has a good knowledge of the awarding body assessment processes. The relevant Director should be made aware at this stage by the EO and s/he will monitor the investigation. If the EO was directly involved in the assessment in question, the VP (PPD) will appoint another member of staff of similar or greater seniority to conduct the investigation and likewise if the EO is not able to conduct the investigation for some other reason.
- 1.4 The purpose of the investigation will be to decide whether the process used for the assessment conformed to the published requirements of the awarding body, whether the correct procedures were used, that the assessment was fair and inclusive, acknowledging and account for any barriers that as student with a disability or learning difficulty might have and that it was correctly internally verified against the stated assessment criteria. The investigation will establish whether the Expectation and indicators of sound practice for assessment identified in the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (The Quality Code) *Expectation B9 Academic Appeals and Student Complaints* have been met.
- 1.5 The Examinations' Officer will report the findings as part of an Appeals' Panel meeting chaired by the relevant Director of Professional Performance. The Panel will consist of:
 - i Director of Professional Performance (Chair)
 - ii Examinations' Officer
 - iii Curriculum Staff involved in investigation

- 1.6 The Panel will meet to consider the appeal within ten working days of the receipt of the written request.
- 1.7 The student will be informed of the time and place of the Panel meeting, and will be invited to attend together with a parent/guardian/friend, and/or the HE Keyworker if requested.
- 1.8 Relevant reports by the student's personal and subject tutors and all other parties involved in the assessment will be received.
- 1.9 At the end of the meeting the Panel will reach its decision in private discussion and will notify the student in writing. All decisions will be monitored by the HEC.

2. Outcome of Appeals

- 2.1 The student will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal by the Director of Professional Performance, including any relevant correspondence with the awarding body and any changes made to the procedure relating to assessment.
- 2.2 A written record will be kept and made available to the awarding body upon request. The Examinations' Officer will record all details relating to formal appeals and these will be reported to the Vice Principal (Performance, Planning and Development) who in turn will report them to the College's Senior Leadership Team and the Higher Education Committee.
- 2.3 Should the appeal bring any significant irregularity to light, the awarding body will be informed.
- 2.4 After work has been assessed internally, it is moderated by the awarding body through the use of External Examiners to ensure consistency between centres. Such moderation may change the marks awarded for internally assessed work. Were this to happen consistently whether for an individual programme or for an individual assessor the College would investigate the causes and ensure its assessment and internal verification procedures were sufficiently robust.

3. Appeal to an Awarding Body or the Office of the Independent Adjudicator

- 3.1 Students have a final right of appeal to the awarding body but only if the procedures in place have not been followed. Further details are given in the Pearson policy, *Enquiries and Appeals on Pearson Vocational Qualifications*. For partner universities students should refer to their appeals processes.
- 3.2 If students are not satisfied with the result of their appeal after following the provider's processes, they can request the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) to review their complaint. The OIA will not deal with complaints about academic judgement but will look at academic appeals process.
- 3.3 Following the OIA process does not prevent students from pursuing a complaint or appeal with the awarding body and they may choose whichever route they feel is the most appropriate

