



Guide to Academic Appeals

2026-2027

**Free, independent and confidential advice
from your Students' Union.**

This guide aims to provide you with basic information and advice on the **Academic Appeals** process and the options available to you if you are seeking to make an appeal.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the University's **Academic Appeals Regulations** and **Appeals Guidance Leaflet**.



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winchesterstudents.co.uk/advice

Support

You don't have to go through the process alone.

The Student's Union **Advice Centre** is available to support you throughout your experience.

We can:

- Explain the Appeals processes
- Help you understand University correspondence
- Help you prepare your response
- Meet with you, via appointment, to discuss any questions or concerns you may have
- Provide feedback on appeal drafts

Our Advice Centre **won't** tell you whether you should appeal - but they can help you understand your options and present your case as clearly as possible.

You can get in touch with us via winchesterstudents.co.uk/advice

In this Guide

This guide includes:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • What an Academic Appeal is | Page 3 |
| • When you can Appeal | Page 3 |
| • The grounds for Appeal | Page 4 |
| • What evidence you'll need | Page 6 |
| • How you might approach writing an Appeal | Page 7 |
| • What happens after you submit your Appeal | Page 9 |
| • Quick guide - Should I submit an Appeal? | Page 11 |
| • Quick Guide - What happens when you Appeal | Page 12 |
| • Frequently Asked Questions | Page 13 |
| • Useful links / contacts | Page 14 |



What is an Academic Appeal?

An **Academic Appeal** is a request for the University to review a decision made by the **Progression and Award Board** (PAB), or the Postgraduate Student Progress Committee (for research students).

These boards typically make decisions about:

- Progressing to the next year
- Final awards or classifications
- Reassessment opportunities
- Repeat Study options
- Withdrawal
- Exit awards

An **Academic Appeal** is not a chance to ask for your work to be remarked.

Before you appeal

Ask yourself the following:



Have I received my official Progression and Award Board decision?

If you haven't yet received the PAB's decision, it's too early to submit an appeal - this doesn't mean you cannot begin preparing one, however. You'll receive an email when your results are available to view on My Record.



Am I within 10 working days of receiving the board's decision?

You will receive the board's decision in the form of a digital letter, addressed to your unimail inbox. Board's typically release letters in July/August.



Have I sought clarification with my Faculty on the decisions in my PAB letter?

Taking this step can help you understand how a decision has been made, and help you decide whether to appeal, and what grounds you might have to do so. You can do this at the same time as seeking support, or beginning to gather evidence.



Do I have evidence to support my appeal?

All appeals require evidence in order to be considered - see page 6 for more details

If the answer to any of the above is **no**, consider speaking to the **Students' Union's Advice Centre** for further guidance.



Can I Appeal?

You can only appeal on one (or more) of **three grounds**.

Ground A: Exceptional Circumstances

This is the ground to choose if something outside your control significantly affected your academic performance, **AND**:

- You couldn't reasonably provide evidence of this at the time; **OR**
- You couldn't reasonably have known about the circumstances until later

Example

You received a diagnosis of a learning difference in Term 2 and a Learning Agreement was put in place. The support helped you succeed your Term 2 assessments, but you failed one in Term 1. If you had had the same support in Term 1, you might not have failed.

Ground B: University Process Issue

This is the ground to choose if you believe that the University (which includes members of staff) failed to follow its own regulations or procedures **AND** this has unfairly disadvantaged you (i.e. has contributed to the outcome you want to appeal)

Example

You're entitled to extra time in your exam, but this wasn't correctly set up for (one of) your assessments - resulting in late submission(s), and your grade being capped. If the extra time had been set up properly, you wouldn't have submitted late.

Ground C: Evidence of Bias/Prejudice

This is the ground to choose if you have **substantive evidence** that bias or prejudice has affected the examination or moderation of your work.

This **must** be supported by evidence - not simply because you're unhappy with your mark.

Examples

You made a complaint about a module leader in a previous year. You were surprised when you barely passed a module, and feel the feedback was very brief. You contend that your work was marked more harshly because of your complaint.



When Can't I Appeal?

Unfortunately, some situations cannot be considered as grounds for an Academic Appeal.

You **cannot appeal**** simply because:

- You disagree with your mark (this would be considered a disagreement with the assessor's "academic judgement" - these judgements are reached via a process of applying academic expertise, internal moderation across modules, and endorsement by external examiners. The University will not consider reviewing this judgement outside of the grounds for appeal, above)
- You believe your work deserves a higher grade
- You didn't understand any relevant policies, procedures, or regulations
- You didn't know about deadlines
- You're unhappy with the teaching on your course (issues with the quality of teaching, supervision, or services must be raised when they occur, or raised through the Student Complaints policy)
- You were affected by circumstances which you could reasonably have told the University about, but chose not to

Did You Know?

If you think that there's been a mistake with the recording of one of your grades, or a grade is missing, you don't have to submit an Academic Appeal to get this fixed.

If you think there has been a transcription error, get in touch with your Faculty Office, or Doctoral School for Postgraduate Research students. They are likely to be able to sort out any errors quickly, and without a need for appeal.

*** please note, this list is not exhaustive*



What Evidence Should I Include?

Every Appeal **must include** supporting evidence.

Good Evidence is...

- independent (i.e. not based purely on your opinion)
- relevant to your Appeal
- verifiable
- clearly linked to your Appeal

Depending on your circumstances, this **could** include:

- medical evidence (e.g. doctor's notes, medical records)
- diagnostic reports
- professional letters (e.g. counselling, legal proceedings, etc.)
- emails (e.g. confirmation of appointments or meetings)
- screenshots
- official University correspondence

Gathering Evidence

Some forms of evidence can take time to gather (e.g. doctor's notes, diagnosis confirmation, etc.). If you're approaching your Appeal deadline, and still waiting on evidence, submit your Appeal on time, and explain what evidence you are waiting for.

Typically, you will have **5 working days after** your Appeal deadline to submit any additional supporting evidence. This evidence can be emailed to appeals@winchester.ac.uk (you don't have to submit a new Appeal).

If you are unsure about this, or have further questions - contact the University's Appeals team (appeals@winchester.ac.uk).



Writing a strong Appeal

The strongest appeals are **clear, factual** and **well-organised**.

IMPORTANT

You can only make **ONE** appeal per Progression and Award Board letter you receive. Within your single submission, you can seek to appeal as many of the board's decisions as you would like. In each case, you will need to demonstrate how your request to appeal is justified by one, or more, of the grounds for appeal (see page 4).

A useful structure could be:

Introduction

- Identify, briefly, which decisions you are seeking to Appeal (e.g. my capped grade for Module X001)
- Identify, briefly, which ground(s) you are basing your Appeal on (e.g. I am seeking to appeal this decision on Ground A and Ground B).

Body

- **Explain what happened** - You might describe the circumstances in **date order** (e.g. "On 01/05/26, late in the evening, I broke my leg. I was admitted to hospital, but surgery was delayed until 02/05/26, the same day as my MX001 exam").
- **Explain the impact** - How did these circumstances affect your assessment or the decision that was made? (e.g. "I was unable to request a deferral for the exam as I was admitted late in the evening, and had surgery early the next day").
- **Explain why this meets your appeal ground** - e.g. "These circumstances clearly meet Ground A, as they happened outside of my control, and I couldn't apply for exceptional circumstances at the time."
- **Refer to your evidence** - Tell the reader which documents support each point. You might use a referencing system - e.g. "On 01/05/26, late in the evening, I broke my leg. I was admitted to hospital (see Evidence 1)".



- **Explain the outcome you're seeking** - you may wish to include what outcome you are seeking. Your request is not guaranteed if your Appeal is successful, but will be considered.
- For example, you might request:
 - a further assessment opportunity
 - a grade to be uncapped
 - to **Trail Credit***, or **Repeat Study****
- **Remember:** the University cannot simply increase your mark because you ask. If an appeal is successful, the outcome is usually another opportunity to complete an assessment. Your submitted work will not be re-assessed, and grade increased.

Please Note

There will be a deadline for continuing students to be offered further attempts at assignments during the summer **AND** then continue onto their next level of study in September. Depending on the timing of your Appeal, you may not be granted an in-year exceptional third attempt, but Trail Credit or Repeat Study, instead.

Conclusion

- **Summarise your argument** - briefly reiterate the decisions you are looking to Appeal, and your ground(s) for Appeal.
- **Thank the reader for their time** considering your Appeal

***Trail Credit:** you retake the required assessments from your current level of study alongside your new modules (up to a max. of 30 credits). You continue to your next level of study. Trail Credit modules are capped at a passing grade.

****Repeat Study:** you complete the required assessments/study in an additional year of study, only taking the number of modules equal to the credits you still need. You do not continue to the next level of study until the following academic year, if you pass.

More information on the above is available via [the intranet](#).



Before you submit

Review your appeal

Aim to make your Appeal clear, easy to read, and focussed on the key points of your argument.

- Is all the information you've provided **relevant** to your Appeal (i.e. demonstrates that you have met the ground(s) you have chosen)?
- Have you clearly **linked your reasoning to your evidence**?
- How easy is it to read and **understand** your Appeal? (You can use bullet points, paragraphs, subheadings, etc. to provide a clear structure)

What happens after I submit?

The University will review:

- whether your Appeal was submitted on time
- whether it meets one, or more, of the permitted grounds
- the evidence you've provided

If more information is needed, they will contact you.

The University will then make a decision, and inform you of the outcome **by email**. They aim to complete the process within **90 calendar days**, though many Appeals are resolved sooner.

If your Appeal is rejected, you may be able to request an internal review if you have:

- New evidence (linked to the grounds for Appeal)
- Evidence that the original Appeal was not handled correctly

Once the University's procedures are complete, you may request (or receive) a **Completion of Procedures Letter** (COP), which allows you to take your case to be reviewed by the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator** (OIA).



Common mistakes to avoid

- **Appealing your mark**

An Appeal **cannot** be made simply because you think you deserved a higher mark.

An Appeal is made on the grounds that something has gone wrong with the process - whether because of exceptional circumstances, or a failure to follow University policy correctly.

- **Missing the deadline**

You have **10 working days** from your Progression and Award Board letter to submit your appeal. Even if you're still waiting for evidence - **submit your Appeal** first, then explain what evidence is outstanding.

- **Not providing evidence**

Every Appeal needs supporting evidence. Statements alone are unlikely to be enough.

- **Choosing the wrong ground**

Take time to consider whether your Appeal is based on:

- Exceptional Circumstances
- Procedural error
- Bias or prejudice

Your explanation should clearly relate to the ground(s) you select.

- **Writing an emotional statement**

It's understandable to be upset, however, Appeals are strongest when they are **factual, chronological, evidence-based**, and **easy to follow**.

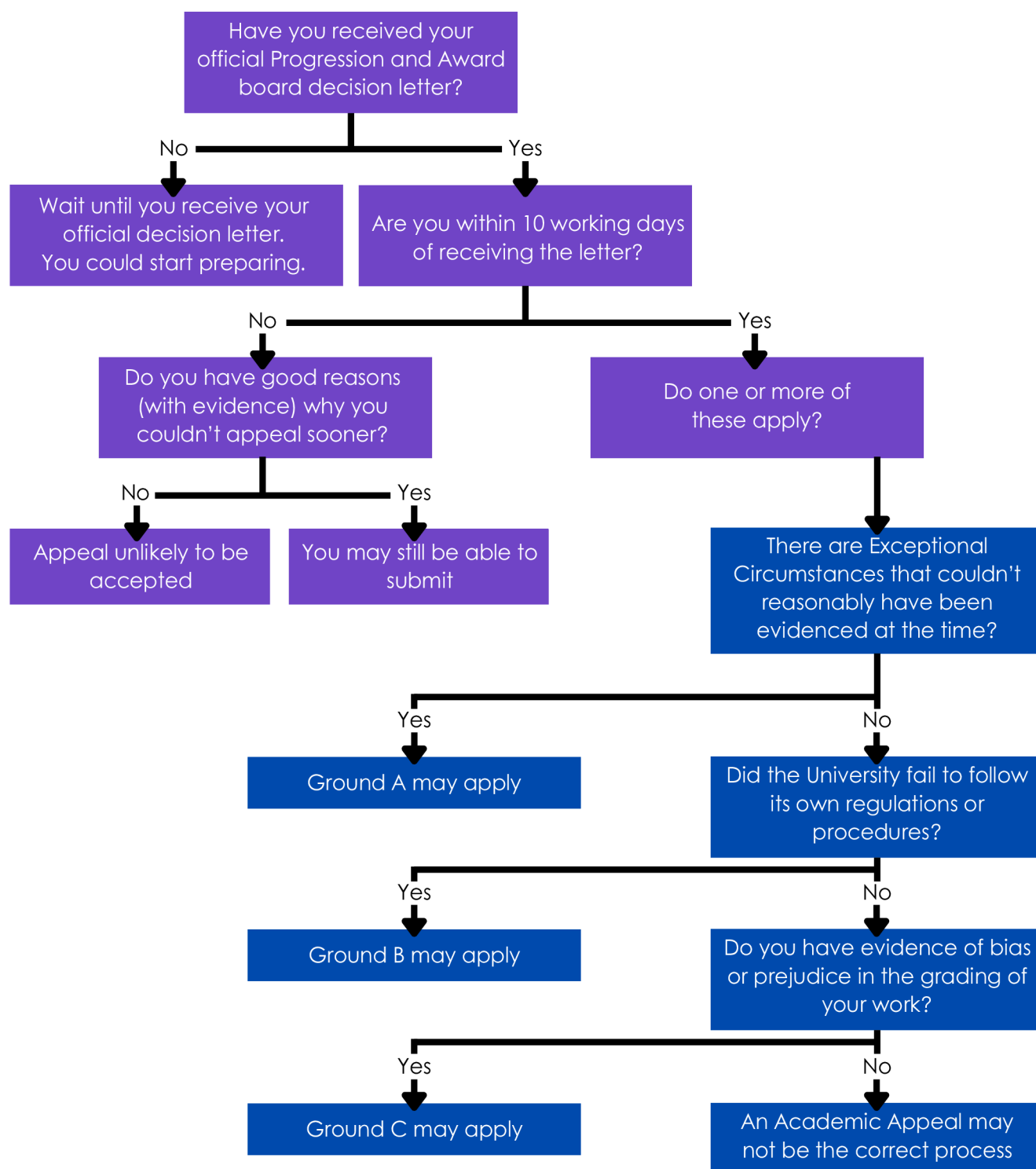
- **Including unnecessary information**

Only include information that helps explain:

- What happened
- Why it matters
- Which ground(s) for Appeal it relates to
- What evidence supports it



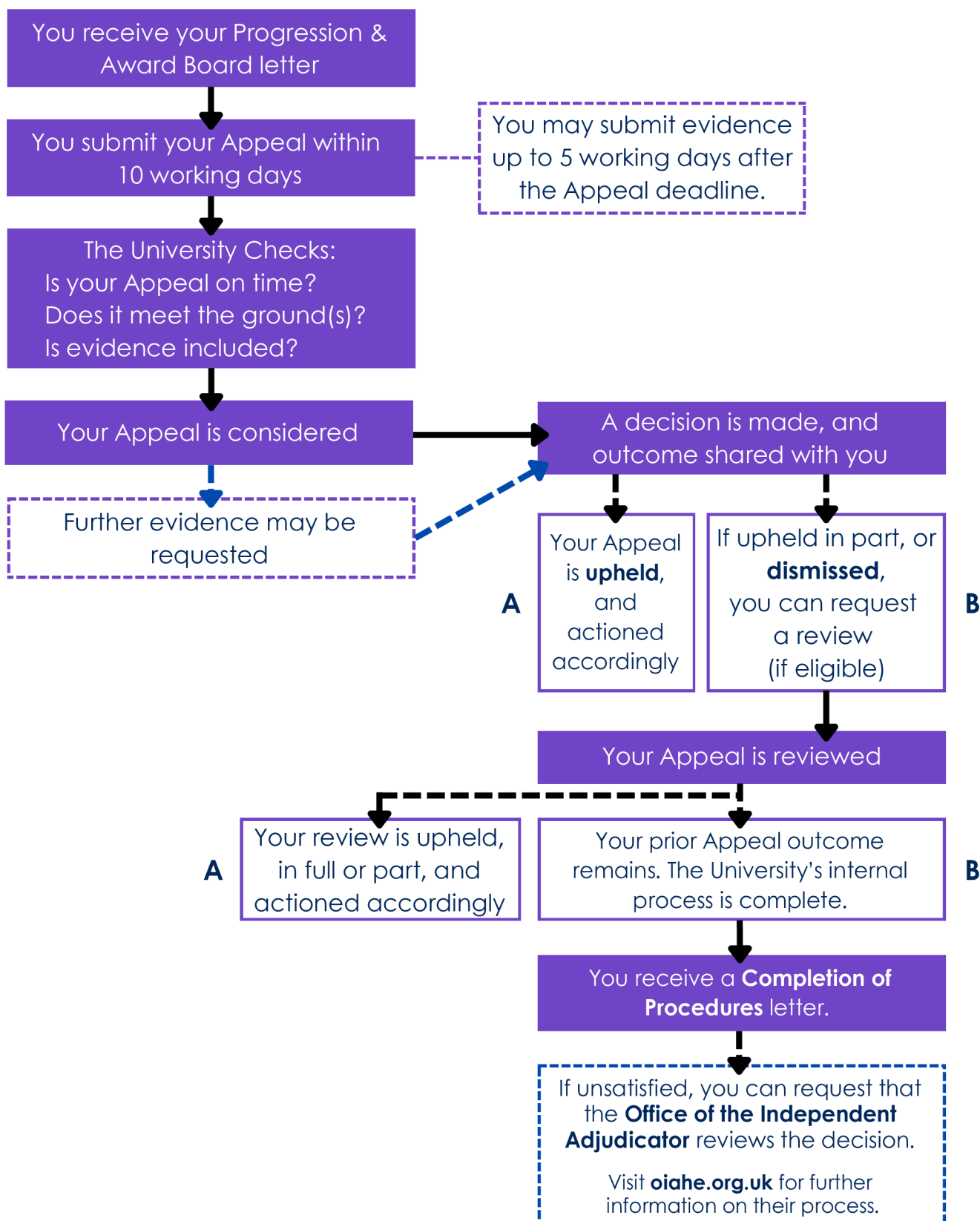
Should I submit an Academic Appeal?



Not sure? Speak to the Students' Union Advice Centre to explore your options.



What happens when you appeal?



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I appeal because I disagree with my mark?

No. You cannot appeal simply because you think your work deserved a higher mark. The University will not reconsider academic judgement through the Appeals process. If you're unsure why you received your mark, you should ask your marker or module leader for feedback.

Can I appeal as soon as I receive my marks on Canvas?

No. You must wait until you've received your **Progression & Award Board** letter. Academic Appeals can only be made against the Board's decision, not provisional marks.

How long do I have to submit an Academic Appeal?

Normally, you have 10 working days from the date of your Progression and Award Board decision letter. **If you're submitting late**, you'll need to explain why and provide evidence supporting the delay.

What if I'm still waiting for evidence?

Don't wait until you have everything. **Submit your Appeal before the deadline** and explain what evidence you're still waiting for and when you expect to receive it. You can normally send the outstanding evidence up to 5 working days afterwards.

What kind of evidence should I provide?

Your evidence should be **relevant, independent, verifiable** and **linked directly to your appeal**. Examples include medical letters, official emails, screenshots, etc.

Will my mark automatically change if my Appeal is successful?

Not usually. If your Appeal is upheld, the University will decide on an appropriate resolution. This is often another assessment opportunity rather than simply increasing your existing mark.

What if my Appeal isn't upheld?

Depending on the reason your appeal was rejected, you may be able to request an **Appeal Review** if you have new evidence or believe there was a procedural error in the handling of your appeal. Once the University's procedures have finished, you may also be able to take your case to the **Office of the Independent Adjudicator** (OIA).

Can the Students' Union tell me whether my appeal will be successful?

No. The Students' Union Advice Centre is independent from the University and cannot decide the outcome of your Appeal. However, we can help you **understand the regulations, identify the most appropriate Appeal grounds, organise your evidence** and **review your Appeal statement** before you submit it.



Useful Contacts & Further Support

Winchester Students' Union Advice Centre

Your first stop for independent advice about your Appeal

The Advice Centre can help you understand the Appeals process, identify potential grounds, organise evidence and prepare your Appeal. The SU is independent from the University and provides free, impartial advice.

Link: winchesterstudents.co.uk/advice

University Appeals Team

For questions about the **Appeals process** itself, deadlines, submitting the form, or reasonable adjustments.

Email: appeals@winchester.ac.uk

Appeals Regulations

Read the University's Appeals regulations for the formal rules governing Academic Appeals.

Visit: The **Complaints and Casework** page on the intranet, and select 'Appeals'

Academic Appeals Guidance

Read the University's Appeals guidance leaflet. New guidance is issued each academic year.

Visit: The **Complaints and Casework** page on the intranet, and select 'Appeals'

Your Faculty / Programme Team

They can provide clarification on what decisions have been made and/or support you if you think a mark has been incorrectly recorded, without the need for a formal Appeal.

Visit: Your **programme canvas page** for contact details and support; and/or contact your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT)

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

Still unhappy after the University's internal process?

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) is an independent body that can review eligible student complaints about higher education providers. You normally need to complete the University's internal procedures first and receive a Completion of Procedures Letter.

Visit: oiahe.org.uk



Notes

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*We're here
to help!*



Winchester Students' Union Advice Centre can be accessed by all current University of Winchester students. We aim to support students to make their own informed choices by offering free, impartial advice and information on a range of matters.

If you would like further support, get in touch by completing our **Advice Enquiry Form**.

You'll find the Advice Centre in the King Alfred Centre on Level 3 (next to the Food Hall).

