

Preparing an Academic Appeal

Drawing on the University of Winchester's [Appeals Regulations Policy 2026-2027](#)

Academic Appeals can be a very stressful event. The information below is intended to provide an overview of what the process will look like, as well as some guidance on how you might prepare an Academic Appeal.

If you would like any further support, then please contact the Students' Union Advice Centre.

The below offers some guidance on the grounds appeals need to meet to be considered, and how you might construct an Academic Appeal. Please note, that this is **guidance only**. It cannot be said how including any or all points may impact on the outcome of your case.

Grounds	☒
<p>Is this an Academic Appeal?</p> <p>Academic appeals only apply to decisions made by the Progression and Award Board (PAB), or Postgraduate Student Progress Committee for PGR Results.</p> <p>You cannot use this procedure to appeal, for example, breaches of academic conduct, or having your Exceptional Circumstances claim rejected. These procedures have a separate process, which can be found in the relevant policy, and should have been signposted to you in any letters from the University</p>	
<p>Am I submitting at the right time?</p> <p>You can only submit an academic appeal during the 10 working days AFTER receiving the letter confirming the decision of the Progression and Award Board (or Postgraduate Student Progress Committee for PGR students).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have received marks back for an individual assessment (e.g. through Canvas) but have not yet received the letter from the Progression and Award Board then it is too early to appeal. You need to wait until you have received the decision letter to submit your appeal (but you can begin preparing your appeal now using the guidance below). You can contact your Faculty Office or Programme Administrator to confirm when you are due to receive the letter from the Progression and Award Board. If it is more than 10 working days AFTER receiving the letter confirming the decision of the Progression and Award Board, you can still submit an appeal, but it will only be reviewed if there were good reasons, supported by evidence, that prevented you from submitting on time. 	
<p>Do I have grounds to Appeal?</p> <p>Firstly, you will need to be able to identify what decision you are appealing against (e.g. a capped grade, fail and repeat, or withdrawal)</p> <p>You then need to reflect on the grounds for your appeal. You can only appeal on 3 specific grounds. It's important that you decide which grounds apply best to your circumstances because the ground you choose will be what the appeal investigator will focus on. You can choose multiple grounds if more than one applies to your situation.</p> <p>Below is a breakdown of the grounds. For full information, please see the Appeals Regulations.</p>	

Ground A: Exceptional Circumstances

There were Exceptional Circumstances that significantly impacted the student's academic performance and where a student demonstrates that the evidence to support an Exceptional Circumstances claim could not reasonably have been provided at the time of assessment or where the cause of the Exceptional Circumstance could not reasonably have been identified or known at the time of the assessment.

This if the ground to choose if:

- Something happened outside your control that affected how well you did on an assessment or prevented you from submitting it
- AND**
- You have good reasons, supported by evidence, why you were not able to evidence an application for exceptional circumstances at the appropriate time
- OR**
- It would not have been possible to know the cause of the exceptional circumstances until later (for example receiving a diagnosis of a learning difference midway through the academic year)

For example: Siya had recently had a diagnosis of Dyslexia. A Learning Agreement was put in place for her semester 2 assessments, allowing her extra time and a PC in exams, but this support was not in place for the exam she took in semester 1, which she failed. Siya submitted an academic appeal on ground A, along with a copy of her diagnostic report, and requested that her resit receive an uncapped mark.

Ground B: Regulation, Policy, Process Error

There is evidence that University did not follow its regulations, policies or processes resulting in the appellant being unfairly disadvantaged.

This is the ground to choose if:

- You have evidence that a process or procedure has not been followed correctly

For example, Ai was entitled to extra time for her online exam, but this was not correctly factored into the exam set-up on Canvas and the submission link closed at the standard time, resulting in Ai being unable to upload her exam paper, and being capped for a late submission.

Ground C: Unfair Disadvantage through Process

The appellant has been unfairly disadvantaged due to substantive evidence of biased or prejudicial examination and moderation processes as applied to their assessment(s).

This is the ground to choose if:

- You believe the mark you received for an assessment was unfairly influenced by bias or prejudice against you. This must be based on evidence, not opinion.

For example, Joe had made a complaint about his module leader in the previous year. Joe was surprised when he barely passed the module and felt the feedback he was given was very brief. Joe submitted an appeal on ground C contending that the module leader had marked his work more harshly because of his complaints. Joe provided a copy of his assessment and feedback, a copy of the emails where he complained to the module leader and a copy of other, more detailed, feedback he had received from other markers.

Reasons for appeal that are not allowed

- You cannot appeal because you did not understand or were not aware of regulations, policies or procedures.
- You cannot appeal against the quality or provision of teaching, supervision or services. These must be raised at the time such issues occur through e.g. programme leader, supervisor, or as defined in the [Student Complaints Policy](#).
- You cannot appeal because you disagree with the academic judgement of your assessor. "Academic judgement" is a judgement that is made about a matter where an opinion of an academic expert is essential. Every module is marked in relation to the learning outcomes, and a pass mark means that you have achieved them. To ensure fairness and consistency for all students, marks are moderated between teaching staff, and endorsed by external examiners. If you are unhappy with the mark for an assessment, you should speak to the marking tutor to get additional feedback, to help you understand the mark awarded.
- You cannot appeal where it would have been wholly reasonable for you to disclose something at the time it became an issue when you were aware that there could have been a detrimental impact on your studies or the ability for the University to discharge its duties under its policies, regulations and procedures.

Writing your Appeal

You may find the following information and structure helpful in constructing your Academic Appeal.

Structure	☒
<p>Structuring your Appeal: Basic Timeline Start with a simple timeline of what happened at the time of the assessment.</p> <p>E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01/05/2025 broke my leg• 01/05/2025 admitted to hospital• 02/05/2025 had surgery• 02/05/2025 missed exam for business studies• 04/05/2025 was discharged from hospital	
<p>Building Your Appeal: Gathering Evidence You will need to be able to provide evidence for each point on your timeline. This evidence should ideally be independent (i.e. not based on your word), and support your argument. Third-party evidence, such as a doctor's note, appointment confirmation, death certificate or obituary etc., will be the best evidence to provide.</p> <p>Examples of valid supporting evidence may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doctors note/Medical record• Hospital admission/A&E record• Letter from independent professional organisation• Email/written confirmation of appointments or meetings• Any documentation relating to legal proceedings surrounding a family situation• Any documentation confirming the involvement of third parties in addressing the matter – Social services, counselling or mediation services etc. <p>It may be helpful to create a document which records your evidence all in one place, so you can make sure nothing is missed when you upload your evidence.</p> <p>E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 01/05/2025 broke my leg (Evidence of medical record)• 01/05/2025 admitted to hospital (Evidence of hospital admission)• 02/05/2025 had surgery (Evidence of surgery)• 02/05/2025 missed exam for business studies (Need to get evidence from Canvas)• 04/05/2025 was discharged from hospital (Evidence of discharge note) <p>If you are unable to provide evidence for a point, consider how key the point is to your appeal, and whether it can be removed. If the point is key, and you cannot provide evidence, you will need to justify why you are unable to provide supporting evidence.</p> <p>There may be some evidence which you are unable to submit at the point of making your appeal. This is generally acceptable, provided you can provide detail on which evidence you are unable to provide, when it will be available, and how it supports your appeal.</p>	
<p>Building Your Appeal: Linking to the Grounds for Appeal It is important that you demonstrate how your evidence demonstrates that you have met the grounds for your appeal. This can be built up from the information you have gathered from the above.</p> <p>E.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ground A – On 01/05/2025, late in the evening, I broke my leg (see evidence 1). That same day I was admitted to hospital to await surgery to put in a rod. Due to delays, the surgery took place on 02/05/2025 (see evidence 2), the same day as my Business Studies Exam (see evidence 3). I was unable to request a deferral for the exam as I had been admitted in the late evening and had surgery early the next day.	

Desired Outcome to your Appeal

As part of the process, you will also be prompted to put forward what **outcome** you would like your appeal, if successful, to have (e.g. uncapping a grade). Your request is not guaranteed on success, but will be considered. Consider what you think would be a fair outcome.

For example, you may wish to be given the **opportunity to retake/repeat assessments or year of study**. Please be aware that we can only award marks based on the work you submitted and so, even if your appeal is successful, **an assessment mark cannot simply be increased**. Instead, you are more likely to be offered an additional attempt.

It should also be noted that graduating students will only be eligible for an upgrade to a higher classification if they meet the criteria stated in Section F3 of the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes.

Please note, all summer re-assessments have to be submitted and marked before the end of August 2026. No continuing students will be offered further attempts at assignments (to be completed in the summer) after Friday 14th August. After this date, all students with incomplete academic profiles will have to complete further attempts as part of the Trail Credit framework or as repeat study in 2026/27.

Programmes delivering through Term 3 are **exempt** from the opportunity of in-year third attempts at assignments.

Reviewing 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 grounds 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)?

The Students' Union Advisor can help you **proofread** appeal drafts and provide feedback. They can comment on how your appeal has been written (i.e. whether it is clear), and help you reflect on what you have drafted. They cannot say whether your appeal is 'good' or 'bad', or whether it will be successful.

Please note that there is a character limit for this section of the online form.

If you initially write your statement of appeal in another document and then copy & paste it onto the form, you need to check that the whole statement has copied across.

If the whole statement doesn't fit on the form, you can attach the Word document as an attachment (along with your other evidence) **or** email it directly to appeals@winchester.ac.uk after submitting your academic appeal form.

Submitting Your Appeal

Online Form

When you are ready, and if it is the right time to do so (see above), you can submit your appeal via the [online academic appeal form](#).

You must use the online form to submit your appeal. If you need any reasonable adjustments to help you submit the online form, due to a disability, learning difficulty or other form of neurodiversity, please email appeals@winchester.ac.uk.

Your appeal will then be considered by the Appeals team, and a decision made. It is worth keeping an eye on your university emails to ensure you don't miss any updates.

Response Times

The university aims to complete the review of Academic Appeals **within 90 calendar days**. However, over the summer boards, it's normally much sooner than this.

Any correspondence regarding your appeal will be sent to your university email account, so please ensure you are monitoring this regularly.

If it has been 10 or more working days (or two weeks) since you submitted your appeal, you may wish to follow up any progress with the appeals team via appeals@winchester.ac.uk. Whilst they may not be able to provide you with an outcome of your appeal at this stage, they should be able to confirm that they have received it and provide any updates.

If your appeal is unsuccessful:

You can request a review of a rejected appeal.

To request a review of a rejected appeal, students must be able to meet and evidence at least one of the following grounds:

- a. They can provide **new evidence that wasn't available** at the time of the initial appeal which, if available, would have allowed you (the student) to meet the original ground(s) for appeal.

Or

- b. There is evidence of a **procedural error in the handling of the original appeal** which, if corrected, would allow you (the student) to meet the original ground(s) for appeal.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

If you are dissatisfied with your appeal outcome at any stage, you can request a **Completion of Procedures Letter**, which you can then use to make a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). This will end the university's internal process.