



# Academic Appeals Policy

Policy Details	
Policy Owner	Vice Principal: Quality and Innovation
Date produced	1 April 2019
Approved by	Policies & Procedures Committee
Date approved	22 April 2021
To be reviewed	Annually
Publication	4Policies
Version	1

## **1. Statement of Intent**

- 1.1** It is the policy of USP College to develop and maintain assessment procedures that are fair, reliable and open to scrutiny. The college's Strategic Plan fully outlines the college's commitment to students.
- 1.2** The college operates a rigorous system of internal verification to guarantee fair assessment that complies with awarding body requirements. It is recognised, however, that there could be exceptional circumstances when individual students or groups may wish to appeal against recommendations or decisions relating to assessment. The following appeals procedure outlines the action that may be taken in such circumstances.
- 1.3** In all cases the college's academic appeal process supports and supplements the appeal process for all awarding organisations and Higher Education (HE) Institutions. While students are encouraged to follow the college's internal Appeals policy, students have the right to appeal directly to the relevant awarding body or relevant Higher Education Institution at any time. Students also have a right to appeal through the appeals procedure as stated in the NVQ Code of Practice. For all Further Education (FE) awarding organisations; T- Levels; Pearson BTEC Firsts, Nationals and Higher Nationals; Professional courses from other awarding bodies; A Levels and GCSE qualifications, the student may request support from the Quality Nominee in order to access and understand the awarding organisation's Appeals process. Likewise, the Head of HE is available to provide similar support for Appeals related to University validated programmes.

## **2. Introduction and Purpose**

- 2.1** Any student who believes that a piece of work submitted for assessment has been assessed unfairly, inconsistently or not in accordance with the standards and level required by the awarding body, shall have the right to appeal against the assessment mark, grade or final outcome.
- 2.2** In the first instance any concerns should be discussed with the student's progress coach or a member of the teaching team. While it is recognised that in most circumstances student queries relating to assessment can and will be resolved informally, the formal appeals procedure is available to support students in their appeal.
- 2.3** If a student needs help in making an appeal, this can be obtained by contacting their progress coach or a member of the Quality team.
- 2.4** It is the responsibility of students to inform the college if they are not satisfied with the grading of any piece of work. The college Appeals Policy and Procedure enables students to make a formal appeal against a recommendation or decision relating to:
  - a. The mark or grade for an individual item of coursework
  - b. The result of an individual course
  - c. Entitlement to an award
  - d. The class or grade of an award
- 2.5** Throughout this document a piece of work shall refer to a set task which may be a written report, essay or assignment, a diagrammatic or pictorial representation, the production of a tangible item or artefact, a portfolio of work or an oral presentation or performance

### **3. Grounds for Appeal**

**3.1** A student/candidate may appeal against an assessment decision if they believe that the decision is unfair or unreasonable. Normally an appeal can be made on any one of the following grounds:

- a. Relevant assessment criteria have been met but not acknowledged
- b. The assessments were not conducted in accordance with the awarding body's regulations
- c. Assessment procedures, including examinations, were not conducted fairly
- d. The internal verifier was presented with incorrect or inaccurate assessment information
- e. There were medical or other extenuating circumstances of which the relevant course manager was unaware when assessment decisions were being made
- f. There was unfairness or impropriety on the part of one or more of the assessors/examiners
- g. The student was unjustifiably excluded from an examination or an assessment opportunity

**3.2** For appeals related to externally assessed work or examinations, the student must appeal directly to the relevant awarding body.

**3.3** It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Curriculum Director in writing of any extenuating circumstances which may be adversely affecting the student's performance. Normally, this should be done before the assessment process takes place.

### **4. Appeals Procedure**

**4.1** The procedure for appeals is detailed on page 3 of this document.

**4.2** The form for lodging an appeal is in Appendix 1

### **5. Legal Background or Relevant Legislation**

**5.1** The relevant awarding body's appeals procedure will be invoked where:

- a. The issue cannot be resolved internally
- b. The appeal is in relation to an examination

## 6. Procedure for Academic Appeals

6.1 This table explains the stages of Academic Appeal and responsibilities for the actions.

Stage		Student Action	To Whom	College Action	Timeframe
1. Informal	Appeal referred to and resolved by the assessor/tutor	Student to discuss with assessor/tutor within 5 working days of receipt of assessment decision	Assessor/tutor	Assessor to discuss and seek to resolve	2 working days
2. Informal	Appeal referred to and resolved by the Internal Verifier	Student appeal to Internal Verifier within 5 working days	Internal Verifier	Internal Verifier to have piece of work reviewed by member of staff with no previous involvement in the assessment decision under appeal.	5 working days
3. Formal	Appeal referred to and resolved by the Curriculum Director	Student to appeal to the relevant Curriculum Director within 5 working days of the above decision. To begin stage 3 the student must complete the appropriate form (Appendix 1 of this policy)	Curriculum Director	Curriculum Director to investigate assessment decision and review with curriculum area internal verifier. Internal Verifier will check that assessment fully meets awarding body requirements	5 working days in writing
4. Formal	Appeal referred to Vice Principal, Academic/ Technical & Professional	Student appeals in writing to Vice Principal, Academic/ Technical & Professional if they feel the decision is unfair at Stage 3 and there is likelihood of a major impact on the student's future, e.g. main qualification not awarded on completion of fulltime course	Vice Principal, Academic/ Technical & Professional	Assessment decision investigated by Vice Principal, Academic/ Technical & Professional or referred to the Quality team for investigation (information obtained from appropriate Internal Verifier and Curriculum Director). A decision will then be taken based on the evidence.	5 working days

6.2 If the student feels that they cannot approach the assessor/tutor they may choose to discuss the matter with a progress coach or another member of staff.

6.3 The time frames are given as guidance. It may be necessary to seek the advice of the relevant awarding body and a response to resolve the appeal may take longer.

### Linked Policies

- a. The Compliments and Complaints Policy
- b. Exam Policy Policy
- c. Non-Examination Assessment Policy
- d. Single Equality Policy
- e. Awarding body rules and regulations

Appendix 1

**USP College  
Academic Appeal Against Internal  
Grading / Assessment Decision**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Course</b>	
<b>Nature of Appeal</b>	
<b>a) Please state which category from 3.1 of the Academic Appeals Policy you are bringing this appeal</b>	
<b>b) In your own words please explain the reason of the appeal</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<i>Please give this form to the Curriculum Director of your area and send a copy to <a href="mailto:Quality@USPCollege.ac.uk">Quality@USPCollege.ac.uk</a></i>	
<b>Please keep a copy of this form</b>	

## Equality and Diversity Statement & Impact Assessment

USP College is committed to equality of opportunity. The aim is to create an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, gender identity, transgender, sexual orientation, trade union activity or unrelated criminal convictions.

This form should be used by managers and policy owners within their area of responsibility to carry out Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments (EDIAs) in relation to protected characteristics including, but not limited to: Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Race, Religion and belief, Sex, Sexual orientation. The word 'policy' is taken to include strategies, policies, procedures and guidance notes; both formal and informal, internal and external.

### 1. Name of Policy

Academic Appeals Policy

### 2. Which of the following groups could be affected by this policy?

*(Tick all that apply)*

<b>Students</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Staff</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Wider Community</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### 3. Complaints

Have complaints been received from anyone with one or more protected characteristic about the service provided? If yes then please give details.

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### 4. The Impact

Four possible impacts should be considered as part of the assessment:

- a. **Positive Impact** - Where the policy might have a positive impact on a particular protected characteristic.
- b. **None or Little Impact** – Where you think a policy does not disadvantage any of the protected characteristics
- c. **Some Impact** – Where a policy might disadvantage any of the protected characteristics groups to some extent. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that where the negative impact on one particular group of individuals with protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.
- d. **Substantial Impact** – Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any or all of the protected characteristics. This disadvantage may be also differential in the sense that the negative impact on one particular protected characteristic is likely to be greater than on another.

Thought-provoking questions, which might help come to a decision about the impact of a policy on individuals with protected characteristics:

- e. Does policy outcomes and service take up differ between people with different protected characteristics?
- f. What key information do we have? Does data or engagement with people with protected characteristics give insights into areas of disadvantage, which relate to the policy area?
- g. If the policy is likely to have a negative impact on individuals, sharing particular characteristics what steps can be taken to mitigate these effects?
- h. Will the policy deliver practical benefits for certain groups?
- i. Does the policy miss opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and foster good understanding/ relationships between groups?
- j. Do other policies need to change to make this policy more effective?
- k. Is there any elements of the policy that could be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010?

Use the guidance provided above and complete the following table: **(Please Tick ✓)**

<b>Gender/Age</b>	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Gender		✓		
Age		✓		
<b>Disability</b>	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Visually Impaired		✓		
Hearing impaired		✓		
Physical Disability		✓		
Specific Learning Difficulties		✓		
Global Learning Difficulties		✓		
Autistic Spectrum Disorder		✓		
Any other disability – Various		✓		
<b>Other Factors</b>	Positive Impact	No or Little Impact	Some Adverse Impact	Substantial Adverse Impact
Race		✓		
Culture		✓		
Religious Belief		✓		
Sexual Orientation		✓		
Gender Reassignment		✓		
Marriage/Civil Partnership		✓		
Pregnancy /Maternity /Paternity		✓		

Please comment on any areas where some or substantial impact is indicated. Any resulting actions must be added to the below action plan.

**5. Is there anything that cannot be changed?**

What cannot be changed?	Can this be justified?	If so, how?
Not applicable		
E.g., Disabled people can be treated more favorably under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. If a policy appears to treat disabled people more favorably than other equality groups, the disadvantage may be justifiable		

Please list the main actions that you plan to take as a result of this assessment in your area of responsibility. (Continue on separate sheets as necessary)

<b>Action Plan:</b>
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