

Academic Appeal Policy and Procedure

Version V2.5

Academic Appeal Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose

Academic Appeals Procedure is the mechanism by which students enrolled with the College can have their concern related to Academic issues and assessments evaluated and investigated. The purpose of this policy is to enable the learner to enquire, question or appeal against an assessment decision, a decision on the academic integrity of malpractice and attempt to reach agreement between the learner and the concerned party at the earliest opportunity.

The policy also sets out to standardise and record any appeal to ensure openness and fairness and facilitate a learner's ultimate right of appeal to the awarding body, where appropriate.

2. Definitions

Abbreviations and Acronyms

UKCBC UK College of Business and Computing

Terms

Academic Dean

The person who heads the academic team at UKCBC.

Academic appeals: these challenge decisions that affect a student's progression (for example, an unfair mark).

Appeal

A formal request from a student asking the college to review a decision relating to progression, assessment, academic awards or grievance.

Programme Leader

The head of the programme specialization e.g. Business and Education, Computing and IT, Engineering, ACCA, and English

Grievance Committee

A committee that is formed to address an appeal. Considering the nature of the grievance relevant members are added to the committee. The committee is normally Chaired by the Academic Dean for any academic grievance and by the Head of Student Services for any other student grievance.

Grievance

A complaint or a strong feeling that someone has been treated unfairly. A Grievance can be classified as one of the following types:

1. Complaints are usually lodged about the poor standard of a service, a procedure or an action which will be addressed by the Complaint Policy and Procedure
2. Academic appeals are the challenges to decisions that affect a student's progression (for example, an unfair grade).

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students at UKCBC
- UKCBC Assessors
- UKCBC Programme Advisers
- Department Programme Leaders
- Student services

The following are affected by this policy:

- All students at UKCBC
- UKCBC Assessors
- UKCBC Programme Advisers
- Department Programme Leaders
- Student services

The following must understand this policy:

- All students at UKCBC
- UKCBC Administration
- UKCBC Assessors
- UKCBC Programme Advisers
- Department Programme Leaders
- Student services

The Academic Dean and Head of Student Services have the ultimate executive responsibility for the effective development and implementation of this policy

4. Policy Statement

It is integral to the teaching/learning process that all students at the College receive feedback concerning their academic standing are entitled to a review of a final grade in a course, in the manner specified in this policy, using a fair and consistent process that respects the dignity of all parties involved. No negative implications must arise for any student who chooses to exercise their right to grade appeal.

Faculty members and administrative personnel involved in any stage of an appeal process must discharge their respective responsibilities fairly, respectfully and within established time frames. Wherever possible, the goal is to reduce established response times to ensure that the student's ability to continue his/her program of studies is not adversely affected.

The College maintains a 2- Level Appeal process, as described below. However, it is anticipated that the faculty member and the student will meet and work together informally to try to resolve the issue before any decision is made to initiate the process outlined in this policy.

1. Level 1 – an initial, less structured process involving direct dialogue between the faculty member and the student. With the agreement of both parties, voluntary mediation may be included at this Level 1 stage to facilitate an opportunity for constructive dialogue between the parties that may contribute to resolution of the issue.
2. A more structured Level 2 Review by a Grade Appeal Panel if the initial review process does not result in a resolution that is satisfactory to both parties.

The intent is to resolve the grading issue as informally as possible. However, any grade changes that result from the appeal process must be based on sound, demonstrable academic decisions and must not create inequities for other course registrants.

The following are possible outcomes of either the Level 1 or Level 2 Review process:

- The final grade is adjusted upward.
- The final grade remains unchanged.
- The transcript status of "R– Refer" is assigned to the student pending the completion of additional work.

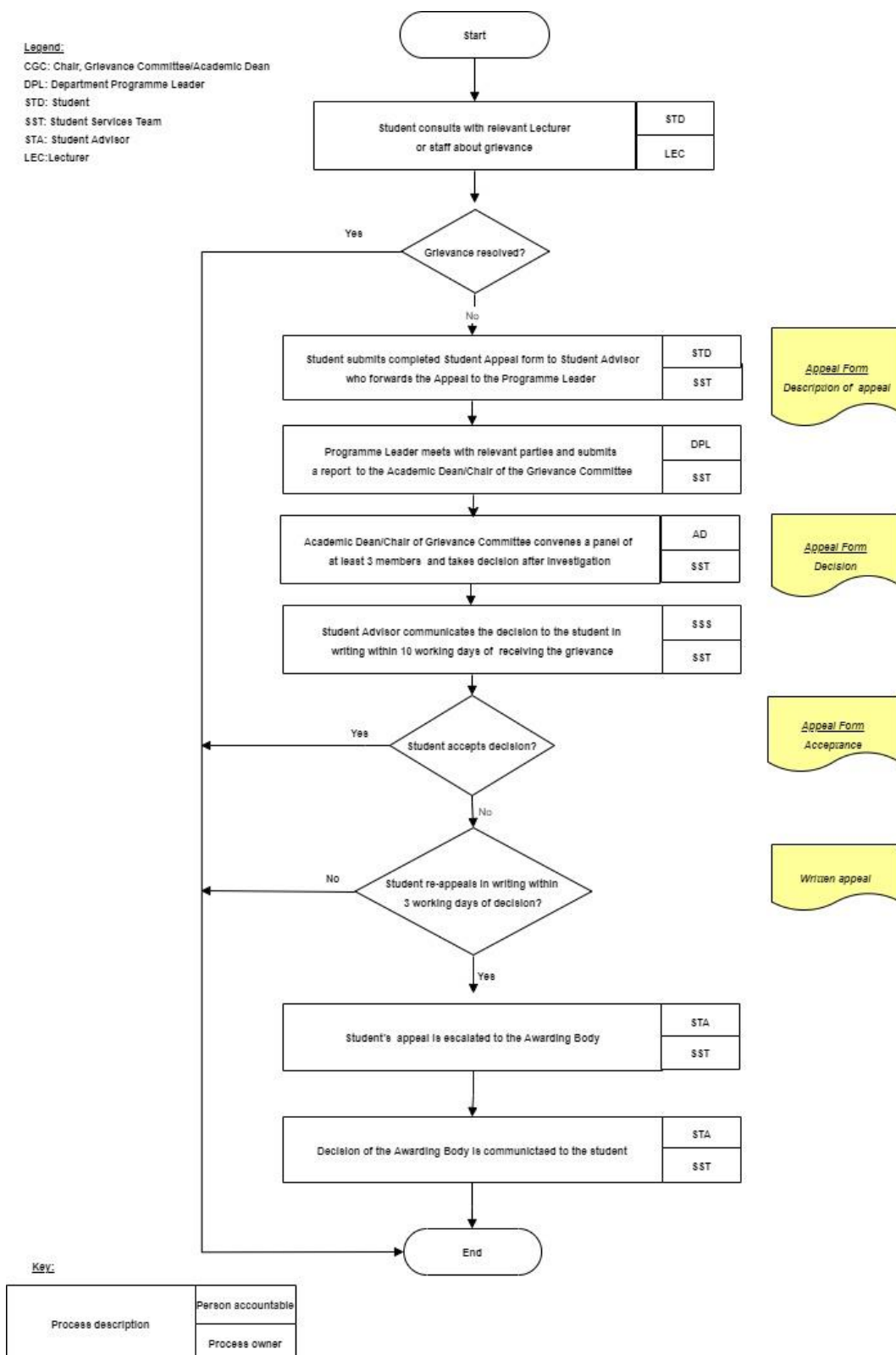
All steps in the process must be documented. The student challenging a final grade is responsible for initiating one or both levels of Appeal, using the forms established by the College for this purpose. Support documentation throughout the appeals process is limited to material submitted with the Appeal Notice at Level 1. No additional supporting documentation will be accepted during the appeals process.

The College also provides both students and academic staff with a final avenue for review – the Procedural Appeal - to ensure that the appeals process is conducted according to established policy and procedure. The Procedural Appeal can be initiated only in situations where there is clear evidence that the Level 2 Review by the Grade Appeal Panel was conducted inappropriately.

All documentation (excluding any notes taken during Mediation) related to appeals of final grades using the structured process outlined in this policy will be kept on file by the Student Services. This documentation will include the Level 1 and Level 2 Academic Appeal forms submitted by students, support documentation submitted by the student and the assessor (if applicable) as part of the Appeal, completed and signed Outcome sheets for Level 1 and 2 (if applicable), written notification of the Outcome of the Level 2 Appeal provided to the student and any notes taken during a Procedural Appeal.

Except in unusual situations as determined by the Dean, the student advancing the appeal must be allowed to continue in requisite courses until the appeals process is finalized.

5. Process Flow Chart



6. Appeal Procedure

Informal - Early Resolution

6.1. If a student has a grievance related to academic issues e.g. grading, assignment feedback etc., the first step is to discuss with the Lecturer/Assessor.

- a) An appeal is shared with the lecturer directly involved as early as possible ("Day Zero")
- b) A member of staff reviews the concern within 5 working days of the appeal being made. Further discussion with the student may be held within this period
- c) A decision relating to actions to address the appeal is agreed between the student and the lecturer within 10 working days of Day Zero.
- d) An outline of appeal and resolution are recorded for further monitoring.

Stage A: Formal Appeal - Internal

6.2 In case the grievance is not resolved by the Lecturer/Assessor, student approaches the Student Advisor and fills an Appeal Form to appeal a decision or files a grievance.

6.3 If the student grievance is related to Academic matters like unsatisfactory grades, assignment feedback not clear, academic malpractice etc. the Student Advisor would forward the student grievance to the respective Programme Leader for further investigation. The Programme Leader conducts preliminary investigation and submits summary of report to the Academic Dean.

6.4. The Academic Dean/ Chair of Grievance Committee convenes a panel of at least 3 members – Chair plus 2 additional colleagues to assist in the investigation. All members of the panel must have no previous involvement in the appeal to ensure impartiality.

6.5 The Investigation panel will invite the student and other parties to make presentation as part of the investigation process.

6.6 The Chair takes a decision based on the evidence submitted.

6.7 The Student Advisor records the decision and communicates to the student within 10 working days since the appeal is submitted by the student.

6.8 The Student Service Team keeps records details of the appeal, investigation and action for monitoring.

Stage B: Formal Appeal- External

6.9. If the student does not accept the decision, then he/she must submit a written appeal within 3 working days and submit to the Student Advisor.

6.10. The Student Advisor will then escalate this grievance to the Awarding Body.

6.11. Once the College receives the response from the Awarding Body, the Student Advisor will communicate the decision back to the student.

6.12. The decision of the Awarding Body will be final.

7. Recording and Learning from the Appeal

Recording

All the records of the appeals are adequately and proportionately documented excluding the student information. Care should be taken to make sure that just the bare minimum of information is kept when it is impossible to record details about an academic appeal without identifying the student

Learning

All comments, concerns and complaints are reviewed each semester, considered, and investigated to inform improvements for the student experience.

Accountability

Timely meetings are held to create awareness among staff regarding the procedure to handle complaints, whom to approach if they are unable to handle the issue, the level of responsibility they need to take while dealing with the academic appeal

7. References

Title	Link
Complaint Policy and Procedure	
Assessment Policy and Procedure	
Academic Integrity and Student Misconduct Policy and Procedure	
Learner and Staff Malpractice Policy and Procedure	
QAA Quality Code	QAA Quality Code expectations B3 and B4

8. History of Versions

Version Number	Date	Link	Author	Comment or Reason for Modification
2.3	Dec 2017	Previous version	ND	Periodic review and update
2.4	Nov 2021	Previous version	SV	Transferred to new template, added the process diagram and updated the procedure
2.5	Aug 2022	Previous version	RM	Updated definitions and policy statements