

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY: ATTENDANCE FAILURES

1. The Academic Appeals Policy: Attendance Failures applies to those students who received a failing grade based on the Attendance Policy (see Attendance Policy).
2. All undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled in courses offered by the University who received a failing grade may appeal to have the failing grade removed and the original performance grade restored.
3. Grounds for appealing a failing grade are:
 - a. Mitigating circumstances exist which can explain or excuse absence from class. Mitigating circumstances claims must be supported by medical or other valid documentary evidence acceptable to the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC);
 - b. The instructor confirms in writing that the students should have been marked present, i.e. there has been an error in recording attendance;
 - c. The incorrect times or dates of a class session were published and not corrected in writing, i.e. an administrative error;
 - d. A procedural irregularity occurred.
4. All grounds must be supported by valid evidence. Detailed information pertaining to mitigating circumstances and evidence can be found in the Mitigating Circumstance Guidance. Students are to read the Guidance before appealing a failing grade.
5. Students using the appeal process to bring frivolous or vexatious matters to the University's attention will be subject to disciplinary action.
6. Students found to have provided fraudulent evidence or falsified a claim will be subject to disciplinary action.
7. Appeals require time to be processed correctly. Appeals may result in delays in the confirmation of grades which may have an impact on progression and the timing of the completion of studies/graduation.
8. Information will be used and retained in line with the University Privacy Policy.
9. Students may not petition to withdraw from a course which has had a failing grade appeal denied.

Stage I: Appeal

10. If students receive a failing grade and wish to appeal, students will indicate this in writing to the AAC using the Attendance Failure Appeal Application Form by the due date listed on the form.
11. In the case of a group appeal, one student, identified on the Attendance Failure Appeal Application Form, will act as the lead student, with the other group members' names listed in the relevant section on the form. The University will only contact the lead student in connection with the group appeal. The University will expect the lead student to distribute the University's communications among the group and collate the group's response to the University's enquiries to give to the University. The University cannot be held responsible if the lead student does not accurately provide the views of any member of the Group or if they do not pass on information from the University.
12. A group appeal is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction by two or more students about the University's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by the University.
13. The University reserves the right to propose individual solutions to any group appeal.
14. It is students' responsibility to support the appeal with documented evidence by the stated deadline.
15. All documents and evidence submitted by students in support of an appeal will be treated as confidential and only seen by those directly involved in the appeal process.
16. The AAC may investigate the claims by contacting relevant members of the University.
17. Only the students about whom a decision has been made can lodge an appeal against that decision. Appeals from third parties are not accepted.
18. Students cannot normally submit an appeal for attendance failures after they have been presented to the University Exam Board to ratify their degree or exit award.
19. The AAC secretary will make an initial determination based on administrative grounds whether or not the case can proceed to the AAC. An appeal may not be considered if there is no evidence, no substantive case for the AAC to hear, or if there is no valid remedy open to the AAC.

20. Failing grade appeals are heard within 15 working days following the end of the semester. The AAC will normally expect to resolve the failing grade case at this meeting, and a decision notice will be sent to the students within 10 working days from the meeting date.
21. The appeals process may be paused if the AAC needs more information, and if the AAC agrees to grant additional time to students to produce additional evidence. Students will be notified of this with a new deadline.
22. All AAC outcomes will be recorded in the reserved minutes of the AAC.

Stage II: Further Appeal to the Office of the Provost

23. Students who are dissatisfied with the decision of the AAC and chooses to appeal the decision may lodge a "Further Appeal" to the Office of the Provost. Only after all methods for settlement at the level of the Academic Appeals Committee have been exhausted can students lodge a Further Appeal.
24. The Office of the Provost will receive information from parties involved in a further appeal, and conduct any further investigations or convene hearings deemed necessary.
25. The grounds for Further Appeal are:
 - a. New evidence exists that could not have been reasonably presented in the appeal to the AAC;
 - b. A procedural irregularity occurred in the conduct of the appeal process;
 - c. A decision was manifestly unreasonable or influenced by prejudice or bias, or perception thereof, on the part of the decision-maker(s).
26. Further Appeal procedures are as follows:
 - a. The students must file a Further Appeal Form to the Office of the Provost requesting a review of AAC's decision within 5 working days;
 - b. In the case of a group complaint, one student will act as the lead student, with the other group members' names listed in the relevant section on the Further Appeal Application form.
 - c. If the Further Appeal is on the grounds of supplying new evidence, then this must be presented with the form;
 - d. The Office of the Provost will review the material presented at the original AAC meeting plus any additional information provided by students;
 - e. The Office of the Provost will request additional information if necessary, and may pause the timeframes to allow this to be gathered and reviewed;

- f. The Office of the Provost will normally make a final determination within 10 working days and students will be informed of the outcome.
- 27. The University reserves the right to propose individual solutions to any group further appeal.
- 28. At this point the University's institutional procedures for appeals have been completed. The Completion of Procedures letter will outline for students the role of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.
- 29. If, upon the conclusion the University's institutional procedures students are dissatisfied with the decision, they may take their appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>). Students must first have exhausted all appropriate internal procedures at the University before approaching the OIA.

VERSION MANAGEMENT

Responsible Department: RAQA			
Approving body: Academic Board			
Version no.	Key Changes	Date of approval	Date of effect
001		24 July 2018	28 August 2018
002	Corrected typos and updated date. Added point regarding students unable to petition to withdraw from a course which has had an FA appeal denied.	25 June 2020	11 August 2020
003	Added information on group appeals. Removed references to FA.	3 September 2021	6 September 2021
004	Formatting updates	May 2022	01 Sept 2022
005	Updated University response time from 5 to 10 working days	June 2023	September 2023
		Restricted access? <i>Tick as appropriate</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	