

Academic Appeal policy and procedure

[Third Party Consent Form](#)
[Group Academic Appeal/Student Complaint Consent Form](#)
[Academic Appeal Form](#)

The above form can also be accessed via Moodle on the [Academic Procedures & Policies page](#).

This document has been informed by the expectations, core and common practices of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Concerns, Appeals and Complaints . This can be found at the following location and contains further guidelines, references and resources:

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance>

The development of our academic appeals policy has also been guided by the OIA (Office of the Independent Adjudicator) good practice framework: handling student complaints and academic appeals.

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers-and-good-practice/good-practice-framework.aspx>

List of appendices:

Appendix A - Appeals procedure flowchart

1. Policy

The Art Academy has a duty to maintain and enhance the quality of provision for students and to provide an effective system for handling academic appeals. The Academy upholds the principle that students should have a full opportunity to raise appeals against academic decisions without fear of disadvantage and in the knowledge that confidentiality shall be respected. This policy applies to both Open University (OU) validated programmes and the Academy's internally awarded programmes.

An academic appeal is defined as a request for a review of a decision concerning the following matters:

- (i) final award;
- (ii) progression from one stage or level of the programme to the next;
- (iii) assessment on the programme.

Outcomes of formal appeals shall normally be communicated in writing to students within thirty four calendar days of receipt of the formal appeal. However, a student will be advised if a time extension is required and the reasons why.

1.1 Grounds for appeal

Grounds for appeal must be founded on one or both of the following:

(a) Where the student provides written evidence in support of a claim that performance in the assessment was adversely affected by extenuating circumstances which the student was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling to divulge before the Examination and Progression Board has reached its decision; or

(b) Where there is prima facie evidence (i.e. it appears that there is evidence to support the appeal on first impression) , whether provided by the student or otherwise, that:

- (i) there has been a material administrative error; or
- (ii) the examinations or other assessments were not conducted in accordance with the regulations for the programme and/or special arrangements formally agreed; or
- (iii) some other material irregularity relevant to the Examination and Progression Board's decision has occurred.

Academic appeals should not be confused with any case of complaint which should be taken up in accordance with the Academy's **Complaints Policy and Procedure for Students**.

Disagreement with the academic judgement cannot in itself constitute grounds for appeal i.e. a student cannot appeal against academic judgement.

A student may not have a qualification conferred which is the subject of an appeal until the appeals procedure has been concluded. An appeal cannot be initiated once the qualification has been conferred. Students who wish their qualification to be conferred at a ceremony but who are considering whether or not to appeal are advised to seek advice as above immediately on receiving their result.

2. Procedure

2.1 Informal Procedure; Guidance

Prior to taking a final decision as to whether to appeal or not, a student is advised to:

- (i) Speak to their tutor and Programme Leader informally to attempt to resolve the issue;
- (ii) speak to the Director of Quality, & Student Experience and seek further advice.

2.2 Formal Procedure; Making an Appeal

If the student decides to appeal, the student must initiate the appeal in writing no later than fourteen calendar days after the formal publication of their results by writing to the Director of Quality, & Student Experience (DQSE)* setting out details of their appeal. Appeals made by third parties on behalf of a student will only be accepted if the student has given their written permission that the third party may act on their behalf. Please note that where this option is taken up the student's representative will attend all meetings and respond to all correspondence *in the place* of the student. A link to the Third Party Consent Form can be found at the top of this document and on [Moodle](#).

An appeal may be made individually, or collectively (i.e. by more than one student). Where an appeal is made collectively the Academy will request that a spokesperson is nominated by the students making the appeal, to whom all correspondence relating to the appeal may be addressed. Students making a

collective appeal should complete the Group Appeal/ Complaint Form found in **Appendix C** of this document and on [Moodle](#).

The DQSE will acknowledge receipt of the appeal and inform the student that the matter will be taken forward, within two calendar days.

The DQSE should inform the Director of Programmes and request a written response to the student's letter from the relevant Programme Leader in appropriate detail. Where necessary the response should make reference to, and confirm the operation of, the declared rules on classification and/or progression. The DQSE will consider the evidence taking steps to secure additional information as they deem fit and will determine whether or not there is a prima facie case. If appropriate the DQSE will seek a second opinion from a senior member of staff, other than the Principal, who is not directly involved in the delivery of the programme the student is on, or a potential member of the appeals panel.

**In the absence of the Director of Quality & Student Experience, the Director of Operations shall deputise.*

2.3 No Case for Appeal

If it is confirmed that there is no prima facie case the appeal procedure will end. The DQSE will write to the student **within seven calendar days of receipt of the appeal**. Where the student is studying on an OU validated programme, a 'Completion of Internal Procedures Letter' will be issued to the student. Students on internally awarded programmes will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures Letter'.

The student may appeal to the Principal **within seven calendar days** of receiving the DQSE's decision not to uphold the prima facie case.

If the Principal determines that there is no prima facie case, students on internally awarded programmes have no further recourse against the decision. If a student enrolled on an OU validated programme still remains dissatisfied, then the student may appeal to the Open University using their formal appeals procedures.

2.4 Case for Appeal upheld

If the DQSE upholds the prima facie case, they shall convene an appeal hearing. The hearing shall normally take place no later than 14 calendar days following the decision to uphold the prima facie case. **At least five calendar days notice, in advance of the meeting, will be given to the student and the Appeals Panel.** All evidence of the assessment process relevant to the case, and any correspondence entered into will be submitted to the Appeals Panel, which has the power to consider the appeal and decide upon it.

The student may be required to appear before the panel. Students have the statutory right to be accompanied by a friend, where they are required or invited by the Academy to attend an Appeals Panel meeting and when they make a reasonable request to be so accompanied. To exercise the statutory right to be accompanied, a student must make a reasonable request. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. However, it would not normally be reasonable for a student to insist on being accompanied by a companion whose presence would prejudice the meeting nor would it be reasonable for a student to ask to be accompanied by a companion from a remote geographical location if someone suitable and willing was available on site. The companion should be allowed to address the meeting to put and sum up the student's case, respond on behalf of the student to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the student during the meeting. The companion does

not, however, have the right to answer questions on the student's behalf, address the meeting if the student does not wish it or prevent the Academy from explaining their case.

If the chosen companion of the student is unavailable on the date of the initial meeting, the student may delay the date of that meeting once by up to three calendar days to enable the chosen companion to attend. The location and timing of any alternative meeting should be convenient to both the Academy and the student, but should not unduly delay the process.

Representatives of the Academy, the student and the student's companion should make every effort to attend the meeting. If the student fails to attend the meeting, without good reason given in advance, the meeting will take place, and a decision will be made, in their absence. In other circumstances where it seems likely that for a lengthy period, the student will be unable to attend a meeting, the Academy reserves the right to convene the meeting, affording the student the right to either submit written representations and/or be represented by a companion.

The Appeals Panel may also require the Programme Leader or their nominee and/or any other member of staff involved in the relevant events to appear before the Appeals Panel to answer questions. The student and the Programme Leader will be asked to attend the meeting separately.

The Chair will adjourn the meeting and determine whether it is possible to reach a prompt decision on the appeal. **Where this is possible the student will be invited back later in the day to orally hear the outcome of the meeting. Where this is not possible the Chair will conclude the meeting. The outcome of the decision will also be conveyed in writing to the student within two calendar days of the meeting.** A 'Completion of Internal Procedures Letter' will be issued to the student.

Should the appeal be upheld the DQSE or Chair of the Academic Appeals Panel will make such instructions or recommendations as are considered appropriate.

2.5 Case for Appeal rejected (Open University validated programmes)

Where the appeal has been rejected, the 'Completion of Internal Procedures Letter' concludes the Academy's appeals procedures and provides the student with formal confirmation that the student has exhausted all available stages of the internal appeals procedures and advises them of their right to take their appeal to the OU.

Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal may take their appeal to the Academy's validating partner, The Open University. The Open University procedures state that they must receive appeals within 28 calendar days of the outcome of the Academy's internal procedures.

An appeal will not be considered unless it is initiated and progressed by the student personally. No substantive correspondence or discussions will be entered into by the Open University with a third party unless the student specifically requests this in writing. The Open University will inform the student of the outcome within 56 calendar days (of the outcome of the Academy's internal procedures).

A copy of the Open University formal appeals and complaints procedure for students is available on request from the Quality & Standards Office. Alternatively, complaints should be addressed to: *The Vice-Chancellor's Delegate, Academic Services, Student Casework Office, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, United Kingdom.*

2.6 Case for Appeal rejected (internally awarded programmes)

Where the appeal has been rejected, the 'Completion of Procedures Letter' concludes the Academy's appeals procedures

3. Academic Appeals Panel and membership

The Terms of Reference for the Appeals Panel is:

- To consider appeals submitted by students against formal decisions relating to the outcomes of assessments;
- to recommend appropriate remedial action to be taken in the light of appeals considered;
- to report a summary of appeals to the Academic Board and Board of Trustees.

The Appeals Panel members will be decided on a case-by-case basis as follows:

- An external member* of the Academic Board (Chair);
- two academic members of staff, independent from the appeal under consideration;
- Academic Programme Manager acting as Panel Secretary.

The DQSE shall also be present at the panel meeting(s) as an observer, though may be asked to contribute information in relation to the earlier stages of the process. The DQSE will not be permitted to contribute to the Panel's decision.

** The member of the Academic Board shall be an external member, who is not normally involved in day to day activities of the programmes/ Academy.*

4. Reports and Documentation

A summary of appeals is reported to the Examination and Progression Board, Academic Board and Trustees for monitoring purposes.

Any notes made during an appeal are not disclosable to the student.

5. Contact Details

Principal: Rob@artacademy.ac.uk

Director of Programmes: Sue@artacademy.ac.uk

Director of Quality & Student Experience: darren@artacademy.ac.uk

Policies and documents that supplement and reference this document:

Quality Handbook
Student Handbook

Student Complaints Policy and Procedure
 Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

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Appendix A - Appeals procedure flowchart

