

# CCG | Higher Education

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## Chichester College Group

### HE Academic Appeals Procedure 2023-2024



Policy Review Area	Higher Education
Lead Manager	Vice Principal -HE
Approval Level	Higher Education Board
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## **Aim**

The HE Academic Appeals policy ensures that Chichester College Group has fair, accessible and timely procedures for handling student appeals about assessment decisions. The outcome from these procedures will facilitate enhancement of the learning opportunities provided. The policy is designed to comply with the Quality Code Theme Concerns, Complaints and Appeals, with due reference to ESG. It also complies with The Office of the Independent Adjudicator's Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals Good Practice Framework (May 2023 and December 2022).

## **Objectives**

1. Chichester College Group will make available opportunities for students to raise academic appeals without risk of disadvantage.
2. Chichester College Group will encourage constructive engagement with the appeals process which offers opportunities for early and informal resolution.
3. Chichester College Group will make its appeals procedures easily available to all higher education students through college communication systems. The college will make clear distinctions so that students know which procedure to follow depending upon where the responsibility for appeals lies.
4. The policy is intended to provide clear and accurate advice and guidance for students appealing against an assessment decision, and for staff involved in handling or supporting complaints.
5. Appeals procedures will be conducted in a timely and fair manner.
6. The academic appeals process is monitored by the college's senior HE Deliberative Body (the HE Board) which will review policy and operations following appeals and will require changes to practice where appropriate.
7. The HE Board will monitor and evaluate the appeals procedure and reflect outcomes from appeals in order to enhance learning opportunities.

## **Introduction**

Assessment may take a variety of forms including dissertation, examination, project, essay, presentation, practical work or any other exercise which is designed to enable students to demonstrate achievement.

Prior to submitting an appeal, students should raise issues informally with members of the Course Team and attempt to resolve any concerns.

Impartial advice on how best to raise issues is available from the academic departments, Student Union and Student Services.

It is important that students ensure that any circumstance which they feel could adversely affect their performance is recorded in accordance with the published procedures and within the deadlines set down in those procedures. It is unlikely that an appeal on this basis will be successful if the student has not reported it and followed the appropriate procedures.

All staff involved in an appeal will maintain confidentiality.

The college higher education qualifications are awarded by a number of validating university partners, University of the Arts London (UAL), University of Brighton, University of Chichester, University of Portsmouth and the awarding body for Higher National qualifications, Pearson. Students on courses validated by University of the Arts London (UAL) and University of Brighton should follow the procedures of the awarding body validating their course.

## **Definitions of roles**

For HE Programmes, internal college processes will be followed (unless the course is validated by the University of the Arts London or the University of Brighton). The internal process has three stages and if the internal procedures have not resolved the matter to the student's satisfaction, the college will issue a Completion of Procedures Letter and support the student in approaching the Office for the Independent Adjudicator. This is the case for Higher National programmes awarded by Pearson.

Where the programme leads to an award from an external university, with the exception of UAL and the University of Brighton, such as Foundation Degrees and Top-Up Degrees there is a right of appeal to the relevant university, after the third and final internal stage where the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction. The student retains the right to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, if the University has not resolved the complaint to the

student's satisfaction

Please note that different partner Universities may have different criteria and process for academic appeals to each other and those stated in this policy and where courses are validated by Partner Higher Education Institutes their procedures should be followed.

Guidance, policies and procedures from awarding institutions regarding Academic Appeals are available on the links below:

- [University of the Arts London](#)
- [University of Brighton](#) (GEAR Section F)

### **Grounds for appeals against assessment decisions**

The grounds on which an appeal may be based are as follows:

1. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of.
2. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative errors).
3. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment.
4. There is evidence of assessment malpractice.

The College is committed to open and fair assessment. Students should be involved in the process of assessment. The purpose of the assessment and what is required to achieve a particular grade or level of competence should be clearly explained to the students. Similarly, constructive feedback should be provided, which clearly explains why a particular mark/grade has been awarded and what the student needs to do to improve the standard of his/her work. There may occasionally be times when the students and assessor have differing views about an assessment decision. The process described below covers such situations. This procedure should be completed before the final Examination Board for the academic year, if there are appeals against the decisions reached in the final Examination Board they must be lodged within 5 working days of the results being issued.

The Higher Education Quality Manager and college staff will make every effort to

ensure that meetings are arranged at the student's convenience. Appropriate technologies should be used especially for learners who are unable to get into college easily.

Students wishing to appeal must provide a clear explanation of the nature of the appeal and the grounds on which they are appealing.

### **Stage One**

If a student disagrees with an assessment decision, the Student Appeal Form (SAF - appendix A), should be completed and submitted to the HE dropbox:

[HE@chichester.ac.uk](mailto:HE@chichester.ac.uk) within 10 working days of receiving their grades. The appeal will be logged by the HE Quality and Compliance Co-ordinator and passed to the Higher Education Quality Manager who will oversee the process. Stage 1 will be facilitated by the Higher Education Quality Manager.

The student will be invited to explain the reasons for concern as soon as possible (within a maximum of 10 working days), and to re-examine the work/evidence with the assessor. The assessor should explain fully the reasons for the grade and listen carefully to the points made by the student, taking due account of them in his/her consideration of whether there is a case for changing the grade. It is expected that most appeals will proceed no further than this. Where a student has claimed prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment the appeal will proceed directly to stage two.

### **Stage Two**

If the student is still unhappy about an assessment decision after stage one has been carried out, he/she should note this in the relevant section of their original Student Appeal Form (stage one - student's response). The updated Student Appeal Form should then be re-submitted to [HE@chichester.ac.uk](mailto:HE@chichester.ac.uk), along with the student work or evidence and any explanation the student may wish to include at this stage. This must be submitted within five working days of receiving the stage one decision.

The internal quality assurer (IQA) will reconsider the decision and inform the student of his/her decision within five working days. If the assignment has already

been internally quality assured, the study programme leader will ask another colleague to blind double mark it. The decision will also be entered on the Student Appeal Form. The Higher Education Quality Manager will oversee Stage two appeals.

In the event that the student is unhappy about the reconsidered assessment the appeal will move to stage three

### **Stage Three**

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of Stage Two, they have 10 working days to escalate their appeal to Stage Three. At this stage, the Student Appeal Form and relevant evidence will be sent to an Appeal Panel, which will include the student, a fellow student or SU rep (if the student so wishes), the original assessor, the internal quality assurer (from Stage Two) and two independent members appointed by the Vice Principal, one of whom will be appointed as Chair. The Panel will meet at a time convenient to the student (within one month of the appeal being escalated to Stage Three).

The Panel will reach a decision within ten working days of the meeting and will make recommendations to the Vice Principal in writing.

The Vice Principal will make the decision on the appeal. This decision will be communicated to the student in a letter indicating the reasons for the decision.

Where the appeal is not upheld the college will communicate that the appeal has exhausted college appeal procedures by means of a “completion of procedures” letter within 20 working days of the decision. This letter will confirm that the academic appeal procedures are complete and that there is no further route of appeal available within Chichester College Group. It will include a clear explanation of the reason for the decision and advise the student of their right to submit a complaint to the external awarding body or to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) and the time limit for doing so and where and how to access advice and support.

If the Vice Principal establishes that the student does have grounds for appeal then they will consult the relevant staff in the College to agree what action should

be taken to correct the matters referred to in the appeal. The College will inform the student in writing of the action to be taken to resolve the appeal.

The student is deemed to have accepted this resolution unless they rejects it in writing within 10 working days of receiving written confirmation of the decision and indicates their intention to appeal to the external Awarding Body or pursue through the OIA.

### **Monitoring of Appeals**

A summary report of all appeals against assessment decisions will be considered by the Higher Education Board to inform policy and procedure and to enhance student achievement.



## Appendix A: Appeal Form

STUDENT APPEAL AGAINST ASSESSMENT DECISIONS FORM    CONFIDENTIAL
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Name of Student	
Programme Title	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Name of Assessor	
Name of Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)	

Unit Assessed	
Nature/Title of Assessment	
Date of Assessment	

Appeals will be considered for the following reasons:

1. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of (for examples please see page 3 of this form) you will also need to explain why you did not apply for extenuating circumstances prior to the assessment deadline.
2. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative error)
3. That there is positive evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment

<b>Student's reasons for appeal</b>			
▪ Please summarise below the reasons for your appeal			
Signature		Date	

### Stage 1

<b>Assessor's comments</b>			
Assessor should present a brief response / comment on the student's stated reasons for appeal			
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Student's response</b>			
Student to comment on assessor's decision.			
<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

### Stage 2

<b>IQA's comments and decision</b>			
▪ IQA should briefly comment on the student's appeal and record his/her decision			
<b>Date appeal received</b>		<b>Date of reply</b>	
<b>IQA signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Student's response</b>			
Student to comment on IQA's decision.			
<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>

<b>Appeal panel's comments and decision</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chair of appeal panel should briefly comment on the student's appeal and record the panel's decision</li> </ul>			
<b>Date appeal received</b>		<b>Date of reply</b>	
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	

Please submit your completed appeal form to [HE@chichester.ac.uk](mailto:HE@chichester.ac.uk)

Do I have extenuating circumstances?

The circumstances you are seeking to mitigate must be unforeseeable or unpreventable and you must be able to demonstrate how these circumstances could have a significant impact upon your academic performance. For the purposes of appeal you must show that the assessor was not aware of these problems.

Common examples include:

- Significant personal illness or injury (where a Doctor certifies that you should not work or study)
- The critical illness or death of a close family member/dependent
- Significant family crises or financial problems leading to acute stress
- Absence for public service (e.g. Jury Service)

Circumstances not normally considered:

- Events that were planned in advance or could reasonably be foreseen (e.g. booked holiday) - arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader once known
- Failure, loss or theft of a computer, printer or storage medium
- Non-diagnosed illness (e.g. exam stress)
- Inadequate time management/planning
- Paid employment or volunteering commitments- arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader
- Rejection of EHCP DSA advice and guidance
- Pre-existing circumstances disclosed at interview (e.g. ongoing diagnosed illness)