

Academic Registry

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# Academic Appeals: A Guide for Students



Edge Hill  
University

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# Introduction and Grounds for an academic appeal

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An academic appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student progression, assessment and awards. This includes Assessment and Award Boards, Malpractice Panels, Fitness for Practice Panels and Request to Repeat the Year Panels. The grounds under which a student can make an appeal are stipulated below, in particular students should note that challenges to academic judgements, including decisions of panels, do not of themselves form grounds for an appeal.

Academic appeals may only be submitted on the following grounds:

- i) Procedural Irregularity in the Assessment Process<sup>1</sup>;
- ii) Bias or Perception of Bias<sup>2</sup>; or
- iii) Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances, details which were, for good reason, not previously available to the appropriate Assessment Boards

The following matters do not, of themselves, form grounds for an appeal:

- i) Disagreement with a mark or grade;
- ii) Disagreement with a degree classification awarded;
- iii) Challenges to academic judgements of examiners on an assessment outcome or the level of award recommended or granted;
- iv) Claims that academic performance was adversely affected by factors such as ill-health, where there is no independent, medical or other evidence to substantiate this;
- v) Complaints against the delivery of teaching and methods of assessment;
- vi) Appeals where no new circumstances are presented or where there is no justification for failing to present the circumstances at the original Board/Panel.

A complaint is defined as: The expression of a specific concern about the provision of a course/module, or a programme of study, or a related academic service. Information on the complaints policy can be found at the following web link:

**[go.gehill.ac.uk/wiki/display/studentservices/Policies+and+Procedures](http://go.gehill.ac.uk/wiki/display/studentservices/Policies+and+Procedures)**

<sup>1</sup> It is expected that the procedural irregularity would be on behalf of the University, not on behalf of the student.

<sup>2</sup> The Office of the Independent Adjudicator defines Bias as ‘...a tendency to favour one person or group, thing or point of view over another, especially in a way considered to be unfair.’

## Academic Appeal process

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Students can only appeal against the decision of a Board or Panel following receipt of the formal decision letter/academic transcript or release of assessment results online.

The deadline for submission of an academic appeal will normally be 10 working days after confirmation of the decision has been issued, the definitive deadline date will be included as part of the decision letter/results release.

Students are strongly advised to seek advice before completing and submitting an academic appeal form (see contact details on page 8).

Any group of students wishing to submit an appeal which relates to the same issue can do so as a group appeal providing the group nominates one person to act as the representative. Any groups of students wishing to do so must contact Academic Registry for further details (see contact details on page 8).

Additional information or documentation will not be accepted after the application form has been submitted unless requested by Academic Registry as part of the investigation or unless prior permission has been given.

All appeals are treated as confidential, however, students must be aware that Academic Registry may contact Edge Hill University staff if it is necessary as part of the investigation of the appeal.

All students who are unable to sit/complete a piece of assessment/placement are expected to complete an Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances (EMC) form at the time of the assessment/placement. Any student submitting an appeal who did not submit an EMC form at the time of the assessment must explain with their appeal why they were unable to do so.

Requests to repeat the year should be made via the Request to Repeat the Year process. See Academic Registry staff for details and an application form. It is important to note that the request to repeat the year process is independent from the assessment board and academic appeals process. As such deadlines for requests to repeat the year are not linked to the date of assessment boards or the release of assessment results.

Students who believe the mark appearing on their official results is factually incorrect must contact their Department/Faculty in the first instance.

At the point that a student submits an academic appeal form they will be referred to as the appellant.

The receipt and outcome for all academic appeals will be issued in writing to the appellant's registered term time or home address as appropriate. If you need to change your address whilst your appeal is under review you must provide your new address using the contact details on page 8 of this form and update your permanent record via the usual process.

Any students who require additional support should speak to the Students' Union, see page 8 for more details.

## Outcomes

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In making a decision in relation to an academic appeal each Faculty will refer to what has been requested on the academic appeal form. However it is important to note that the academic regulations do not permit marks to be changed. Ordinarily students who have submitted a successful academic appeal will be given another attempt at the module or assessment in question.

Requests to Repeat the Year should be made via the separate Request to Repeat the Year process. Further details can be found on the Academic Registry Web Pages: **[edgehill.ac.uk/registry/programmes](http://edgehill.ac.uk/registry/programmes)**.

Students who believe the mark appearing on their official results is factually incorrect must contact their Department/Faculty in the first instance. It may be possible for matters such as this to be resolved informally.

Students must be aware that it is not possible to challenge academic judgement as part of the academic appeal process. Students with queries in relation to the marks they have received should refer to the feedback process within their Faculty and contact their module tutor.

## Factual Statement

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In order for an academic appeal to be accepted there must be a clear explanation of all circumstances relating to the appeal detailed via a supporting factual statement. If a student feels that they are unable to submit a supporting statement they should seek advice from Academic Registry and/or the SU Advice & Guidance Centre (see contact details on page 8).

Applications on the grounds of exceptional mitigating circumstances will only be considered if the details were not previously available to the appropriate assessment board via the Exceptional Mitigating Circumstances (EMC) process for good reason.

In addition to this students must also explain what measures they took to seek guidance or help in relation to their circumstances. In particular, students should detail any contact made with their tutors, Academic Registry and local departmental or Faculty office. If it is felt that the exceptional mitigating circumstances could have been made available prior to the assessment board then the appeal will be rejected.

## Independent Supporting Evidence

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All supporting evidence must be referenced in the supporting statement; it must be clear what the supporting evidence is and how it acts as confirmation of the circumstances detailed. Please note it will be expected that the dates noted on the supporting evidence will correlate with the dates that the assessment or placement was taking place.

Students must obtain all independent evidence directly from Doctors and Counsellors and note that due to the confidential nature of this type of information the University cannot obtain this information on behalf of a student.

Supporting evidence should be independent and verifiable and must relate to the circumstances and dates highlighted in the factual statement.

Supporting evidence should relate to the circumstances which have impacted upon a student's performance in an assessment/module. As such statements in relation to a student's character will not normally be taken into consideration as part of academic appeal.

If a student feels that their circumstances are such that it is not possible to obtain independent supporting evidence this must be clearly stated in the supporting statement.

Supporting evidence will not normally be requested by Academic Registry after the application has been submitted.

In order to ensure that all academic appeals are considered as quickly as possible it is requested that all documentation is submitted in English, or with authorised translations.

In the case of illness or other circumstances relating to family or friends, students should describe the effect the illness or circumstances had upon them, and provide medical or other professional evidence to support this.

Upon conclusion of the appeal supporting evidence will not normally be returned unless specifically requested. In keeping with the Edge Hill University retention policies evidence will not be retained indefinitely and as such students are advised to keep copies of any documentation submitted with their appeal.

Students are expected to pay any costs which might be incurred in the gathering of any independent evidence. Advice on financial support can be obtained from the Students' Union or Student Services.

Information and supporting evidence submitted as part of other claims such as EMC, Repeat Year or Academic Appeal applications will not automatically be put forward for consideration as part of a new appeal application.

## Contacts for Support and Queries

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Students are strongly advised to seek advice prior to completing and submitting an academic appeal form.

Advice and guidance can be sought from the Edge Hill Students' Union Advice Centre who offer independent advice and representation to Edge Hill students:

Web: **[www.edgehillsu.org.uk](http://www.edgehillsu.org.uk)**

Tel: **01695 657301**

Email: **[suadvice@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:suadvice@edgehill.ac.uk)**

Information can be sought from the Assessment & Awards Team in Academic Registry. This can be done in person, within the Student Information Centre (SIC) building, by telephone on **01695 650914** or by email **[academicappeals@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:academicappeals@edgehill.ac.uk)**

Any students requiring additional support with the academic appeal process should contact Academic Registry using the details above.



## How to submit an academic appeal form

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An application form can be submitted in person to Academic Registry (located in the Student Information Centre (SIC) or by post to the address below;

### **Academic Appeals**

Academic Registry  
SIC Building  
Edge Hill University  
St Helens Road  
Ormskirk  
Lancashire  
L39 4QP

All applications should be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked for the attention of 'Academic Appeals'. Please note, Academic Registry cannot take responsibility for applications which are not received. Students are advised to submit their application in person and to ensure they have copies of all supporting evidence, it is recommended that any application submitted by post is done so via recorded delivery.

Any student who wishes to submit their application via email to **[academicappeals@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:academicappeals@edgehill.ac.uk)** must ensure that the application form, supporting statement and independent evidence are clearly legible.

## What happens next?

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After an academic appeal is submitted the appeal is considered following the steps detailed below.

- Appeal logged with Academic Registrar
- Appellant is issued with a receipt confirming submission of the appeal
- If no case has been established<sup>3</sup> the appeal is rejected, appellant informed in writing including their options at this point
- If a case has been established the appeal is referred to the Chair of the original Board/Panel to be reviewed
- If the appeal is upheld the appellant is informed in writing
- If the appeal is rejected the appellant is informed including their options at this point
- Depending upon the volume of requests and the availability of the members of staff reviewing an academic appeal decision letters may take a number of weeks to be issued.

<sup>3</sup> Identified as the appeal being submitted prior to the specified deadline, within one of the grounds for an appeal and with relevant supporting evidence.

