QuEST
Quality Enhancement and Standards Team

UWS Student Appeals Procedure

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST of SCOTLAND
UWS

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Introduction

An academic appeal is defined as a request to review a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student engagement, assessment, progression, awards, withdrawal from programme and student disciplinary cases. See Chapter 6 of the Regulatory Framework: **UWS - Policies and Procedures Guidance**.

This covers an academic appeal made by a student against a decision of:

- An Extenuating Circumstances Submission (ECS) Deadline
- The Senate Disciplinary Committee
- A Student Academic Integrity Panel
- A Conduct, Competence and Fitness to Practise Committee
- A Module Assessment Board (MAB)
- A Progression and Award Board (PAB)
- A Doctoral College Review Board
- A Faculty Engagement/Attendance Panel
- Any other Committee, Board or Panel of the University which is empowered to make decisions on the matters listed above.

An academic appeal may be made only by students directly affected; third parties such as parents or other representatives are not allowed to lodge an appeal. The only exception would be for students with permanent or temporary disabilities which prevent them from submitting the appeal independently.

Students' privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all stages of the appeals process. The circulation of personal or medical evidence provided by students submitting an appeal will be restricted to staff directly involved in the appeal decision process.

Where an academic appeal also contains within it a complaint and vice versa, it is possible for the appeal or complaint to be reclassified either by the student or the University (at whatever stage they may have reached) and processed under the most relevant regulation or procedure if this is likely to lead to a more appropriate outcome for the student.

An academic appeal may not be lodged after the conferment/receipt of a University award. This is in line with Chapter 6 of the Regulatory Framework: **UWS - Policies and Procedures Guidance.**

Grounds for an Appeal

Students are allowed to appeal a decision and/or penalty from:

- The Senate Disciplinary Committee
- A Conduct, Competence and Fitness to Practise Committee
- A Student Academic Integrity Panel on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	There is new substantial information directly relevant to the case which, for good reason, was not available when the original decision was made.
Excess of jurisdiction	The decision was made in excess of the jurisdiction conferred on one of the committees/panel noted above.
Defect in procedures	There was a defect in the procedures employed by one of the committees/panel noted above such as to render the decision unfair.
Unreasonable decision	The decision made by one of the committees/ panel noted above was unreasonable, in that the committee/panel reached a decision by taking into consideration something which they ought to have disregarded or disregarded something which they ought to have considered.
Excessive or unreasonable penalty	The penalty applied by one of the committees/panel noted was excessive or unreasonable.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision of a Module Assessment Board (MAB) or Progression and Award Board (PAB) on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
Defect in procedures	There is evidence that there has been a computational or administrative error in the recording or processing of their marks.
	An examination or assessment related to the decision was not conducted in accordance with the University's recognised procedures.

The following are NOT grounds for an appeal against a decision of a MAB or a PAB:

- Students question the academic or professional judgement of the examiners.
- Students are disappointed with a result where marks have been accurately recorded, assessment regulations correctly followed and there is no evidence of material irregularity.
- An academic appeal may NOT be lodged against a 'Defer' decision of a MAB or a 'Defer Chair' decision of a PAB since this is not a final decision on progress or status.

Students are allowed to submit an appeal against an ECS deadline prior to the sitting of the Module Assessment Board (MAB):

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	Students may submit an appeal against an ECS deadline prior to the sitting of the Module Assessment Board (MAB) (in line with Regulation 3.36 - 3.38) - if a valid reason for not meeting this deadline and evidence is provided to support the appeal.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision from a Doctoral College Review Board on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	There is new substantial information directly relevant to the case which, for good reason, was not available when the original decision was made.
Defect in procedures	There was a defect in the procedures employed by the Doctoral College Review Board such as to render the decision unfair.

Please note that, where research students are not able to attend scheduled sessions, they are expected to take responsibility for making arrangements to catch up with missed work and/or to consider whether they wish to request a period of interruption until they are fit to resume their studies.

The following are NOT grounds for an appeal against a decision of a Doctoral College Review Board:

- Any complaint made by students for alleged inadequacy in the supervision or other arrangements during the period of registration, since procedures exist for such complaints which can be instigated during the period of registration and before submission.

Students are allowed to appeal a decision from the Research Degree Examiners on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	Students were adversely affected by circumstances, such as illness or other factors, which impacted on their performance and the examiners were unaware of these at the oral examination as students were unable, or, for valid reasons, unwilling to disclose before the examiners reached their decision. This includes circumstances where a student was unable, for valid reasons, to request a deferral of the oral examination or to notify the University in advance that they were unable to attend. The appeal must be supported by relevant documentary evidence.
Defect in procedures	There is evidence of administrative, procedural or other irregularity in the conduct of the examination of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity.

The following are NOT considered grounds for an appeal against a decision of the Research Examiners:

- Any complaint made by students for alleged inadequacy in the supervision or other arrangements during the period of registration, since procedures exist for such complaints which can be instigated during the period of registration and before submission.
- Any disagreement with the academic judgement of the examiners in assessing the merits of the thesis and the programme of supervised research, or in reaching any assessment decision based on students' performance in the oral or approved alternative form of examination.



Students are allowed to appeal a decision of a Faculty to remove them from a module or programme for non-engagement on the following grounds:

Grounds for an appeal	Details
New evidence	Students can provide additional extenuating circumstance information which was not originally available to the Faculty. Where students could have reported this additional information to the Faculty prior to its meeting, the extenuating circumstances cannot then be cited as grounds for appeal unless there is a compelling reason why these were not disclosed in the first instance.
Defect in procedures	There is evidence of a procedural irregularity in relation to the implementation of the University's Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure.



Submission of an Appeal

Students must submit their academic appeal in writing on the relevant Appeal Form within 10 working days from the notification date which informed them of the decision which is being appealed. Appeal Forms are online: **UWS - Academic Appeals**

Students are expected to complete the relevant Appeal Form and indicate on the form:

- If they will be attending the Appeal meeting, should a meeting be held.
- If they are attending the Appeal meeting they should also give details of the name and status of any representative, or witnesses who will also attend.

Students must submit their appeal electronically to **appeals@uws.ac.uk**, including any evidence or documents supporting their appeal.

The operation of any penalty or decision applied by one of the committees/panel noted above **may** be suspended pending the determination of the appeal. Students will be notified in writing if the penalty is to be suspended.

An academic appeal submitted in one term must relate to a decision from one of the committees/panels noted above from the same or the previous term.

If students fail to submit an academic appeal within the timescale set out above, the appeal may exceptionally be considered at a later date. (Provided there are compelling reasons why it could not be submitted on time and these are detailed in full with supporting evidence at the time of submission).

Advice

Students intending to lodge an appeal against a decision of one of the committees or panels noted above, can obtain appropriate advice and counselling within the University. In particular, students are encouraged to seek appropriate support from **The Hub** or advice from the **Students' Union**.



The Senate Appeals Committee

The constitution, terms of reference and standing orders of the Senate Appeals Committee are set out in the **UWS Committee Framework**.

Students' Status during an Academic Appeal

Where students submit an academic appeal part way through the level or year, they may be permitted to continue provisionally until such time as a decision has been reached. This is to ensure that the students are not academically disadvantaged if the appeal is subsequently upheld. Continued attendance on placements will be at the discretion of the relevant Faculty.

Where students submit an academic appeal at the end of a level or year of study they may be permitted to enrol on the next level but only on a conditional basis. If their appeal is subsequently upheld, their enrolment would be confirmed. If their academic appeal is not upheld enrolment may be terminated immediately.

Where students are deemed to be eligible for an award and they subsequently submit an appeal they will be permitted to graduate and to receive the award agreed by the appropriate Progression and Award Board (PAB). If the appeal is successful and results in achieving a different award, they will be required to return any degree parchment before the new award is sent to them.

An appeal cannot be submitted after a student has graduated, either in person or in absentia.

Records and Publication

The Secretary to the Senate Appeals Committee keeps a record of all appeals.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

All students of The University of the West of Scotland are entitled to refer cases to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman when the UWS appeals procedure has completed.

Title	
Procedure Author	Appeals, Complaints and Conduct Manager
Procedure Owner	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Teaching and Student Success)
Parent Policy Statement	Learning, Teaching and Student Success Policy Statement
Public Access or Staff Only Access	Public
Version Number & Date	Version 7, September 2026
Changes and Reason for Changes	Minor corrections, updates to reflect new academic structures introduced in August 2026; additional information on procedure relating to documentation, response to appeal and Chair's right to adjourn meetings; reference to external professional representatives appointed for appeals against Fitness to Practise decisions (reflecting existing practice as set out in the Competence, Conduct and Fitness to Practise Procedure).

Appendix A – Procedures for each stage of the Appeal process

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Chair's Action	If an appeal is received, with evidence, this can be forwarded to one of the Chairs for Chair's action. However, if the appeal is rejected via Chair's action, a meeting will be arranged with an alternative Chair, which students will be invited to attend.
Informing the students	Students are notified of the date and time of the appeals meeting by email (UWS student email account) with at least 5 working days' notice. (The meeting may be sooner if students request this, subject to operational conditions).
Location of the meeting	The meeting of the Senate Appeals Committee is held online. (Exceptionally the Chair may agree to an in-person meeting on campus on receipt of a student's request which, for good reason, seeks an in-person meeting).
Additional support requirements	Students with additional support requirements may arrange this in advance of the meeting support e.g. a BSL Interpreter.
Response to the appeal	A copy of the appeal form and any further information provided by the student will be sent to the Chair of the body which made the decision being appealed. The Chair of the decision making body, or their nominee, will be invited to provide a written response to the appeal which will be submitted to the Senate Appeals Committee and to the student as part of the appeal documentation.
Appeal documentation	The full appeal documentation, including any response to the appeal, will be confidential and will be shared with all members of the Senate Appeal Committee appointed to hear the case and with the student who has submitted the appeal. Documentation will be circulated to the Senate Appeals Committee and the student at least 5 working days before the scheduled meeting. The student will receive documentation by email and is responsible for sharing the documentation with any supporter they have arranged to accompany them at the meeting. Following receipt of the appeal documentation, students are allowed to send any further documents that they wish to be considered to the Secretary to the Senate Appeals Committee.

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Membership of the Committee and attendance at the meeting	The University may be represented by the Chair (or nominee) from the committee/panel which made the original decision which the student is appealing – this person will hereafter be referred to as the University's representative. The Senate Appeals Committee has the right to invite any relevant member of staff to attend the meeting. Minimum attendance for a Senate Appeals Committee meeting includes one of the appointed Chairs; two appointed academic members of the Committee; one appointed member from Professional Services. For Appeals against the decision of a Conduct, Competence and Fitness to Practise Committee which relate to sanctions, rather than procedural matters, it will be appropriate to include a professional representative on the Senate Appeal committee. The Faculty will be invited to nominate an appropriate professional representative who will normally be external to the University. The appointed professional representative will be co-opted as a full member of the Senate Appeals Committee considering the case.
Student attending the meeting	Students will be entitled to be accompanied by a supporter, such as: • an advice worker from the Students' Union, • a friend, • a relative, • Accompanying supporters should not be a legal representative unless approved by the Chair in advance of the meeting. Approval will be at the Chair's discretion based on the circumstances of the appeal and will take into account matters such as the seriousness of the alleged offence and potential penalty, the ability of the student to present their case; and the procedural complexity of the case. Where students fail to attend, the Senate Appeals Committee proceeds with the meeting considering the appeal and reaching a decision.

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Hearing the case	• The Senate Appeals Committee considers the appeal together with any submitted evidence, provided by the student or the University. • Exceptionally, a member of the Committee may need to send their apologies to the meeting once the date has been confirmed. In such cases they submit their considerations to the Chair. • Students may present written or oral evidence in support of their case. Written evidence must be supplied in advance along with the Appeal form. • The University's representative may question students or any witness they have called. • The student may only question any witnesses through the Chair. • Any member of the Senate Appeals Committee has the right to question those in attendance, with the exception of student supporters. • In its sole discretion and in the interests of justice and fairness, the Senate Appeals Committee may hear evidence on the part of the student not given at a previous panel or committee.
Reaching a decision	The Senate Appeals Committee considers the matter and reaches its decision in private. At the Chair's discretion, the meeting may be adjourned to allow confirmation or clarification of information pertinent to the case. The Secretary shall notify the student of any such adjournment and the timescales for further consideration of the case.
	The Senate Appeals Committee decides whether to decline or uphold the appeal.

Procedure	Senate Appeals Committee
Conclusion	The Senate Appeals Committee may decide as follows: **Appeal is not upheld** The existing decision and any penalty will be confirmed by the committee. **Appeal is upheld (or partly upheld)** If an appeal is upheld or partially upheld then depending on what decision is being appealed, the Senate Appeals Committee can apply one of the following: 1. Reverse the original decision and rescind any penalty previously imposed. 2. Review the level of penalty and choose to reduce or rescind it. 3. Refer the case back to the original committee/panel with a judgement that the original committee/panel should review their decision and/or penalty. The Senate Appeals Committee can provide a recommended decision/penalty. 4. In the case of an appeal against a decision from examiners related to a research qualification, require that the examiners reconsider their decisions or that new examiners be appointed to re-assess the thesis and conduct a re-examination. The Senate Appeals Committee is not an examination board and does not have the authority to alter the decision of a Module Assessment Board (MAB) or Progression and Awards Board (PAB), nor to recommend an academic award.
Communicate the decision	The decision of the Senate Appeals Committee and any effect on an existing decision and penalty: • May be communicated to the student by the Chair of the committee at the meeting, giving reasons for the committee's decision. • Will normally be sent to the student by email within 5 working days of the meeting (or the conclusion of the case if there has been an adjournment). Where this is not possible, the student will be informed of the reason for delay and advised of the revised timescale for communication of the outcome. • The decision of the Senate Appeals Committee is final and will indicate the end of UWS processes. • Students are advised of the right of appeal to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. • The decision and any effect on an existing penalty or award will also be reported to the Chair of the committee/panel which the appeal was against. • Depending on the decision and any change to a penalty or award, Registry may alter the student's record.


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