

Further Education Academic Appeals Policy

Version Number	Date of Change	Summary of Revisions Made
6	August 2015	Amended to include additional appeal route to SQA Accreditation.
7	November 2016	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reflect change in role title of Sector Manager. ▪ Add sections for definitions and responsibilities. ▪ Change responsibilities of investigation of appeal from Head of Curriculum to Sector Manager. ▪ Change responsibilities of determination of grounds of an appeal on an outcome from Principal to Head of Quality.
7.1	May 2017	Moved para 8.2 to higher in section.
7.2	September 2017	Added Responsibilities section, and BCS appeal process.
7.3	December 2018	Change of role to Quality Manager and other job titles to adhere to the new structure.
8.0	January 2019	UHI Single Policy Group revised and renewed the Policy to be pan-UHI FE Policy.
8.1	March 2023	Rebranded
8.2	June 2026	SQA Update to Qualifications Scotland

Further Education Academic Appeals Policy

Policy Summary

Overview

Why is the policy required?

This policy, together with the associated Academic Appeals Procedures, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by UHI Perth (the College), where there are grounds to do so.

Purpose

What will the policy achieve?

The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (eg a decision by a Progression Board).

Scope

Who does the policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Further Education courses (normally up to and including SCQF Level 6).

Consultation

Who has been consulted on the policy, and who will be notified?

The policy was developed by a group of practitioners made up from across the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership. All relevant staff and students will be notified.

Implementation and Monitoring

Who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy, and what resources/costs will be incurred?

Colleges will be responsible for local implementation of the policy. The policy is part of the business-as-usual function of the college.

Risk Implications

What are the risk implications of this policy?

Failure to adopt a strong policy and follow the procedures would undermine the student experience and the academic reputation of the College.

Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment: 23 January 2019 – No negative impact.

Privacy Impact Assessment: N/A

1 Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy, together with the associated Academic Appeals Procedure, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by Perth College UHI, where there are grounds to do so.
- 1.2 The policy aims to ensure appropriate, fair and consistent treatment of all parties involved in any further education academic appeal across the partnership.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Academic Appeal: A procedure through which students may in certain circumstances as for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress or award.
- 2.2 Progress Board: A panel of staff from the College who consider and determine student awards and progression to a more advanced stage.
- 2.3 Awarding Body: An organisation that designs, develops, delivers and awards the recognition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) of an individual following an assessment and quality assurance process.

3 Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (eg a decision by a Progression Board).
- 3.2 The procedures allows the student to raise an appeal at an informal level and, if the outcome of this is not satisfactory, to use the formal procedure.

The internal formal Academic Appeal Procedure should be followed before escalation to external Awarding Body appeals processes. Students will be signposted to relevant external Awarding Body appeal processes at the start of their programme of study.

- 3.3 External appeals procedures vary, depending on the type of qualification for which the appeal is being made and the awarding body. The overriding principle is that all appeals will be treated fairly and objectively.
- 3.4 Without prejudice to the outcome of an appeal, a student may continue to attend classes and make use of the facilities of the College whilst their appeal is being heard.

- 3.5 Students who have completed their programme, who have grounds to appeal an award decision or programme progression board, will be unable to receive their award until the matter has been fully resolved.
- 3.6 The timescales set out in the Procedures must be followed. Students and staff should note where there may be variations between awarding bodies.

4 **Scope**

- 4.1 This policy applies to students enrolled on courses normally up to and including SCQF Level 6 (see Section 4.2 for variations to this criteria).
- 4.2 There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses for the purposes of the UHI Partnership. This policy applies to these students.
- 4.3 **Grounds for Appeal**

Appeals against an assessment decision will normally only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

- 4.3.1 That a student's performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors. The student must have been unable to, or have a valid reason not to, divulge the information to their lecturer prior to assessment. In the case of a Progression Board, the information must have been unavailable at the time the determination was made. In these cases, the appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence to the Personal Academic Tutor (see Procedures).
- 4.3.2 Evidence of College academic assessment administrative error or that an assessment was not conducted in accordance with the College's specific assessment policies/procedures.
- 4.3.3 That evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

5 **Exceptions**

- 5.1 This policy does not apply to Higher Education students, eg normally those students studying courses at SCQF Level 7 and above (see Section 4.2 for variations to this). These students should refer to the UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations.
- 5.2 Appeals that question the academic judgement of a member of staff or an academic assessment body will not be considered.

- 5.3 Students undertaking non-regulated qualifications (NQs), have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with the academic partner. External awarding bodies will not accept internal assessment appeals.
- 5.4 Appeals will not normally be permitted from third parties on behalf of a student.
- 5.5 Qualifications Scotland Post-Results Services for National Qualifications and other external assessments. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.
- 5.6 Exceptional Circumstances Considerations. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.

6 Notification

- 6.1 All staff members will be notified of changes to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures through the normal channels.
- 6.2 Teaching staff and staff advising students should have a detailed knowledge of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures.
- 6.3 Any changes to awarding body regulations will be reflected in the annual review process of this policy and associated procedures.
- 6.4 Students will be made aware of the policy within 4 weeks of commencing their course.
- 6.5 The policy will be publicly available on the College's website.

7 Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 The Learner Experience Committee is responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is followed. Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.
- 7.2 Principal/SLT is responsible for operational compliance with the policy. Perth Leadership Group is responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for all staff. Set by the delegated authority given in 7.1 above, and making recommendations to the Learner Experience Committee/UHI FE Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group about updates to the policy. Principal/SLT is responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for all staff.
- 7.3 The Further Education Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group is responsible for overseeing updates to the Policy and Procedures.

- 7.4 Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff participate in training and follow the policy in their day-to-day role.
- 7.5 All relevant staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures.
- 7.6 Quality approval checking of the policy is the responsibility of the Risk Management & Project Officer who will also arrange for the policy to be posted on the web.