

## Academic Appeals Policy

Revised July 2017 (due for review July 2018, KC/TQE)

### 23.1 Context and Scope

23.1.1 Students studying with MPA have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action brought against them and also to make a complaint about any aspect of their training. This policy also provides support for Students wishing to make an appeal against an assessment decision. Students can appeal against an assessment decision relating to:

- The mark for an individual item of course work
- The final result of any element of assessment
- The result or outcome of any external assessment or moderation
- The final overall internal and/or external assessment decision for a qualification.

23.1.2 Please note: All Students are assessed against agreed and published Awarding Organisation criteria. Assessment decisions are made by assessors who are trained, experienced and/or appropriately qualified

23.2 It is the responsibility of the Student to notify the assessment staff of any medical problem which may affect performance adversely in the assessment process, so that a decision can be made for deferral, prior to the assessment date.

23.3 Confidentiality - All Appeals will be treated impartially and will not impact in any way on future assessment decisions on individual cases. The appeal process will be handled on a confidential basis.

23.4 Students are strongly encouraged however, to pursue any issue or grievance through informal channels, before following the formal procedures. Students should note that there are time limits for lodging appeals. Students are reminded that assessment is a matter of judgment and disagreement with an assessment judgment is not grounds for appeal. The Student should draw attention to any problems at the earliest opportunity, seek advice and take corrective action.

23.5 The grounds for appeal generally fall into one of following main types:

- The assessment was not conducted in accordance with the qualification and/or Awarding Body regulations
- Medical or other extenuating circumstances arose during the assessment process which affected the Student's performance
- There was inappropriate or irregular behaviour on the part of the Assessor
- Administrative or procedural error

23.6 Where the outcome of an appeal brings into question the accuracy of results for other students, MPA will take steps to protect the interests of all students.

23.7 Stages of the Appeals process - Stage 1 - The Student should firstly discuss the reason for the appeal with the Assessor or Moderator (if possible) on the day of the assessment. If this does

not resolve the appeal the Student should complete the Appeal Form (available from the Directors and in 2017 this will be on the Student Portal) and submit to the Principal within 5 days from the date of the assessment, including any supporting evidence. The Principal will investigate the appeal and respond in writing within 7 working days

23.8 Stage 2 - If the Student feels that the outcome is unsatisfactory they should complete the relevant section of the Appeal Form and re-submit to the Directors. MPA will notify the External Examiner and relevant Awarding Body at this stage. If the External Examiner was not present or is unable to resolve the appeal issue, the Student will be directed to the third stage of the appeals process.

23.9 Stage 3 - The Student should complete a written appeal directly to the Awarding Body (following the relevant guidelines for that qualification (documentation is available in the relevant Course Handbook and in 2017 this will be on the Student Portal).

23.10 The Awarding Body and/or the External Examiner will investigate the matter thoroughly and respond in writing within 21 working days.

23.11 If the Student feels that the External Examiner and Awarding Body have been unable to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion, the appeal may be escalated in accordance with the relevant Awarding Body procedure (and the OIA).

23.12 Stage 4 - The Student may be offered a formal appeals hearing depending on the circumstances of the appeal. This will be conducted within 6 weeks and may have nominal fees attached. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. Full written details will be provided at this stage.

23.13 Additional Notes: It is extremely difficult to investigate appeals without impartial evidence. Therefore appeals against referrals in practical assessments based solely on the Student's disagreement with the assessor's decision will only be considered when accompanied by a video recording. The Student has the right to video any aspect of their assessment using their own video recording equipment provided it does not interfere with the assessment process, other Students or the assessor's ability to carry out their role(s). In such instances, it is the responsibility of the Student to arrange a video operator.

23.14 An academic appeal is a request from a student for a reconsideration of a decision made by an Assessment Board regarding his/her assessment, progression or award. It relates to the outcome of an assessment or examination, or a student's progression, and may be based on:

- Extenuating or mitigating circumstances where, for good reason, the Assessment Board was not made aware of a significant factor relating to the assessment of a student when it made its original decision and/or;
- A material error, either in the conduct of the assessment itself, or in the proceedings of the Assessment Board, which significantly affected the Assessment Board's decision or;
- A penalty imposed for academic misconduct.

23.15 Successful appeal results in the Assessment Board reviewing its decision in the light of the new information initially provided by the student, although it does not necessarily mean that the

original decision of the Assessment Board is changed. An appeal may only be made against a published assessment result which has been confirmed by an Assessment Board.

- 23.16 The principles and timescales outlined in these regulations will also apply to a group of students. Staff responsible for the management of the appeal will ensure that all members of the group are in agreement as to the nature of the appeal. Individual issues would normally be dealt with separately. With the agreement of the group, staff will respond to and liaise with a spokesperson. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated to all members of the group.
- 23.17 Students who have a complaint or grievance concerning the provision of a programme of study or academic service which they believe has affected the quality of their academic performance, should, before submitting an appeal, follow the Complaints Policy procedures. Explanatory notes and guidance for making a Complaint are available in the Quality Manual.
- 23.18 In most cases, students are advised to make every effort to discuss any problems with an appropriate member of the academic staff before submitting a formal appeal/ complaint. This may result in the matter being resolved informally and quickly.
- 23.19 Please note: there is a time limit of 28 calendar days from the date of the Assessment Board results being published for submission of a formal appeal to the Academic Board.
- 23.20 Learners studying with MPA have the right to appeal against any disciplinary action brought against them and also to make a complaint about any aspect of their training. This policy also provides support for learners wishing to make an appeal against an assessment decision. Learners can appeal against an assessment decision relating to: the mark for an individual item of coursework e.g. worksheets/assignments and case studies; the final result of any element of assessment e.g. planning, teaching and/or evaluation; the external assessment (theory paper); the final overall internal/external assessment decision for a qualification.
- 23.21 All learners are assessed against agreed and published Awarding Body criteria. Assessment decisions are made by assessors who are trained, experienced and/or qualified.
- 23.22 All appeals will be treated impartially and will not impact in any way on future assessment decisions on individual cases. The appeal process will be handled on a confidential basis. Learners are strongly encouraged, however to pursue any complaint or grievance through informal channels, before following the formal procedures. Learners should note that there are strict time limits for lodging appeals. Learners are reminded that assessment is a matter of judgement and disagreement with an assessment judgement is not grounds for appeal. The learner should draw attention to any problems at the earliest opportunity, seek advice and take corrective action.
- 23.23 The grounds for appeal generally fall into one of following main types:
- The assessment was not conducted in accordance with the qualification and/or Centre/Provider regulations
  - Medical or other extenuating circumstances arose during the assessment process which affected the learner's performance
  - There was inappropriate or irregular behaviour on the part of the assessor

- Administrative or procedural error
- Where the outcome of an appeal brings into question the accuracy of results for other students, MPA will take steps to protect the interests of all students.

23.24 Stage 1 - The learner should firstly discuss the reason for the appeal with the assessor or internal verifier (if possible) on the day of the assessment. If this does not resolve the appeal the learner should complete the Learner Appeal Form (available from the Directors) and submit to the internal verifier within 5 days from the date of the assessment – include any supporting evidence. The internal verifier will investigate the appeal and respond in writing within 7 working days

23.25 Stage 2 - If the Learner feels that the outcome is unsatisfactory they should complete the relevant section of the Learner Appeal Form and re-submit to the internal verifier. The Centre will then notify the External Examiner. If the External Examiner was not present or is unable to resolve the appeal issue, the Learner will be directed to the third stage of the appeals process.

23.26 Stage 3 - The learner should complete a written appeal directly to Awarding Body. The External Examiner will investigate the matter thoroughly and respond in writing within 21 working days. If the learner feels that the External Examiner has been unable to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion, the appeal may be referred directly to the Director of Awarding at the relevant Awarding Body.

23.27 Stage 4 -The learner may be offered a formal appeals hearing. This will be conducted within 6 weeks and will be conducted by the appeals panel. Provision of an appeals hearing will incur a nominal fee. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

23.28 Additional Notes - It is extremely difficult to investigate appeals without impartial evidence. Therefore appeals against referrals in practical teaching based solely on the learner's disagreement with the assessor's decision will only be considered when accompanied by a video recording. The learner has the right to video any aspect of their assessment using their own video recording equipment provided it does not interfere with the assessment process, other learners or the assessor's ability to carry out their role(s). It is the responsibility of the learner to arrange a video operator. It is the responsibility of the learner to notify the centre where their assessment is taking place of any medical problem which may affect student performance adversely in the assessment process, so that a decision can be made for deferral, prior to the assessment date.

23.29 Appeals against referrals in the external theory result can result in the following action: Investigation into the centre's invigilation procedures/delivery; Hand marking of the theory papers; Investigation into the content of the theory paper by the Awarding Body.