



## **Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure 2024-2027**

### **Aim**

The aim of this policy and procedure is to enable learners who believe that they have a grievance concerning an assessment to request a review of the decision. Please note that this policy and procedure does not deal with learner's general complaints for which there is a separate complaints procedure. The procedure deals only with academic appeals.

The terms 'assessment' and 'examination' are to be treated synonymously and refer to all forms of student assessment. An academic appeal is defined by the OIA as,

*"a challenge to or request for reconsideration of a decision by an academic body that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards This may include a request to change marks or progress decisions, or final award classifications."*

An academic appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment or exam, or a student's progression, and may be based on:

- a procedural irregularity in the assessment process
- bias or reasonable perception of bias
- circumstances affecting the student's performance where, for good reason, the academic body was not made aware of a significant factor relating to the assessment of a student when it made its original decision
- a challenge to the outcome of a student's request for additional consideration of personal circumstances which have affected their performance

**The learner cannot challenge a decision based on dissatisfaction solely with the academic judgement on which a grade is based.**

Students will not be disadvantaged by making a complaint and LMC undertakes to address any complaint fairly and in line with the process set out in this policy. LMC will take all steps to explain policy and procedures to students so that they are confident in the academic decisions made.

Any student may be supported during hearings by a supporter or representative, for example a fellow student, friend or line manager, who may attend but will take no part in the proceedings. All reasonable adjustments will be made to support students with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The main reasons for an academic appeal are likely to be:

- The learner does not understand why the assessment decision has been made because of lack of, or unclear, feedback from the assessor;
- The learner believes the assessor has missed, misjudged or misinterpreted some of the evidence put forward for assessment; or
- There has been an administrative error on the part of the assessor; or

- The assessment was not conducted in accordance with the course guidelines or programme regulations of the awarding body.

Where the learner believes they have grounds to appeal, the learner should advise the College indicating the points of disagreement with reasons and reference to the evidence in the portfolio, exam or assessment.

There are 3 stages in the appeals procedure and each stage must be completed before proceeding to the next one. All learners who register an appeal will receive a formal reply.

### **Stage 1: Early resolution**

The learner appeals directly to the assessor (lecturer) who has carried out the assessment by completing the Learner Appeal Report. The Learner Appeal Report should be completed and submitted to the assessor within 10 working days of the receiving the assessment decision. The assessor will advise the learner of his/her response in writing within 10 working days.

### **Stage 2 : Formal investigation**

If the learner is not satisfied with the written response of the assessor made in Stage 1, the learner can proceed to Stage 2 by appealing to the internal verifier or where relevant, the Head of Operations in writing indicating her areas of his/her objections to the response of the assessor. All learner appeals will be acknowledged and investigated to establish facts and evidence supporting the appeal. Where a meeting is required in order to investigate the appeal, reasonable notice of the meeting will be provided and the student can be accompanied by a supporter.

Responses to the outcome of the investigation will be issued in writing within 10 days of a hearing. If an appeal by a learner is considered justified, remedial action will be taken by the internal verifier within 10 working days of receiving the learner's appeal.

### **Stage 3: Review**

If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal stage, they can request a review within 10 days.

The grounds for asking for a review include:

- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage
- a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable
- new evidence that could make a difference to the outcome and which the student could not reasonably have provided earlier in the process.

If the request is within the time allowed and it is established that there are grounds for a review, the matter will be taken to the Academic Quality and Standards group for review.

If the appeal is unresolved at the end of the three stages, LMC will provide a Completion of Procedures letter within 28 days of the stage 3 review. This letter will enable to student to take the appeal to the relevant awarding body and/or to the Office of the Internal Adjudicator for resolution. This appeal must be in writing to the Awarding or Validating Body and must be accompanied by copies of all the documentation used in Stages 1-3.

## **Levels 3 and apprenticeship-only provision**

For academic complaints by students on non-validated programmes, stages 1 to 3 are the same with the following exceptions:

1. Poor academic practice and offences will be investigated by the Head of Operations or the Head of Quality, supported by any subject experts as required.
2. The process is followed in accordance with the relevant awarding body and/or IfATE guidance and regulations

The Awarding Body's decision will be final.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Learner**

The learner is responsible for initiating the appeals procedure, in the required format, within a defined time frame.

#### **Assessor**

The assessor is responsible for providing feedback to learners that objective and follows the awarding body's course guidelines. The assessor is responsible for ensuring that learner's appeal is processed within the published agreed time.

#### **Internal Verifier (Head of Department)**

The internal verifier is responsible for judging whether assessment decisions are valid, fair and unbiased.

#### **External Verifier (Awarding Body)**

The awarding body is responsible for the final leg of the appeal.

LMC will keep all appeals records for a minimum period of 12 months for inspection by the awarding body. **Policy last reviewed January 2024. Nest review January 2025. Policy Owner: Kate Howes, Head of Quality**

**Appendix 1**

**Candidate Appeal Report**

Learner's Name:	Assessor's Name:	Internal Verifier's Name:
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**Stage 1 Assessor's Decision**

<p><b>Assessment Details</b></p> <p>Course:</p> <p>Unit / Learning Outcome:</p> <p>Assessment Method:</p> <p>Original Assessment Decision:</p>
<p>Learner's reason for appeal:</p>
<p>Learner's Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>

	<i>This column to be completed by College staff</i>
<p>Assessor's Decision:</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Date Appeal received:</p> <p>Date replied to Learner:</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>

<p>Learner's Decision</p> <p>I accept the Assessor's decision I wish to proceed to Stage 2</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Date reply received:</p> <p>Date forwarded to Internal Verifier:</p> <p>Signature:</p> <p>Date:</p>
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**Stage 2 Internal Verifier's Decision**

Internal Verifier's Comments:	
Internal Verifier's Decision:  Signature:  Date:	Date Candidate informed:  Signature:  Date:
Candidate Decision  I accept the IV's decision  I wish to proceed to Stage 3	Date reply received:  Date forwarded to Awarding Body:  Signature:

**Stage 3 Awarding Body's Decision**

Awarding Body's Decision	
Date Appeal Decision received:  Date Learner informed:	Name:  Signature:  Date:
Learner's response  I have received the decision of the Awarding Body  Signature:  Date:	Date reply received:  Signature:  Date

