



UCFB*

Academic Appeals Policy

Owner:	Head of Academic Quality
Author:	Head of Academic Quality
Version Number:	4.0
Approved Date:	19 September 2024
Approved By:	Academic Board
Date of Commencement:	23 September 2024
Date of Last Review:	19 September 2024
Date for Next Review:	September 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Policy provides information on how UCFB responds to academic appeals against decisions made in the delivery of higher education and reflects the requirements of the University of East London (UEL) in respect of the awards given.
- 1.2 Students will not be disadvantaged because of the submission of an academic appeal in good faith under this Policy and procedure.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 UCFB has adopted the following definition of an academic appeal from The Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Appeals (December 2022), produced by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education: “A challenge to, or request for reconsideration of a decision by an academic body that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.”
- 2.1 This may include a request to change progression decisions, or final award classifications. An academic appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment or examination, or a student’s progression.

3. Scope

- 3.1 The Academic Appeals Policy allows a student to bring an appeal against a decision made by an Assessment, Reassessment, Progression or Award Board.
- 3.2 This Policy applies to all students registered or enrolled on undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses, irrespective of study mode, at UCFB toward University of East London (UEL) degrees. It also includes those who have recently left UCFB, although students (both current and former) are only able to raise issues of academic appeal within 10 working days of receipt of the relevant Board Outcome.
- 3.3 The Policy aligns with the [UEL Appeals Against Assessment Board Policy](#) and the [UEL Manual of General Regulations](#) .
- 3.4 This Policy does not cover the following categories of appeal for which separate procedures exist:
- Extenuating Circumstances applications (see the [UCFB Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure](#));
 - Complaints (see the [UCFB Complaints Policy](#));
 - Appeals against the decisions of academic misconduct outcomes (see the [UCFB Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct Policy](#)); or
 - Appeals against decisions taken under disciplinary proceedings (see the [UCFB Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy](#) and [UEL Non-Academic Misconduct Policy](#)).
- 3.5 Depending on when a completed Academic Appeal Form is received by the UEL Complaints & Appeals team, and the time taken for a successful outcome decision to be issued, it may not be possible for the student to continue their studies in the current academic year, if too many teaching weeks have been missed. If the re-enrolment deadline has expired, the right to return will be determined by the UEL Chief Student Officer (or nominee). In some cases, students may be required to defer their studies to the next academic year.
- 3.6 Where a student has submitted an Academic Appeal against a continuation decision, they will normally be advised to (re-)enrol as per the original Assessment Board decision until the final Academic Appeal outcome has been determined.

4. Raising an Academic Appeal: UCFB

4.1 **Grounds for Academic Appeal:** Only where there has been a clerical error relating to the administration of marks are UCFB able to consider the appeal at a local level. In such cases, the appeal should be raised via email to Resolutions@ucfb.ac.uk **within 10 working days of receipt of the relevant Board Outcome.**

4.1.1 Where a student request an appeal, the Resolutions Team will confirm the nature and timeliness of the appeal.

a) Nature: The appeal should be in relation to a potential administrative error by UCFB, as follows only:

- i. There is clear evidence of a significant administrative error on the part of UCFB or in the conduct of the assessment/examination and that this accounted for the student's performance;
- ii. The assessment had not been conducted in accordance with the approved regulations for the course of study;
- iii. If some other material irregularity had occurred in the procedures of the relevant Board; and/or
- iv. There is evidence that the student's extenuating circumstances were so severe as to have prevented the student from making an informed decision at the time as to whether to attempt an assessment or to apply for extenuation.

Otherwise, the student should be directed to appeal directly with UEL (see Section 5 below).

b) Timeliness:

- i. Appeals received too early: If the appeal is received before the student has received the Board Outcome, the student will be advised to re-submit the appeal in a timely fashion.
- ii. Appeals received too late: the Resolutions Team will contact the UEL Appeals Team to confirm whether the appeal can be accepted for review. If UEL confirm that it cannot be accepted, the student will be notified that the appeal is considered out of time and cannot be accepted, completing the internal procedures. The student may wish to be issued with a CoP letter if they remain dissatisfied.

4.1.2 Where the nature and timeliness of the appeal are appropriate, the Resolutions Team will confirm this with the student in writing and provide advices regarding the next steps in the process.

4.2 **Group Appeals:** Where a group of students wish to submit a collective appeal, the group should nominate a spokesperson to act as the channel of communication for the group. However, the appeal form must contain the names and signature of all of the other students in the group.

4.2.1 One member of the group must be identified as the main contact who will correspond on the group's behalf, attend meetings, and receive communication from UCFB regarding the appeal.

4.2.2 Each member of the group must submit their consent in writing and agree to abide by these regulations. They must include their full name, Student ID number and details as to how they were personally affected by the matter of the appeal. UCFB will work on the assumption that any discussion or agreement with the main contact will be with the consent of the rest of the group and that no-one providing written authorization has been coerced into agreeing to the appeal or outcomes. If this option is taken, the main contact must accept or reject the outcome on behalf of the whole group.

4.2.3 An individual student that has entered into a group appeal cannot then submit a

complaint referring to the same issue raised in the group complaint.

4.2.4 Where a group of students submit more than one appeal relating to the same substantive issue, UCFB may choose to treat those complaints as a single, group complaint.

4.4 **Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education:** In the event that the student remains dissatisfied with the final outcome after the internal UCFB procedures have been completed, they may lodge a request for external review directly with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

4.4.1 Any request for OIA review must be submitted to them **within 12 months** of the Completion of Procedures letter being received by the student. The OIA will not usually review complaints which have not been considered by UCFB in the first instance.

4.4.2 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education may be contacted via:

- Telephone: 0118-959-9813
- E-mail: enquiries@oiahe.org
- Website: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/>
- Postal address: Office of the Independent Adjudicator - Second Floor; Abbey Gate; 57-75 Kings Road; Reading, RG1 3AB.

5 Raising an Academic Appeal: UEL

5.1 Grounds for Appeal:

5.1.1 UEL makes awards to students studying courses at UCFB. UCFB students may make use of various UEL services. UEL has overarching responsibility for the quality and standards of the academic courses offered by UCFB. UCFB students may complain to UEL on matters related to the quality of their academic course. Appeals can be made direct to UEL as the marks for students studying at partner institutions are ratified at UEL Assessment Boards and by UEL Chairs. An annual summary report of student Appeals in partner organisations will be received by the UEL Board of Governors and a record will be retained.

5.1.2 In all cases, except as identified in Section 4 (above), the Academic Appeal process is fully undertaken by UEL.

5.2 **UEL Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure:** is available online via:

- [Student Academic Appeals page](#) , which includes a link to the Academic Appeals Form; and the
- [Appeals Against Assessment Board page](#)

6 UCFB Reporting and Monitoring

6.1 Records of all requests for Academic Appeal will be maintained for the purposes of monitoring and improvement. An annual report will be prepared for the Education and Student Experience Committee and Academic Board. This will detail any potential areas for enhancement, including relevant action points. The annual report will also be shared with UEL each year.

7 Policy Updates

7.1 This Policy will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis as directed by the UCFB Institutional Academic Policy Review Schedule and in line with changes required by the awarding partner