

## **2.1 Purpose and scope**

- 2.1.1 This section sets out the procedures approved by the Academic Board governing reviews of the decisions of Progression and Awards Boards and for considering appeals by students.

It encompasses:

- a) the circumstances under which and the grounds upon which a review may be sought or a subsequent appeal lodged;
- b) the procedures to be followed by a student and the University in seeking a review or lodging of a subsequent appeal;
- c) the responsibilities of students requesting a review or lodging an appeal;
- d) definition of further rights of appeal and their limitation.

## **2.2 Circumstances and grounds for requesting a review**

- 2.2.1 Students may seek a formal review of the decision of an Assessment Board with regard to their results once the results have been formally promulgated or notified.
- 2.2.2 The review may be sought in connection with the following aspects of the academic decisions arising from the results of an assessment:
- a) the overall result of a final assessment including the classification of the degree or qualification of the award;
  - b) the results of an assessment, not being a final assessment, where that result:
    - i) precludes continuation on course or progression to the next stage of the course;
    - ii) requires reassessment or the repeat of an assessment;
    - iii) leads to directed transfer to a lower level course;
    - iv) prevents progression to the honours degree as distinct from an unclassified degree;
    - v) precludes progression to the major option of course, which the student might reasonably have aspired to follow.
- 2.2.3 The grounds upon which a student may request a review of an Assessment Board decision are limited to the following:
- a) the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the regulations for the course or there was an administrative error or some other significant procedural irregularity that prejudiced the student's performance;
  - b) there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners, although the candidate shall not be permitted to question the academic judgement of the examiners;
  - c) exceptionally, that there is evidence that the 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 a deferral.
- 2.2.4 Disagreement with the academic judgement of an Assessment Board in assessing the merits of an individual piece of work or in reaching a decision on a student's progression or on the final level of an award, based on the marks, grades and other information relating to the student's performance, cannot in itself constitute grounds for a request by a student for reconsideration. Any alleged inadequacy of supervision

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or in other arrangements during a period of registration as a student of the University, is not admissible grounds for review. A review cannot be considered if an alternative procedure has been invoked for the same matter. Procedures for requesting and conducting a review

- 2.2.5 Within ten working days<sup>1</sup> of the release of confirmed results, the student must inform the University of their request for a review of the decision of the Assessment Board, submitting full supporting documentation.

The following email addresses should be used: Coventry University  
students:

The student must:

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<sup>1</sup> Working days are defined as all weekdays other than statutory holidays and other days when the University is formally closed, irrespective of whether they fall outside of term time.

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- a) submit the completed form and full supporting details of the circumstances, including medical certificates and other third-party evidence to demonstrate how those circumstances affected them, within ten working days of the release of confirmed results;
  - b) be prepared to be interviewed by the Resolution Manager (or nominee) should the Resolution Manager deem it to be necessary in order to clarify any points.
- 2.2.6 If eligible (see paragraph 2.2.3), the review requested by a student shall be heard by the Assessments Review Group (see paragraph 2.4), which shall meet to consider requests on a regular basis. These meetings shall be scheduled. Meetings at other times shall be held as required.
- 2.2.7 Exceptionally, the student may be invited to attend and be interviewed by the Assessments Review Group.
- 2.2.8 The Chair of the Assessments Review Group and the Resolution Manager (or nominee) shall ensure that:
  - a) the student's written submission, including any supporting documentation, is fully considered;
  - b) any persons named by the student are consulted, provided that they can be reached and their views are relevant to the issues;
  - c) the Group reaches a decision as expeditiously as possible in the given circumstances, having regard to the depth of investigation required and the availability of persons to be consulted;
  - d) if the Group decides there are grounds for review identifying in writing to the relevant Assessment Board, upon what grounds it is being requested to reconsider its decision and provide guidance on good practice in similar circumstances.
- 2.2.9 The Resolution Manager (or nominee) shall be responsible for writing to the relevant Associate Registrar (or nominee) to inform them of the Assessments Review Group's decision.
- 2.2.10 The Associate Registrar (or nominee) shall ensure that:
  - a) the Assessment Board notes the decision of the Assessments Review Group;
  - b) consideration is given to the relevant scripts or work;
  - c) the grounds upon which the Assessment Board reached its original decision are reconsidered.
- 2.2.11 Having given consideration to all the circumstances, the Assessment Board shall:
  - a) confirm the original decision of the Assessment Board, *or*
  - b) vary the decision, setting conditions as allowed within the discretion of the Assessment Board and the Assessment Regulations.

Where the Assessment Board wishes to have further evidence of the student's performance, it may require a (further) viva voce examination or other form of assessment appropriate to the student's circumstances and the requirements of the programme of study, before reaching its final decision.

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- 2.2.12 The Associate Registrar (or nominee) shall be responsible for confirming in writing to the student the decision of the Assessment Board, normally within 15 working days of the consideration of the review by the Assessment Review Group.
- 2.2.13 The Associate Registrar (or nominee) shall inform the Resolution Manager (or nominee) of the outcome of the decision of the Assessment Board. If an Assessment Board requires a (further) viva voce examination or other form of assessment appropriate to the student's circumstances and the requirements of the programme of study, this requirement should be notified to the Resolution Manager within the deadline specified and the assessment carried out as soon as practicable.

## 2.3 Constitution and Terms of Reference for the Assessments Review Group

### 2.3.1 Constitution

A review requested by a student shall be heard by the Assessments Review Group of the Academic Board, which shall be appointed by the Provost

a) The Assessments Review Group shall comprise:

- at least two experienced members of academic staff;
- at least one staff representative from Welfare (Health and Wellbeing or International Office Welfare or equivalent);
- a senior member of academic staff of the University/Subsidiary shall be appointed Chair;

b) The quorum shall be three members;

c) To avoid any conflict of interest, no member of the Assessments Review Group can be a Research Degree Supervisor, Module Leader, Course Director or equivalent linked directly or indirectly to the student's programme of study or have any other involvement in the assessment of a student whose case is being considered at the meeting;

d) The Secretary shall be the Resolution Manager or nominee;

e) The Chair shall be a senior member of academic staff, but outside of the University's Senior Management Team.

### 2.3.2 Terms of Reference

a) The review shall be conducted within the terms of reference specified in paragraph 2 above.

b) The Assessments Review Group having considered the relevant information shall have power to decide that there are grounds upon which to require an Assessment Board, Higher Degrees Examination Panel/Progress Review Panel as ratified by the Research Degrees Sub-Committee to review its decision.

c) In exceptional cases an Assessments Review Group may recommend to an Assessment Board that the results of any or all assessments which the student has taken in the current year's programme be declared void if there is satisfactory evidence that the result was so affected by extenuating circumstances as to render it inequitable to treat it as an attempt. If the student subsequently fails the module, the Assessment Board shall have the discretion to reinstate any previous marks.

d) If the Assessments Review Group decides that there are grounds, these must be identified and communicated to the relevant Assessment Board.

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- e) The Assessment Board, after reconsidering the student's performance in the light of the new circumstances, shall have power to:
- confirm the original decision of the Assessment Board;
  - vary the decision, setting conditions as allowed within the discretion of the relevant group and related Regulations.

## 2.4 Circumstances and grounds for lodging an appeal

- 2.4.1 A student may lodge an appeal against a decision of an Assessment Board only after a formal review of the Assessment Board decision has taken place, the outcome of which still leaves the student dissatisfied.
- 2.4.2 The appeal may be lodged in the circumstances of the kinds of academic decisions arising from an assessment that are listed in paragraph 2.2.2.
- 2.4.3 The grounds for an appeal are:
- a) additional grounds as specified in section 2.2.3 which were not considered at the review stage; *or*
  - b) significant new evidence relating to the grounds considered at the review stage; *or*
  - c) specific allegation of irregularity in the conduct of the review process itself.
- 2.4.4 If additional grounds are the basis for the appeal under section 2.5.3a), or additional evidence submitted under section 2.5.3b), the following criteria must each be satisfied:
- a) the fresh grounds or evidence only came to light after the review process was completed;
  - b) the fresh grounds or evidence could not have been made available before the review;
  - c) the fresh grounds or evidence add a significant new dimension to the case.
- The Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (or nominee) must be satisfied that these conditions are met before admitting such evidence. The Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer's decision is final (paragraph 9 refers).
- 2.4.5 Fresh evidence must be introduced in support of any appeal; no appeal shall be heard if all the evidence submitted has already been considered at the review stage, even if fresh grounds are introduced.

## 2.5 Procedures for lodging an appeal

- 2.5.1 Within ten working days of the release of the outcome of the formal review of the Assessment Board, the student must inform the Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (via the following email address: [ArgAppeals.reg@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:ArgAppeals.reg@coventry.ac.uk)) of their request for an appeal to be considered, submitting full supporting documentation, where appropriate.
- 2.5.2 The Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (or nominee) will investigate the circumstances and decide whether or not to grant the appeal. Should the appeal not be granted a completion of procedures letter will be issued to the student. The decision of the Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (or nominee) in this respect is final.

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- 2.5.3 If the appeal is granted, the Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (or nominee) shall be empowered to set aside the decision of the Assessments Review Group and convene a new meeting of the Assessments Review Group, with a new membership, to consider the evidence.
- 2.5.4 The secretary to the Assessment Review Group shall ensure that the appellant receives ten working days' notice of the time and place of the meeting and copies of all written evidence.
- 2.5.5 The appellant has a right to appear before and be heard by the Assessment Review Group accompanied by a friend<sup>2</sup> to assist in presenting the case if the appellant so chooses, subject to the following:
- a) at least five working days prior to the meeting the student shall inform the secretary to the Assessment Review Group as to whether they intend to attend and to be accompanied by a friend, and if so, the name of the person concerned. In the event that the appellant arrives at the meeting with more than one friend, the Chair has the authority to ask the appellant to choose whom they wish to be present. All other friends will be required to leave;
  - b) the appellant may not be represented by another person in the appellant's absence;
  - c) the appellant, if present, shall not refuse to answer personally questions which the Chair and members of the Group desire to put, in order to establish the facts or clarify issues.
- 2.5.6 If, exceptionally, the appellant wishes to be legally represented, the appellant must give a minimum of five working days' written notice to the University in advance of the meeting. If such notice is not given sufficiently early to allow the University to arrange its own legal representation, the meeting will be rearranged but only one such extension will normally be granted. The University reserves the right to instruct lawyers in connection with any meeting at which the appellant is to be legally represented or in connection with any matter where the University feels that is necessary because of the complexity or significance of the case. The appellant remains responsible for presenting their case, and for ensuring that any statements made by their legal representative are accurate.
- 2.5.7 If the appellant wishes to call witnesses, the appellant must give written notice to the University five working days in advance of the meeting.
- 2.5.8 The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the procedure outlined on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with normal practice.
- 2.5.9 At the conclusion of the hearing all persons other than the Assessment Review Group and its secretary shall withdraw. The Assessment Review Group shall reach its decision in private and shall recall the interested parties when the Chair is ready to announce the decision to them.
- 2.5.10 In the event of the Assessment Review Group wishing to recommend an annulment of an Assessment Board decision, the Chair may decide to adjourn the hearing to allow any procedures to be completed as may be required by the approved regulations for the course.

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<sup>2</sup> A friend might be for example a relative, friend, member of clergy or member of staff from the Students' Union Advice Centre who may attend the hearing with the appellant to provide support. However, it remains the appellant's responsibility to present their case.

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- 2.5.11 The Registrar & Chief Governance Officer (or nominee) shall confirm in writing to the appellant the decision reached and the reasons for it:
- a) within ten working days of the conclusion of the hearing;
  - b) as soon as possible if the hearing has been adjourned, to enable an annulment to be considered by the Chair of Academic Board in consultation with External Examiners and any external body involved.

## **2.6 Responsibilities of students seeking a review or lodging an appeal**

- 2.6.1 Students are responsible for:
- a) submitting their case with supporting documentation to the Resolution Manager (or nominee) and the Group Registrar & Chief Governance Officer in order to initiate the process of review or appeal respectively within ten working days of the release of their confirmed results or the outcome of the formal review of an Assessment Board decision;
  - b) making themselves available to attend an upheld appeal hearing unless they have expressly requested it to be heard in absentia;
  - c) accepting personal responsibility for the truth and accuracy of statements that they have signed;
  - d) submitting documentation within the timescales required.
- 2.6.2 Students are entitled to seek advice on and interpretation of this document and course regulations from the Group Resolution Unit (in writing via: [ArgAppeals.reg@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:ArgAppeals.reg@coventry.ac.uk)), the Students' Union or their College/School/Subsidiary/Campus registry in order to enable them to prepare their cases. However, the student remains responsible for preparing the case and submitting it in accordance with the specified timescale.
- 2.6.3 The decision of an Assessment Board remains in force until the Registrar has formally notified all interested parties that it has been rescinded. Therefore the student remains responsible for:
- a) conforming to the requirements for a reassessment, resubmission of work to be assessed or resitting an examination(s) pending a review or appeal hearing;
  - b) the consequence of not complying with these requirements should the subsequent decision of the review or appeal process not be in the student's favour.

## **2.7 Right of appeal and their limitation**

- 2.7.1 The Academic Board, the Assessments Review Group and Assessment Boards do not have the power:
- a) to take any disciplinary action in connection with the case. Such matters shall be referred to the student's School/College;
  - b) to vary the approved regulations governing a course except where those regulations expressly give discretion so to do.
- 2.7.2 Students do not have a right of appeal to the Board of Governors against an academic decision properly made; the Board of Governors has no powers to vary course regulations, grant exemptions from them, or to annul decisions on assessments, nor does it have any powers in relation to exclusion of students on academic grounds.

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- 2.7.3 In the event of the Academic Board agreeing to annul the decision of an Assessment Board there is no right of appeal.
- 2.7.4 A student who has been found guilty of or admitted to a charge of cheating or malpractice in any assessment has no right of appeal against a decision of an Assessment Board to record a failure in that assessment.
- 2.7.5 Any student who knowingly submits false or forged evidence at any stage of a review or appeal process forfeits their right to consideration of the case and renders themselves liable to disciplinary proceedings.

## **2.8 General Items**

- 2.8.1 Queries on these regulations should be addressed to the Registrar & Chief Governance Officer.