



Student Academic Appeals Code of Practice

1. Purpose

This code of practice provides information about the principles and approach that must be followed by students and staff when students wish to raise an academic appeal. It explains when a student has a right to make an appeal and the grounds under which appeals can be considered, provides information about each stage of the process, sets out expectations of those involved in submitting and responding to appeals, and provides details of the expected timescales. It also signposts students to the support available throughout the process and provides information about how to request adjustments to enable them to access the process fully.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) is an independent body which runs a student complaints scheme for England and Wales, in line with the requirements of the Higher Education Act 2004. The University of Nottingham is a member of this scheme and this code has therefore been written in accordance with the [OIA's Good Practice Framework](#) for the handling of appeals.

2. Scope

2.1 Who does this code apply to?

The content of this code of practice is applicable to staff and students across the UK campuses. Details of who is considered a student under this procedure are in section 2.3 of this code.

For students and staff studying or working at University of Nottingham Ningbo China or University of Nottingham Malaysia, please consult the information on the relevant webpages:

- [University of Nottingham Ningbo China – academic appeals](#)
- [University of Nottingham Malaysia – academic appeals](#)

2.2 Definitions

Academic appeal

For the purposes of this code, the university has adopted the definition used by the OIA, which is “a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.”

School/department

Where references are made to a school/department, this is taken to mean any area within the university which is most appropriately placed to provide information and/or a response to a student's appeal.

Revised recommendation

Where references are made to a revised recommendation/upheld decision, this means a recommendation which revises an earlier decision of an academic body at the university charged with making decisions on assessment, progression and awards.

Fully registered

An individual who has completed the registration requirements set out by the university. Details of the registration steps required are detailed on the [registration webpages](#).

2.3 Who can use this code of practice?

For the purposes of this code of practice, a student is:

- An individual who is a current fully registered student of the university, or
- An individual who has previously been fully registered as a student of the university.

This code of practice applies to students on both taught and research courses.

Students who are studying away from their home campus, for example on exchange to another University of Nottingham campus, should refer to the academic appeals code of practice/policy and procedure which applies to the campus where the issues they wish to raise have occurred.

Any individual who is eligible to use this code (as outlined above) must submit their appeal within the timescales outlined in section 4.2 of this code.

The academic appeals process only considers appeals relating to decisions outlined in section 2.4 of this code. A student who has had their registration suspended by the university for other reasons and wishes to contest this decision should raise this via the appeals route for the policy/procedure under which the suspension was made (for example, the Student Code of Conduct) or where such an appeal route is not provided, via the student complaints process.

A group of students may use this code of practice to make a group appeal, though it is normally the case that an individual appeal will allow for more appropriate consideration of a student's particular circumstances. To raise a group appeal, one student must be identified as the main contact and have written consent from all others that wish to be named as part of the appeal. A group appeal can only be considered if all students named in the appeal are appealing on the same right and grounds and are seeking the same outcome. The Investigations and Resolution team will determine whether it is possible to consider a group appeal or whether cases submitted as a group appeal should be considered individually. If a student is aware that a group appeal is being raised but does not wish to be part of it, they can submit an individual appeal if they wish to do so.

Anyone wishing to make an appeal is usually expected to do so themselves, unless they are part of a group appeal as detailed above. The [Policy on Communications with Third Parties](#) applies to the academic appeals process. It provides information about circumstances in which a student may request for a third-party (such as a family member or friend) to represent them.

Anonymous appeals will not be considered. Raising an appeal anonymously would prevent investigation of the circumstances raised in the appeal as well as communication and implementation of the outcome.

2.4 Which decisions provide the right to appeal under this code?

Students have the right to appeal against the following final decisions of an academic body charged with making decisions on assessment, progression and awards:

- a) The conditions imposed and/or the requirement to take reassessments to progress to the next stage of a taught course or phase of research study.
- b) A decision to terminate a student's current programme of study without an alternative lower qualification being awarded. This includes students whose programme of study is terminated but who are offered a transfer to another taught course or research degree.
- c) A classification decision. This includes appeals against the class of honours degree awarded and the classification of other undergraduate and postgraduate awards.
- d) A progression decision in situations where a student has met the progression requirements of their course but did not make the university aware of serious circumstances affecting their study before a progression examination board made its decision and is appealing to mitigate a possible effect on their future degree classification. This also applies to postgraduate research progression review outcomes. Such an appeal would be considered if submitted within the requirements of this code and the student demonstrates compelling reasons why they were unable to make the university aware of circumstances affecting their study prior to the examination board decision (for example, reasons associated with a disability or medically evidenced incapacity to engage with support procedures).
- e) A decision not to award the qualification for which a student is registered and instead award a lower qualification or no qualification. This relates to decisions made at the end of a student's taught course or research degree.
- f) A decision of a university Fitness to Practise Committee, Practice Assessment Panel or Special Cases Committee. This is relevant to students on professional courses who have been the subject of [fitness to practise procedures](#).
- g) The outcome of an [extenuating circumstances claim](#).

Where more than one right applies, a student may select multiple rights on their academic appeal form. A student can only submit one appeal against any decision which gives them the right to appeal as set out above.

2.5 What issues are grounds for appeal under this code?

Only claims of at least one of the following circumstances will be considered as grounds for appeal:

- a) Parts of the documented assessment procedure were not applied (a procedural irregularity) and this procedural irregularity, which has disadvantaged the student, was significant enough to have materially affected the decision or recommendation made, rendering it unsound.
- b) Prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners took place and can be substantiated with evidence, or there are grounds to support a reasonable perception of prejudice or bias.
- c) The decision-making body took a decision which no reasonable person would find comprehensible (a “manifestly unreasonable” decision). To apply this ground, the student must provide a substantive argument explaining why no reasonable person could have arrived at the decision that was made. Disagreement with a decision does not make it manifestly unreasonable.
- d) The student’s performance was materially affected by circumstances for which there is evidence, which was not, and could not have been, made available to the examination board at the time of its original decision. The student will be required to explain why the circumstances could not have been brought to the university’s attention sooner. If evidence which relates to an extenuating circumstances outcome is submitted as an appeal prior to an exam board having taken place, this will be referred to the extenuating circumstances process for consideration and the appeal will be closed.

Where the student believes that more than one ground applies to their appeal, the student may select multiple grounds. The student submitting the appeal must establish the case and explain why they believe they have grounds for appeal.

2.6 What issues are grounds for an appeal review request under this code?

Only claims of at least one of the following circumstances will be considered as grounds for an appeal review request:

- a) Procedural irregularity in the handling of the appeal which has disadvantaged the student and was significant enough to have materially affected the decision or recommendation made, rendering it unsound
- b) A compelling argument that the decision was not reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature must be supported by evidence and a clear rationale for the unreasonable nature of the decision. Claims that simply amount to an expression of dissatisfaction with the decision will not be considered.

Where the student believes that more than one ground applies to their appeal review request, the student may select multiple grounds. The student submitting the appeal review request must establish the case and explain why they believe they have grounds for review.

2.7 Exclusions from this code

The following circumstances will not be considered grounds for appeal:

- a) **Perceived shortcomings in tuition, supervision or support.**
Concerns relating to the quality of teaching, supervision or other circumstances that relate to the delivery of a programme of study should be raised through the [student complaints process](#) within the timescales set out in that process. Cases where complaints are upheld and there has been a clear impact on an academic outcome may lead to an academic conclusion e.g. allowing a student a further attempt at an assessment.
- b) **Matters of academic judgement of an examination board or individual.**
The student will not be permitted to argue the academic merits of their work. The student's assertion that the result unfairly reflects the merit of their work or their ability is not a ground of appeal.
- c) **Disagreement with the actual mark awarded for a piece of assessed work except where grounds can be established above.**
If a student wishes to have clarification about a mark received for an individual assessment or module, they are advised to contact their school/department or module convener directly. Errors in calculating or recording marks on which the original decision was made cannot be submitted as grounds for appeal unless these errors have been brought to the attention of the school/department but have not been resolved.
- d) **Appeals against provisional marks.**
- e) **Any matters relating to circumstances affecting study which could have been raised before the meeting of the examination board or the confirmation of a postgraduate research progression review outcome.**

Students cannot use the appeals process to request an outcome that would change a penalty for academic misconduct. Information about requesting a review of an academic misconduct finding and/or penalty can be found in the [Academic Misconduct Procedure](#).

2.8 Principles

This code upholds the OIA principles of good practice for appeals procedures, which outlines that they should:

- Be accessible and clear
- Be fair, independent and confidential¹
- Be inclusive
- Be flexible, proportionate and timely
- Improve the student experience.

¹While information related to an academic appeal case will be kept as confidential as possible, information provided as part of an appeal usually needs to be shared with relevant staff members in schools/departments and services across the university to allow for full consideration of any issues or circumstances raised.

Appeals will be treated seriously, and students will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as the result of making an appeal in good faith. Appeals made frivolously, vexatiously or with malice will not be investigated.

The university is committed to ensuring that appeals are handled in accordance with this code. Occasionally, it may be sensible for the university to deviate from procedure if strict adherence to it could give rise to perceptions of prejudice or bias.

Appeals form part of the university's process of quality review and improvement and are considered as providing valuable feedback rather than criticism. We will widely publicise information about procedures to students and staff, and all schools and central services are required to provide a link to them via their websites.

The university will not accept or investigate appeals which it considers to be in breach of the standards set out in the [Unacceptable Behaviour Policy](#).

Students will be notified as early in the process as possible if the remedy sought within the appeal is beyond what the university can reasonably provide or what is in its power to provide.

It is important for students to note that the Office of the Independent Adjudicator cannot consider matters which are or which have been the subject of court proceedings. Similarly, the university reserves the right to decline, suspend or to discontinue an appeal made under this code if legal proceedings are commenced and the claim concerns the same subject matter as the appeal.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Roles and responsibilities of those submitting and responding to appeals

Students

- To raise appeals promptly and in accordance with the timescales of this code.
- To conduct themselves responsibly and treat the process and members of the university involved in the process with respect at all times, in line with the [Unacceptable Behaviour Policy](#). Where a student is being represented by a third party, the [Policy on Communication with Third Parties](#) also applies.

Students' Union Advice Team

- To provide independent support and guidance to students wishing to use this code.

Supporters (for students)

- Where a supporter is attending a meeting with a student at any part of the academic appeals process, they may take notes on the student's behalf, make representations on their behalf and ask questions, but may not answer questions on their behalf.

Investigations and Resolution Team

- To administer the handling of appeals and assess their eligibility for consideration
- To provide information to students on the process and progress of their appeal
- To provide advice and training to staff members on the process

- To issue outcome responses to appeals within the timescales of this code (or advise the student of any delays)
- To ensure that those appointed to respond to appeals are free from prejudice and bias or a reasonable perception of prejudice and bias
- To review and update this code of practice
- To maintain records of appeals and to provide reports to university committees as required.

Those receiving, considering and making decisions on appeals at both the appeal and appeal review stages, including staff in the Investigations and Resolution team making decision at the initial triage stage of an appeal/appeal review

- To approach an appeal/appeal review with an open mind and to act fairly, proportionately and reasonably in relation to the appeal/appeal review
- To uphold the university's principles of equality, diversity and inclusion
- To access training opportunities related to the appeals process and keep up to date with developments to this code of practice
- To declare any potential conflicts of interest
- For staff in schools/departments at the appeal stage: to prepare a school/department response form and submit this to the Investigations and Resolution team within the timescales of this code (or advise of any delays)
- At appeal review stage: to ensure that consideration of an appeal review is carried out, which may be delegated (as set out in section 4.1 of this code).

Quality and Standards Committee

- To approve this code as part of the university's Quality Manual and to have oversight of the activity of the Investigations and Resolution team
- To receive and review reports relating to appeal handling at the university.

3.2 Support for students

We encourage students to seek advice from Students' Union Advice at any stage in the appeals process, including seeking advice on how to present their case effectively. The Students' Union is independent from the university and has specialists who can provide impartial advice.

If a student needs adjustments to support them to access any stage of the academic appeals process, they should email the Investigations and Resolution team at academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk outlining what adjustments would be useful.

Students have the right to bring a supporter to meetings arranged during any stage of the appeals process. The supporter must be one of the following:

- An education adviser from Students' Union Advice
- A fellow student
- A member of staff
- A union representative (e.g. BMA, RCN).

The university provides a number of support services which may be useful to students making an appeal under this code. Information about the services available can be found on the [Wellbeing Service webpages](#). This includes pastoral support available from Support and Wellbeing.

4. Procedural steps

4.1 Overview of the academic appeals process

The academic appeals process has six potential stages. A case may not need to progress through all stages of the process. Decisions about which stages a case goes through will be led by the relevant case handler from the Investigations and Resolution team in conjunction with colleagues in schools/departments where appropriate. In the event of any disagreement between parties regarding these stages, the final decision will be made by the Head of Casework.

The potential stages of the appeals process are:

4.1.1 Initial assessment of the case by the Investigations and Resolution team

On receipt of an appeal, the Investigations and Resolution team will determine the eligibility of the appeal in accordance with this code. The appeal will be closed if the student:

- has not completed the appeal form fully¹
- has not supplied any or relevant evidence¹
- does not have the right to appeal
- has requested an outcome that is not available within the academic appeals process or is beyond what the university can reasonably provide/has the power to provide¹
- has submitted the appeal outside of the timelines stated in section 4.2 of this code
- has not adequately explained why the circumstances claimed establish grounds for appeal
- has previously submitted an appeal relating to the same grounds.

¹If the student has not completed the appeal form in full or has not supplied any or relevant evidence, or if the outcome requested by the student is not available within the academic appeals process, the student will be invited to revise and resubmit their appeal. The deadline for resubmission will be set by the Investigations and Resolution team.

If the circumstances claimed by the student should be addressed under a different policy, the student will be informed and guided to the correct policy and the appeal case will be closed.

The Investigations and Resolution team has the remit to decide whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant further consideration of the case and to close appeals which do not warrant such consideration. As part of this, they may seek further information from a school/department, service or from the student.

As a result of the initial assessment stage, one of the following actions will be taken:

- The case will be closed and the student will be guided to the appropriate policy for consideration of the topics being raised.

- The case will be closed if it has not met the requirements set out in this code and the student will be provided with an explanation of which requirements have not been met and advised of further steps available to them.
- The case will be accepted for further consideration and progressed for a school/department response.

4.1.2 School/department response

If the initial assessment of the case by the Investigations and Resolution team finds that further consideration of the appeal is required, the case will be forwarded to the relevant school/department and information will be gathered regarding the case. The school/department's response will usually be submitted on a school/department response form within 10 working days. The school/department should address in full the points raised in the student's appeal form, referencing relevant policies and procedure where applicable.

The response should either make a revised recommendation (sometimes called an **upheld** decision) or confirm the original decision (sometimes called a **not upheld/rejected** decision). In either case, the school/department should provide a written response and any relevant evidence. A revised recommendation (upheld decision) will not necessarily result in the outcome requested by the student (for example where the school/department believes an alternative outcome is more appropriate).

As a result of the school/department response stage, one of the following actions will be taken:

- The case will be upheld if it establishes grounds for appeal and a revised recommendation will be issued. The student will be provided with an explanation of why grounds have been established and the actions to be taken by both the university and the student following this decision.
- The case will not be upheld if it does not establish grounds for appeal. The student will be provided with an explanation of why grounds have not been established and will be advised of further steps available to them, including information about submitting an appeal review request.
- The case will be referred to an Academic Appeal Panel.

4.1.3 Academic Appeal Panel

If the triage process demonstrates that the case is not suitable for a school/department decision, the student's appeal will be considered by an Academic Appeal Panel, which acts with the fully delegated authority of Senate. This could be for a number of reasons, which might include:

- The school/department does not wish to make a revised recommendation as it does not believe grounds have been established, but the case handler disagrees
- The school/department and case handler agree that a revised recommendation should not be made but the case would benefit from further consideration by a panel
- The case is too complex to be suitable for a decision at the school/department stage alone.

A panel might also consider an appeal case where the student rejects a revised recommendation issued as a result of their appeal.

Determination for the suitability of a case for referral to a panel is made by the Investigations and Resolution team.

The Academic Appeal Panel will comprise of three members of the [Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Committee](#). No member of the panel will have had any prior involvement in the case. A member of the Investigations and Resolution team will be present throughout proceedings to provide guidance with respect to matters of policy and precedent but they will not be a member of the panel. This individual may act as note taker or may be accompanied by a further member of staff acting as note taker.

The Academic Appeal Panel will base its decisions on the information and evidence submitted by the student and the response provided by the school/department. The panel may request further evidence from the student and/or the school/department, if required. This is a paper-based consideration and neither the student nor the school/department is entitled to attend. The student will be sent a copy of the paperwork to be considered by the panel and invited to highlight any factual inaccuracies in the information provided by the school/department so that this can be brought to the attention of the panel. New evidence/information will not be considered at this stage unless there is compelling evidence that it was not previously available, or it is provided in support of a claim of factual inaccuracy.

The Academic Appeal Panel may:

- i) Reject the appeal and confirm the original decision
- ii) Uphold the appeal and accept the revised recommendation submitted by school/department
- iii) Uphold the appeal and refer the case back to the school/department to reconsider
- iv) Uphold the appeal and substitute another decision, rejecting the revised recommendation submitted by school/department (if applicable)
- v) Refer the case to an Academic Appeal Hearing.

The Academic Appeal Panel cannot change marks or degree classifications.

The Academic Appeal Panel may attach conditions to these decisions, such as the requirement for the student to provide medical evidence. Clear instructions will be provided about the consequences of failing to comply with these conditions.

The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel, reasons for the decision and any findings of fact will be conveyed to the student, normally within five working days of the meeting.

4.1.4 Academic Appeal Hearing

Please read the [Academic Appeal Hearing procedure](#).

An Academic Appeal Hearing acts with the full delegated authority of Senate. It has the power to require members of staff of the university to attend, give evidence, and answer questions.

A case may be referred to a hearing if one or more of the following grounds apply:

- There is a compelling argument that the student's case would be adversely affected by not being able to present their argument in person
- An Academic Appeal Panel is unable to agree on a course of action
- The appeal case concerns a student who has already attended a panel or committee to address issues of professional competence. This is likely to apply to cases concerning a Fitness to Practise Committee, Practice Assessment Panel or Special Cases Committee, for example.

Determination for the suitability of a case for referral to a hearing is made by the Investigations and Resolution team.

The student will receive a written invitation to the hearing from the Investigations and Resolution team at least 10 working days in advance of the hearing. The student will be asked to confirm in writing whether they intend to attend.

The Academic Appeals Hearing panel will comprise of three members. Two of the members will be academic staff members of the [Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Committee](#) and one of these will act as chair. The third member will be a student delegate nominated by the Students' Union. If no student delegate is available, the hearing panel shall instead include a full-time officer from the Students' Union. Where no student delegate or full-time officer is available, the third member of the panel will be a further member of the [Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Committee](#).

For a hearing considering an appeal against the decision of an Academic Appeal Panel or a committee convened to address issues of professional competence, such as a Fitness to Practise Committee, Practice Assessment Panel or Special Cases Committee, the hearing panel will include two additional staff members of the relevant faculty. In the case of fitness to practise, one of the additional members must be a clinically active member of the same professional discipline as the student.

No member of the hearing panel will have had any prior involvement in the case.

The student will be notified of the names of the members of the hearing panel and should notify the Investigations and Resolution team immediately of any conflict of interest so that the membership of the panel can be reviewed. The student should inform the Investigations and Resolution team at least five working days prior to the hearing if they do not wish, or wish to insist, that a student delegate is included in the hearing panel. If the student wishes to insist that a student delegate is included in the hearing panel, this may result in a delay to the hearing taking place while a suitable student delegate is found.

A member of the Investigations and Resolution team will be present throughout proceedings to service the hearing panel and provide guidance with respect to matters of policy and precedent, but they will not be a member of the hearing panel. This individual may act as note taker or may be accompanied by a further member of staff acting as note taker.

The student is entitled to bring a supporter as detailed in section 3.2 of this code. The student must inform the Investigations and Resolution team of the name and status of their supporter at least five working days prior to the hearing. The student may be asked to choose a different supporter if, for example, it is perceived that the chosen supporter may cause a conflict of interest or if their presence may prejudice the meeting.

The school/department will be requested to send a representative to attend the hearing. This representative should have detailed knowledge of the case, the student's academic career and the arrangements for the student's course.

The hearing panel, the student and the school/department representative will all have access to the same evidence.

The hearing panel will base its decisions on the information and evidence submitted. The hearing panel can:

- i) Reject the appeal and confirm the original decision
- ii) Uphold the appeal and accept the revised recommendation submitted by the school/department
- iii) Uphold the appeal and refer the case back to the school/department to reconsider
- iv) Uphold the appeal and substitute another decision, rejecting the revised recommendation submitted by the school/department (if applicable).

Where a hearing panel is making a decision related to a fitness to practise case, the only options available to the panel are i) and iii) above.

The decision taken at the Academic Appeals Hearing, reasons for the decision and any findings of fact will normally be conveyed to the student by the Investigations and Resolution team within five working days of the hearing.

4.1.5 New evidence

In both instances outlined below, the Investigations and Resolution team will determine if new evidence can be accepted for consideration. Students can normally only submit new evidence for consideration on one occasion (either before the appeal outcome or within the 10 working days following the appeal outcome). Multiple submissions of new evidence will not normally be accepted.

New evidence prior to receiving an outcome:

Students are expected to provide all relevant evidence at the point of submitting their appeal; if evidence is provided after submission of their appeal form, they must explain why this evidence was not previously available for it and demonstrate its relevance to the case for it to be considered. Evidence which could have been included in the original appeal will not normally be considered.

If a student has new evidence to provide in support of their appeal, they must do this as soon as possible by emailing academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk.

If the new evidence is accepted for consideration, the Investigations and Resolution team will arrange for the evidence to be provided to those considering the appeal at its current stage. If the new evidence is not accepted, the student will be provided with an explanation of why they have not established that the evidence was not available previously and/or is materially relevant to their case.

New evidence following receipt of an outcome:

A student can submit new evidence which was not previously available up to 10 working days after receiving their appeal outcome. If the student requires an extension to this timeframe, they can request this as detailed in section 4.2 of this code. New evidence must be submitted using the new appeal evidence form, which will support the student to explain:

- The relevance of the new evidence to their case
- Why this evidence was not previously available.

If the new evidence is accepted for consideration, the appeal will return to the school/department stage of the academic appeal process for reconsideration.

If the new evidence is not accepted for consideration, the student will be provided with an explanation of why they have not established that the evidence was not available previously and/or is materially relevant to their case. The student has no further route to request consideration of new evidence within this code but can submit an appeal review request. A new deadline for the submission of a review request will be set by the Investigations and Resolution team in line with the timescales in section 4.2 of this code.

4.1.6 Appeal review request

If a student is dissatisfied with the formal outcome of their appeal, they may be able to request a review of this decision on the grounds detailed in section 2.6 of this code.

New arguments or criteria not included in the original appeal will not be considered as part of a review request. Requests that amount simply to an expression of dissatisfaction with the decision without establishing grounds for review will not be considered. The review exists to assess the reasonableness of the decision made based on the case made by the student in their appeal submission or whether there is any evidence of a procedural irregularity in the handling of the appeal stage.

The request for review should be submitted to the Investigations and Resolution team. The request should be submitted within 10 working days of the student being notified of the outcome of their original application to appeal. Review requests submitted after this period will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances and where there is good reason, supported by evidence, for the late submission.

Only written cases made using a fully completed academic appeal review request form, supported by evidence which establishes one or more of the grounds outlined in section 2.6 of this code, will be accepted. Reviews of decisions made at the initial assessment stage or the school/department response stage will be conducted by a member of the [Academic](#)

[Appeals and Academic Misconduct Committee](#). Reviews against the decision of an Academic Appeal Panel or Academic Appeal Hearing will be conducted by the Director of Registry & Academic Affairs or their nominee.

The review stage will not usually consider the issues afresh or involve further investigation. The reviewer will have access to all documentation considered by the decision-making body and may request further information from relevant parties. The reviewer can:

- i) Close the review request and require reconsideration by the original decision-maker if the outcome letter provides insufficient information for the reviewer to reach a conclusion on the case
- ii) Close the review request and require consideration of the case by an Academic Appeal Panel if the case was dismissed at the initial assessment stage
- iii) Uphold the claim and substitute a decision on behalf of the university
- iv) Reject the claim and issue the student with a completion of procedures letter.

After the internal university processes have been exhausted, students have the opportunity to have their case independently reviewed by the [OIA](#).

4.2 Expected time limits

The OIA Good Practice Framework stipulates that the handling of appeals will normally be completed within 90 calendar days of the submission of the appeal and its acceptance into process. This timeframe requires students to meet any deadlines set by the university. Delays in information or evidence being provided will require this timeframe to be extended. If a student requires an extension to any of the timescales set out in this section, they must request this from the Investigations and Resolution team prior to the deadline by emailing academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk.

Where the table below refers to working days, this means working days at the University of Nottingham which can be checked on the [bank holidays and closure days webpage](#). If a student requires support with calculating the latest date on which their appeal can be submitted, they can email the Investigations and Resolution team at academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk.

	Student	Investigations and Resolution Team	Outcome
Appeal	Appeal should be raised within 30 working days of the decision the student is appealing (right to appeal)	Will acknowledge receipt of appeal within five working days of submission	The outcome of an appeal and any appeal review request will normally be communicated within 90 calendar days of the appeal being received. If this is not possible, the staff member responding to the appeal will provide an explanation for the delay and an alternative

			timescale will be issued to the student.
Appeal review	Appeal review request should be raised within 10 working days of the outcome of the original appeal	Will acknowledge receipt of appeal within five working days of submission	<p>The outcome of an appeal and any appeal review request will normally be communicated within 90 calendar days of the appeal being received. If this is not possible, the staff member responding to the appeal will provide an explanation for the delay and an alternative timescale will be issued to the student.</p> <p>When the appeal review request stage has been completed, the student has completed the university's academic appeals process and can request a completion of procedures letter if they wish to raise their appeal with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.</p>
OIA	Appeal case should be raised with the OIA (who will refer to it as a 'complaint') within 12 months of the date of issue of the Completion of Procedures letter	No direct involvement with student	Variable

If a student fails to proceed within the given deadlines of the academic appeals process, they may not be able to progress through the internal academic appeals mechanisms of the university.

Appeals submitted outside of the timescales stipulated in this code will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances and where there is good reason, supported by evidence, for the late submission.

4.3 Standard of evidence

Independent, reliable evidence is normally required to accompany an academic appeal. Details of the types of evidence often submitted as part of an appeal can be found in section 4.4 of this code.

Evidence submitted as part of an appeal should:

- Where written by appropriately qualified professionals who are independent of the student, be on headed paper and signed and dated by the author. Evidence presented by email may be acceptable if the email has been sent by the author from the official domain name of the author's organisation. Students should note that services, such as medical services or university support services, are unlikely to be able to provide evidence if the student has had no engagement with that service.
- Confirm that the circumstances were witnessed on the relevant date as opposed to being reported retrospectively. Evidence reported by the author as being informed retrospectively about the circumstances will not be acceptable evidence.
- Be in English. It is the student's responsibility to provide supporting documentation, and any translation should be undertaken by an accredited translator (e.g. be a member of the Association of Translation Companies). Any associated costs must be met by the student.

Medical certificates supplied by online doctors will not be accepted.

As part of an appeal, staff can consider evidence supplied by other members of university staff known to the student, such as a personal tutor, a staff member from the Residential Experience team, or a staff member from the Support and Wellbeing team.

The university reserves the right to take such steps as are deemed necessary to verify the evidence submitted, without prior notification. Where the university is unable to authenticate the material to its satisfaction, the evidence may not be accepted. The university reserves the right to request sight of original documents. If there is evidence that a student has fraudulently presented documentation to the university, the matter will usually be referred for consideration under the academic misconduct or disciplinary processes.

4.4 Responsibilities of students when raising an appeal

Appeals

Before submitting an appeal, a student should:

- Check that they have both the right to appeal and grounds for appeal in accordance with this code.
- Discuss the matter with an appropriate person in their school/department, which may resolve the student's concerns or clarify their understanding about how a mark for an assessment was given or how a classification has been calculated, for example.

An appeal must be submitted by completing the academic appeal form which can be accessed through the [appeals webpages](#). If a student needs adjustments to support them to access the university's appeals process, they should email the Investigations and Resolution team at academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk outlining what adjustments would be useful.

When raising an appeal, students must:

- Clearly outline the reasons for their appeal, including details of the outcome they are seeking. Appeals that do not outline a clear rationale will not be accepted for consideration. If the case handler from the Investigations and Resolution team (who carries out the initial triage of appeals cases to confirm they are eligible under this code) believes that a submission is unclear or unnecessarily long, the student will be

asked to resubmit the form in a manner than enables proper consideration of the appeal to take place.

- Gather evidence in support of their appeal, ensuring that they include important dates, times and other details that are needed to assess the eligibility of their appeal. Appeals without relevant evidence will not be accepted for consideration. This could include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - A timeline of events (if they cannot remember the exact dates, the student can provide a rough timeline of events)
 - Reference to relevant policies, procedures and/or regulations
 - Letters/emails
 - Evidence from others, such as independent medical evidence, reports by professionals or witness statements
 - Screenshots
 - The outcome of an investigation under another University of Nottingham process.

- Provide all evidence relevant to their appeal at the point of submitting their academic appeal form. Evidence submitted after the submission of an appeal form will only be accepted under the circumstances outlined in section 4.1.5 of this code. The evidence must meet the standard of evidence outlined in section 4.3 of this code.
- Complete the academic appeal form in full.

Appeals must be submitted as soon as possible and within the timescales set out in section 4.2 of this code.

Review requests

An appeal review request must be submitted by completing the academic appeal review request form which can be accessed through the appeals webpages. If a student needs adjustments to support them to access the university's appeals process, they should email the Investigations and Resolution team at academic-appeals@nottingham.ac.uk outlining what adjustments would be useful.

When raising an appeal review request, students must:

- Identify the ground(s) under which they are submitting the request (as set out in section 2.6 of this code)
- Provide evidence in support of their claim. A student who wishes to provide evidence that was not provided as part of the student's original appeal should not submit this as a review request and should instead follow the procedural steps set out in section 4.1.5 of this code under the heading 'New evidence' and must explain why this evidence was not available at the time of their original appeal.
- Complete the academic appeal review request form in full.

Appeal review requests must be submitted within the timescales set out in section 4.2 of this code. The outcome to the student's original appeal will confirm the date by which they must submit their request for an appeal review.

4.5 Responsibilities of staff responding to appeals

Initial assessment stage

On receipt of an appeal, the Investigations and Resolution team will undertake an initial evaluation to check that the appeal is submitted under the right procedures, within the appropriate deadlines, and in the required format with supporting evidence. The Investigations and Resolution team will administer the appeal and will provide information and support regarding the process to students and staff at all stages.

After the initial assessment of the case, one of the actions listed in section 4.1.1 of this code will be taken by the Investigations and Resolution team.

School/department response

On receipt of an appeal case requiring a school/department response, the receiving individual in the school/department will ensure that consideration of the appeal case is carried out. The consideration may be carried out by any member of staff who has received appeals training.

The school/department should submit their response on a school/department response form, usually within 10 working days, addressing the points in the student's appeal form in full and referencing relevant policies and procedures where applicable. The response will either make a revised recommendation or confirm the original decision. The form will be returned to the Investigations and Resolution team alongside any relevant evidence.

If the appeal is not proceeding to an Academic Appeal Panel or Academic Appeal Hearing, the Investigations and Resolution team will issue the appeal outcome to the student and advise them of further steps available to them, including submitting an appeal review request.

Academic Appeal Panel

If an appeal is being considered by an Academic Appeal Panel, the Investigations and Resolution team will be responsible for arranging for the panel to take place in accordance with section 4.1.3 of this code and will service the panel.

If a member of the [Academic Appeals and Academic Misconduct Committee](#) selected to be a member of the panel has prior knowledge of the case and/or there is a conflict of interest, they should inform the Investigations and Resolution team immediately so that an alternative member of the committee can be identified if required.

The outcome of a panel will be issued to the student by the Investigations and Resolution team, normally within five working days of the meeting.

Academic Appeal Hearing

If an appeal is being considered by an Academic Appeal Hearing, the Investigations and Resolution team will be responsible for arranging for the hearing to take place in accordance with the procedural steps in section 4.1.4 of this code and will service the hearing.

If an individual selected to be a member of the hearing panel has prior knowledge of the case and/or there is a conflict of interest, they should inform the Investigations and

Resolution team immediately so that an alternative hearing panel member can be identified if required.

The school/department representative attending the hearing is responsible for ensuring they have detailed knowledge of the case, the student's academic career and arrangements for the student's course.

The outcome of a hearing will be issued to the student by the Investigations and Resolution team, normally within five working days of the hearing.

Appeal review request

On receipt of an appeal review request, the Investigations and Resolution team will undertake an initial evaluation to check that the review request is submitted under the right procedures, within the appropriate deadlines, and in the required format with supporting evidence. The Investigations and Resolution team will administer the review request and will provide information and support regarding the process to students and staff at all stages. Where a student is requesting a review of a decision made by a member of the Investigations and Resolution team at the initial assessment stage, a different member of the team will conduct the initial assessment of the appeal review request.

After the initial assessment of the review request, one of the following actions will be taken by the Investigations and Resolution team:

- The case will be rejected if it has not met the requirements set out in this code. The Investigations and Resolution team will provide the student with an explanation of which requirements have not been met and they will be advised of further steps available to them.
- The case will be accepted for review and the Investigations and Resolution team will organise for the case to be considered by a reviewer, in line with section 4.1.6 of this code.

On receipt of an appeal review case, the reviewer will proceed to conduct the review. If the reviewer has prior knowledge of the case and/or there is a conflict of interest, they should inform the Investigations and Resolution team immediately, which will organise for an alternative reviewer to consider the case if required.

The reviewer will submit their response to the Investigations and Resolution team. The reviewer can:

- Close the review request and require reconsideration of the original appeal by the original decision maker if the outcome letter provides insufficient information for the reviewer to reach a conclusion on the case
- Close the review request and require consideration of the original appeal case by an Academic Appeal Panel, if the case was dismissed at the initial assessment stage
- Uphold the review request and substitute a decision on behalf of the university
- Reject the review request and require the student to be issued with a completion of procedures letter.

The outcome of a review request will be issued to the student by the Investigations and Resolution team.

5. Internal, statutory or regulatory requirements

5.1 Office of the Independent Adjudicator

As required by the OIA, if the university is unable to resolve an appeal to the student's satisfaction, and there are no further steps available to the student, the Investigations and Resolution team will issue a formal completion of procedures letter within 28 days of the outcome being determined. This provides formal confirmation that the student has exhausted the internal procedure and is required for their case to be considered by the OIA. The OIA operates externally to the university. It will not normally look at a case unless and until all relevant internal procedures have been exhausted. Further information is available from the [OIA](#) website.

5.2 Recording and monitoring of appeals

It is important that appeals are monitored in order to improve the student experience. The Investigations and Resolution team will record and provide reports to indicate the nature of appeals and outcomes. Such reports will:

- Feed into the monitoring and evaluation procedure at various levels: department, school, faculty and university
- Feed directly into appropriate university-wide committees
- Assist in identifying problems and trends across the university
- Form the basis of positive publicity in demonstrating that identified issues have been resolved
- Be made available to the Students' Union.

5.3 Review of this code

This code will be reviewed every two years by the Head of Casework in Registry and Academic Affairs.

6. Related policies, procedures, standards and guidance

- [Policy on Communication with Third Parties](#)
- [Unacceptable Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Student Complaints Code of Practice](#)
- [Academic misconduct policy and procedure](#)