Academic Appeals and Student Complaints

**Frequently Asked Questions**

If you have any queries which are not answered below please email [appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk](mailto:appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk).

Q. **What is the difference between an Academic Appeal and a Student Complaint?**

A. An **Academic Appeal** is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.

A **Student Complaint** is the expression of a specific concern about matters that affect the quality of a student’s learning opportunities.

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**Academic Appeals FAQs**

Q. **Who should I first talk to about an appeal?**

A. You must first raise the academic appeal-related matter informally with the appropriate Module / Course Team or School, as soon as it arises so that it can be responded to and dealt with quickly at a local level.

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Q. **What is the deadline for submitting an appeal?**

A. If the matter cannot be resolved informally at a local level, and if there are valid grounds for appeal, a formal academic appeal must be submitted on an Academic Appeals Form within 20 working days of the publication of results or decision of a Board of Examiners, together with any appropriate supporting evidence.

Q. **What is meant by academic judgement and why am I not permitted to question it?**

A. Boards of Examiners follow University guidelines on the moderation of marking/double marking, and External Examiners ensure that standards are comparable with standards at other Universities. Therefore you may not base an appeal on your belief that your work was worthy of a higher grade than the one awarded.

Q. **Can the Academic Appeals Group or Academic Appeals Review Panel raise my grade?**

A. No. If the Group / Review Panel feel that circumstances existed which may have affected the grade you obtained they may request that the Board of Examiners reconsider its decision. If the Board modifies its decision it may mean that you are given the opportunity to achieve an improved result through repeating the assessment.

Q. **I’ve been asked to supply ‘any appropriate documentary evidence’ along with my Academic Appeal Form, what does this mean?**

A. This is any documentation you have which supports your grounds for appeal which could include copies of email conversations, information provided to you regarding the assessment, medical certification etc.

Q. **I’ve submitted the Academic Appeals Form – what happens next?**

A. The Academic Appeals Group will meet at the earliest opportunity to consider your appeal. A decision will be communicated to you within 5 working days of the meeting.

Q. **I’ve received a response from the Academic Appeals Group who state that there is ‘insufficient evidence to uphold the appeal’ – what do I do?**

A. If you decide to continue with your appeal, and you meet the grounds outlined in the Academic Appeals Procedure to do so, you will need to inform the Director of Governance and Registry Services within 10 working days, in writing, of your intention to proceed to have your case considered further by an Academic Appeals Review Panel. You should ensure that you include any relevant documentary evidence that may help support your case.

Q. **I’ve received a response from the Academic Appeals Group to say that there is not a case for appeal – what do I do?**

A. If the Group does not consider there to be a case for appeal, you may still request that your case is considered further by an Academic Appeals Review Panel, providing you meet the grounds outlined in the Academic Appeals Procedure for this. If you decide to continue with your appeal, despite the advice of the Group, you will need to inform the Director of Governance and Registry Services, in writing, of your intention to proceed within 10 working days. You should ensure that you include any relevant documentary evidence that may help support your case.

Q. **My appeal has been ‘rejected as invalid’ by the Academic Appeals Group – what does that mean?**

A. Your appeal will be rejected if it is made against the academic judgement of the Board of Examiners, or is made outside the published deadlines, or for other good reason identified by the Group. If this happens, you may submit a request for review to the University Secretary & Registrar, providing you meet the grounds outlined in the Academic Appeals Procedure for this. If, following that review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you will be advised that you may apply for a review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, if your case is eligible under its Rules.

Q. **Why is it taking so long for my appeal to be heard by the Academic Appeals Review Panel?**

A. An Academic Appeals Review Panel will need to be established and will consist of:

* + Chair (identified from amongst the senior members of staff of the University);
  + Two academic staff who are not members of the relevant Board of Examiners, one of whom should normally be a member of Academic Board;
  + One student member nominated by the Students’ Union, who has no connection with the student or the academic programme involved, and has not been involved in advising the student
  + President of the Students’ Union (non-voting)
  + Director of Governance and Registry Services (or nominee) (non-voting Secretary);

Both the appellant and the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners and/or other appropriate members of academic staff will normally be invited to present at the hearing at the same time.

Due to the variety of people who need to be involved in the appeal hearing there can be some delay in sourcing a suitable time for the Panel to be held. We will of course convene a Panel meeting as soon as possible.

Q. **Can I bring a friend or relative with me when I see the Academic Appeals Review Panel?**

A. Students have the right to be accompanied by, supported or advised at any stage of the procedure by another member of the University community (which is a person who is a currently enrolled student of the University, or a member of staff of the University, or a member of staff or elected officer of the University of Gloucestershire’s Students’ Union). If a student is under 18 years of age, they must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or other responsible adult.

If you are being accompanied by a member of the University community at the Academic Appeals Review Panel, you will need to confirm the name and status of the person accompanying you, in writing, to the Director of Governance and Registry Services at [appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk](mailto:appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk) ideally no less than four working days before the hearing, and keep them informed of any changes.

Q. **My appeal was upheld – what happens now?**

A. The Board of Examiners will be asked to reconsider its decision at the recommendation of either the Academic Appeals Group or Academic Appeals Review Panel. You will then be notified in writing of the decision of the Board of Examiners. If the Board of Examiners declines to modify its decision, the Vice Chancellor (or nominee) may arrange for specific action to be taken to amend the decision of the Board and make alternative arrangements for the assessment.

Q. **How long will my appeal take?**

A. The University will endeavour to process academic appeals as quickly as possible, and to complete the processing of a formal appeal and any associated review within 90 calendar days. Within that 90 calendar day timeframe, students must meet any University deadlines for submission of documentation and attending meetings. There may occasionally be circumstances when the timeframe needs to be extended for different stages of the procedure for good reason, particularly if the appeal is complex, extensive, or was submitted at a time when key staff are away from the University. If this is the case, the student will be notified and regularly informed of progress.

**Student Complaints FAQs**

Q. **Who should I direct my complaint to?**

A. Initially, the complaint should be raised informally at a local level with the appropriate Module Tutor of Academic Course Leader (for academic-related complaints) or an appropriate member of staff in the relevant Course Team or School, or Professional Services Department (for non-academic complaints). If you are still unsure as to whom to approach please contact [appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk](mailto:appealsandcomplaints@glos.ac.uk).

Q. **When can I make a complaint?**

A. Students should raise issues of complaint as soon as they occur and try to resolve the matter informally. If the matter is not resolved and you wish to pursue a formal complaint, you must raise this **no later than three months** after you have completed the year of study in which the complaint arose or within three months of the date of withdrawal, or beginning of an approved leave of absence from your programme of study.

Q. **Will I be disadvantaged by the fact that I have complained?**

A. No. It is a basic principle of the Complaints Procedure that a complainant will not be disadvantaged.

Q. **How long will my complaint take?**

A. The University is committed to dealing with complaints as quickly as possible, and to complete the processing of a formal complaint and any associated review within 90 calendar days.