



APPEAL GUIDANCE

A handy guide to writing an appeal.



Background information

The University then have **30 calendar days** to provide you with an outcome.

I hope that this information is helpful, but please do let me know if you have any questions. Please do reach out to the university's [Wellbeing Services](#) for support with any impact that this is having on your mental and emotional wellbeing and please do take care.

The deadline for your Appeal will be 10 days following receipt of your final transcript.
11:59pm UK time on the 10th working day after your result was given.

Valid grounds for appeal

Every student has the right to make an appeal, but they will only be successful if they meet one of three specific 'grounds'

(a) Material circumstances affecting your performance of which a Board of Examiners or the Board of the Faculty (or the Dean of Faculty acting on its behalf) had not been aware before reaching its decision, only if you can present reasonable grounds why such circumstances had not been presented to the Board in advance of its meeting (see 5.2):

An example might be where there is evidence that the student was ill, but was in hospital, or had confirmed severe mental health difficulties which meant that they were unable to prepare a mitigation application at the appropriate time (please see the University's Handbook in relation to Mitigation). It is not sufficient to say that the student was unaware of the procedure for submitting a mitigation request, or that they chose not to do so at the time.

If you make an appeal on the basis of circumstances that affected your performance, it is very important that you explain and evidence how your circumstances affected your performance, and why you were unable to raise them at the time through the Mitigation Procedure or by interrupting your study. **You will also need to get evidence to corroborate this – for example, a letter from a doctor or counsellor which explains your circumstances and their effect on your assessment and your engagement with the relevant University processes.**

(b) The procedural irregularities occurred in parts of the assessment procedures, or in reaching another academic decision, which has disadvantaged the student.

Many of the requests we receive for appeals advice are based on a student disagreeing with the markers' view of their work. Unfortunately for students in this position, disagreeing with a marker's judgment is not in itself a valid ground for appeal. If the marking is harsh or feels unfair that is different to incorrect and could be considered as academic judgement. It may be beneficial to look at some of the University procedure and policy and see if your experience directly contradicts the expected procedures and refer to that in your if appropriate.

TQA Manual Marking
TQA Manual Feedback

What a successful appeal can mean: The outcome of successful appeals depends on the individual case and the reason for the appeal, so there is no simple answer to this question. By way of examples:

If a student can show that there was a problem with the marking of their work, they may be granted a re-mark as the result of a successful appeal. In this situation, the marks could be increased, decreased or remain the same.

If you believe that your ILP has not been followed it could be considered a procedural irregularity. It may be beneficial to look at some of the University procedure and policy and see if your experience directly contradicts the expected procedures and refer to that in your appeal if appropriate.

4 - Assessing students with disabilities - Teaching Quality Assurance Manual - University of Exeter

2 - Setting and submission of assessments - Teaching Quality Assurance Manual - University of Exeter

(c) That prejudice or of bias on the part of one or more Examiners and/or markers took place

If you believe that there has been bias against you, then you will need to evidence that you can prove **what the bias** is or show why you had good reason to perceive prejudice or bias and then the **negative impact** of this.

The idea that your marks are wrong isn't sufficient for this – that is considered a matter of 'academic judgment' where only the view of an academic (i.e. your markers) will suffice. It can be tricky to evidence this as perceiving that someone has a bias and then that they have acted upon this to your disadvantage.

The TQA Chapter 5 (5.3.1) of marking states that anonymous marking is the most effective means of ensuring that marking is free from prejudice. Was your work anonymously marked?

Evidencing your case

It's important to include evidence of your grounds for appeal and the University will not seek out evidence on your behalf. This means that it is up to you to clearly explain and evidence your case. If you're not sure about the types of evidence that might be helpful in your case, we can discuss this with you.

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/policies/calendar/part1/otherregs/appeals/>

Structuring your Appeal:

As a starting point, we advise you to think about the following:

- Is it clear how your case meets one of the appeal grounds? Have you presented an argument that explicitly shows how this is the case?
- Would anyone reading your appeal understand it, and agree that you have shown how your circumstances meet one of the appeal grounds?

- Is your timeline of events clear? If there could be any uncertainty, consider including a timeline that explains all relevant events and evidence.
- Is there strong evidence to support your appeal? Is that evidence from an appropriate and reliable source? Have you clearly explained what the evidence is, and why it is relevant?
- If you don't have good evidence, is there a way you could get this?
- How might the person making a decision think about your case? If you can anticipate any reasons why your appeal might not convince someone that you have valid grounds, is there a way you can improve it to address these concerns?
- Have you considered the tone of your appeal? We tend to find that in cases based on procedural irregularities or bias, it is important to avoid writing in a tone that comes across as frustrated or angry. Instead, we find that successful appeals usually adopt a moderate, respectful tone basing an argument on evidenced, objective facts rather than emotive accusations.

How to submit an appeal.

You can submit an appeal application, via the [Student Records System \(SRS\)](#) using your normal IT sign in details. You can also access this from the 'More' tab in the [MyExeter](#) app.

More details of how to submit an appeal, including a step-by-step guide, can be found in the University's student guide here: [Students' Guide \(Appeals\)](#)