



Academic Appeals and Complaints Regulations 2026/27

Publication:	External (public)
Date approved:	17 June 2026
Approving body:	Senate
Date of next review:	June 2027
Review frequency:	Annually
Policy/Regulation Owner:	Jon Sharp, <i>Academic Registrar</i>

1. Overview and Purpose

1.1 The Academic Appeals Regulations are intended to allow the formal raising of concerns by UEA students undertaking taught or research programmes regarding their academic results or circumstances relating to them.

1.2 The Academic Complaints Regulations are intended to allow the formal raising of concerns by UEA students undertaking taught or research courses regarding academic matters not relating to academic results.

1.3 Student concerns are taken seriously at UEA and these Regulations are designed to enable their effective consideration and timely remedies as appropriate. If a more appropriate route exists to consider the concern, the student will be redirected to the relevant alternative route.

1.4 There are three parts to Academic Appeals and Complaints: an informal stage; a formal Stage One and a formal Stage Two.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to any current UEA Student. Students on validated or accredited programmes at partner institutions wishing to submit an appeal or complaint should use the relevant Regulations at their place of study.

2.2 Adherence to approved policy and regulations is fundamental to the effective operation of the university. This policy has been developed in alignment with sector best practice to promote consistency, accountability, and compliance with relevant standards. Observing the policy ensures that decisions and actions are informed, equitable, and aligned with institutional values.

2.3 Sector best practice for these Regulations are the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's "Good Practice Framework" <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/handling-complaints-and...>

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Academic Result	The formal judgement by authorised examiners of a student's performance in assessed work.
Board of Examiners	For taught provision, a group of internal and external examiners appointed by the University to assess and confirm students' academic outcomes. In relation to PGR students, references to

	'Board of Examiners' normally means the internal and external examiner of the thesis appointed by the University.
'Late' in reference to submission of Exceptional Circumstances (for Post Graduate Research students)	The consideration of late submission of exceptional circumstances for non-taught elements of research degrees will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor UEA Doctoral College.
Natural Justice (the duty of fairness)	A category of appeal or complaint that can be used only where a student can demonstrate a compelling and exceptional reason that does not fit into any other reason listed. To be considered, the appeal or complaint must include independent evidence showing the following apply: • An unpreventable and severe event occurred which directly impacted the fairness of the assessment or decision. • The situation could not have been reasonably accommodated or resolved through standard university processes. • A serious injustice would occur if the case were not reviewed.
Panel	A group of at least 3 Academic members of staff who meet to consider Academic Appeals and Complaints. For example: A Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel (FACP) or Multi-Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel (MFAC)
Procedural irregularity	When University procedures are not properly followed or errors occur that may affect an outcome.
UEA Student	An individual currently or recently (within the last 30 days) registered at UEA, including those based at affiliated research institutes.
Upheld	A decision that sufficient grounds for an appeal or complaint have been met, though this does not guarantee a specific outcome.
Work	An item submitted for a summative assessment, in any format, either to a deadline or at an event.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Students who submit an Academic Appeal or Complaint under these Regulations will not be unfavourably treated for having done so. Any student who believes that they have been less favourably treated as a result should use the Report + Support process.

4.2 The University expects that students will not engage in frivolous or malicious appeals or complaints. If an Academic Appeal or Complaint is found to have been brought with mischievous or malicious intent this may be grounds for disciplinary action against the student.

4.3 All personal information will be collected, stored and processed by the University as described in the Privacy Notice for Applicants and Students at <https://www.uea.ac.uk/about/university-information/statutory-legal-policies/data-protection/pn-students>

4.4 Membership of Panels is limited to University employees holding a substantive academic role.

4.4.1 In order to provide continuity of considerations across an Academic Year, Panel members will serve from 1 October to 30 September. Outgoing Panel members will retain authority to consider cases submitted before 30 September 30.

4.4.2 Nominations for Panel Membership will be arranged on an annual basis, with a five year maximum term.

5. The Process of Academic Appeal or Complaint

5.1 Students are encouraged to seek an informal resolution before beginning the formal Appeal or Complaint process. Informal explorations of possible ways in which a matter may be resolved will not prejudice the consideration of a later formal submission.

5.1.1 The University recognizes that an informal approach is most likely to be of use in respect of Complaints rather than Appeals against academic outcomes.

5.1.2 The University recognizes that an informal approach cannot rectify late or further consideration of Exceptional Circumstances, and a formal appeal will always be required.

5.2 Challenging marks allocated has specific requirements which are not wholly within this Regulation:

5.2.1 Marks allocated to work which has not yet been marked independently by two markers can be challenged by students either via the re-marking process or as part of an Academic Appeal.

5.2.2 Work which has been marked independently by two markers cannot be subject to an Academic Appeal unless the Appeal relates to circumstances affecting the submission rather than concerns about marking.

5.2.3 Work which has been re-marked via the re-marking policy cannot be subject to an Academic Appeal unless the Appeal relates to concerns about the conduct of the re-mark process.

5.3 Students should make every attempt to seek an informal resolution concerning a provisional academic result before the Board of Examiners meets to confirm their result. This is in students' best interests as an early decision can then be made.

5.4 Students may submit a Formal Stage One Appeal against any of the following:

5.4.1 A Degree result confirmed by a Final Board of Examiners.

5.4.2 Marks published on the Student Record (Evision) for any work except as excluded by 5.2.2 above.

5.4.3 A required withdrawal from a course or the award of a lower-level qualification (known as an "Exit award") or the requirement to transfer to an alternate course.

5.4.4 A formal penalty applied in respect of plagiarism and/or collusion, except where the student has been referred to Senate Student Discipline Committee (SSDC) regarding the alleged plagiarism and/ or collusion, as the SSDC has a specific right of appeal.

5.4.5 A refusal to extend the due date for an assessment or confirm a deferred event attempt resulting in either the application of a late Penalty Mark or a referral to Reassessment or a Compensated Pass.

5.4.6 A failure to be transferred to a PhD from an MPhil or to an EdD from an MEd.

5.4.7 A failure to apply Reasonable Adjustments or Assessment Adjustments to the Student Record or where Reasonable or Assessment Adjustments have not been correctly applied that has impacted an academic outcome.

5.5 Only those outcomes detailed at 5.4 above can be cited as the reason for an Academic Appeal and any appeal based on other aspects not covered by 5.4 above shall be declared Not Eligible for further consideration unless they can be considered as an Academic Complaint.

5.6 Academic Complaints may address any aspect of a student's academic experience about which they are dissatisfied except for the aspects detailed at 5.4.

5.7 Students must submit a completed Stage One Academic Appeal Form or a completed Stage One Academic Complaint Form to the Academic Registry to start the formal process.

5.7.1 The Academic Registry publish the link to the electronic form alongside guidance to students on MyUEA.

5.7.2 Students should be guided by 5.4 to 5.6 above in selecting the appropriate form.

5.8 The deadline for submission of a form and evidence is 15 working days.

5.8.1 For Academic Appeals the 15 days starts from the date on which the student was formally notified of the outcome against which they are appealing or, where informal resolution has been sought, the date of the last communication to the student regarding the outcome of the informal stage (this may include, but is not limited to, meetings, emails, and letters) and the student is responsible for providing the proof of this date.

5.8.2 For Academic Complaints the 15 days starts from the date on which the attempt to resolve matters informally was concluded. This date shall be the date of the last communication to the student regarding the outcome of the informal stage (this may include, but is not limited to, meetings, emails, and letters) and the student is responsible for providing the proof of this date.

5.8.3 Academic Appeals or Complaints submitted after the deadline with good reason for the delay may still be considered. The student should submit evidence and an explanation of the reason for the delay as part of their Appeal or Complaint submission.

5.8.4 The decision by the Academic Registrar or their nominee as to whether a late submission should be accepted shall be final and not subject to appeal.

5.8.5 Failing to open, read or understand a notification of an outcome may not be considered a reasonable explanation for any delay, unless there are other mitigating reasons for this failure.

5.9 Students must submit all relevant evidence and third-party releases with their form or provide a list with reasons to explain why their evidence is pending.

5.9.1 Students must submit evidence in pdf format and must not provide links, videos, sound files or requests for the Academic Registry to solicit evidence on their behalf.

5.9.2 For Academic Appeals relating to 5.4.5 above, the evidence provided must be different to any already submitted for an Exceptional Circumstances Request, or a reasonable explanation provided for why it should be reconsidered.

5.10 The Academic Registry may suspend the Stage One Academic Appeal or Complaint where appropriate, pending clarification by a student that they have tried to resolve the matter they are concerned about informally before beginning the formal stage of the process.

5.10.1 The student's School or the School providing any teaching referenced or marking any work may also request suspension of the process to investigate the matter before beginning the formal stage of the process.

5.10.2 Where the interval between the notification of an academic result and a meeting of the Board of Examiners is less than 15 working days, consideration of an Academic Appeal shall be suspended until after the relevant Board of Examiners has met and their decision has been communicated.

5.11 A student may decide to withdraw an Academic Appeal or Complaint at any time prior to its consideration by the Panel. They must notify the Academic Registry of this themselves in writing. Students who wish to reverse the outcome of a Stage 1 Academic Appeal or Complaint once they are notified of this can only do this via the Stage 2 process.

5.12 The Head of School or their nominee shall be notified of the substance of the Academic Appeal or Complaint when this will be considered by a Panel and may choose, within the limits of their authority, to reverse the action or decision giving rise to the Academic Appeal or Complaint in advance of the Panel meeting to consider the case.

5.12.1 When this occurs it shall be regarded as an informal resolution of the Academic Appeal or Complaint after a confirmation by the student that they are now content that the Academic Appeal or Complaint has been satisfactorily addressed.

5.12.2 When they are limited in their authority to reverse the action or decision, the Head of School or their Deputy may be asked instead to investigate the substance of the Academic Appeal or Complaint and notify the Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel of the outcome of their investigation.

5.13 Until such time as the Academic Appeal or Complaint has been resolved the student situation should continue as if they had not submitted an appeal or complaint. For example, students appealing against a failing mark should continue to engage with any reassessment opportunities they are required to undertake. In instances where a student has been withdrawn, they will retain this status until such time as the outcome of any Academic Appeal or Complaint results in their reinstatement.

5.14 When an appeal relates to a previously rejected exceptional circumstance request due to lack of suitable evidence, and the appeal is submitted within required timescales and with evidence as required by the Exceptional Circumstances Regulations, a member of Academic Registry shall consider the appeal without further reference to the Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel. This is called Delegated Authority.

5.14.1 The evidence with an Academic Appeal must normally be different to the evidence previously considered with an Exceptional Circumstances Request, as described in the Exceptional Circumstances Regulations. Where the evidence is still not conclusive the appeal will be considered by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel.

5.14.2 Where an Academic Appeal relates to a new submission of exceptional circumstances with evidence, that was not previously considered or rejected, a member of Academic Registry shall consider the appeal using delegated authority if the student has made a reasonable explanation for failing to submit an Exceptional Circumstances Request before the deadline.

5.14.3 Where the reason for not submitting the Exceptional Circumstances Request before the deadline is not conclusive but evidence has been submitted the appeal will be considered by the Exceptional Circumstances Panel.

5.15 Stage One Academic Appeals and Complaints that are not resolved by Delegated Authority (either by the Academic Registry or the Exceptional Circumstances Panel) and submitted for a reason covered by 5.4 above shall be considered by a Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel (FACP), which shall meet with a frequency that ensures that the time between submission and consideration by a panel does not exceed 20 working days for any taught student case, unless a suspension is required as described in 5.10 above.

5.15.1 PGR FACP meetings are arranged when required and shall meet within 30 working days of submission of the Stage One Academic Appeal or Complaint unless a suspension is required as described in 5.10 above.

5.16 There shall be two Panels in each Faculty, one being responsible for UG and PGT cases and the other being responsible for PGR cases. Each Panel shall be chaired by a senior trained member of academic staff in the Faculty concerned. The Panel shall comprise up to two members of academic staff from the Faculty, one member of staff from a Panel in another Faculty, plus the Chair and an Academic Registry Secretary.

5.16.1 The Academic Registrar will advise on procedural matters in relation to particularly complex cases.

5.16.2 The requirement for a Panel per Faculty will be relaxed during periods where low volumes are expected, at the direction of the Academic Registrar. During such periods there shall be one Panel to consider all UG and PGT cases and one Panel to consider all PGR cases. The UG and PGT Panel shall comprise one member of academic staff from each Faculty (rotating Chair) and a member of Academic Registry staff to provide secretarial support. This is known as a Multi Faculty Appeals and Complaints Panel (MFAC).

5.17 The Academic Registry will provide the Panel with the documentation submitted by the student at Stage One, a summary of the case including the views of the School(s) and an indication as to whether the submission appears to meet one of the necessary grounds in order for it to be considered.

5.18 The Academic Registry will acknowledge receipt of all Academic Appeal and Complaint forms. Once a decision has been made to refer under 5.15 above, the Academic Registry will

write to the student, informing the student of the date of the next meeting of the Panel at which their case will be considered, subject to any suspension required as described in Section 5.10 above. This email will also inform the student of the date by which they should normally expect to be advised of the Panel's decision.

5.19 In normal circumstances the student shall be advised of the outcome of their Stage One Academic Appeal or Complaint within 10 working days of the date of the Panel meeting. Where the complexity of the case or the unavoidable absence of the Panel prevents this the student shall be notified of the delay.

5.20 A Panel will uphold an Academic Appeal where any of the following are found to have happened:

5.20.1 Correct procedure was not followed which undermined the validity of the academic result.

5.20.2 Prejudice and/or bias affected the academic result.

5.20.3 The student's performance was adversely affected by exceptional circumstances not previously submitted.

5.20.4 Exceptional circumstances were not fully and properly considered.

5.20.5 Significant changes were made to a course without being properly communicated and/or were not properly considered, which undermined the validity of the academic result.

5.20.6 The teaching, supervision or research training provided was insufficient which undermined the validity of the academic result.

5.20.7 The learning support provided was unsatisfactory or inappropriate which undermined the validity of the academic result.

5.20.8 Natural Justice dictates that the Appeal be upheld.

5.21 A Panel will uphold an Academic Complaint where any of the following are found to have happened:

5.21.1 Correct procedures were not followed.

5.21.2 The student experienced prejudice and/or bias.

5.21.3 Significant changes were made to a course without being properly communicated and/or were not properly considered.

5.21.4 The teaching, supervision or research training provided was insufficient.

5.21.5 The learning support provided was unsatisfactory or inappropriate.

5.21.6 Natural Justice dictates that the Complaint be upheld.

5.22 The Panel shall approve the following actions in respect of upheld Academic Appeals. The specific remedy determined by the Panel shall depend on each case:

5.22.1 Reconvene a Board of Examiners to reconsider the academic decision/outcome. The reconvened Board should have different internal members from the original Board. The Board should reconvene as soon as practical and the Secretary to the reconvened Board shall advise both the student and the Secretary of the Panel of the outcome.

5.22.2 Recommend to Senate that it instructs the original Board to award a specified classification.

5.22.3 Require the correction of procedural irregularity.

5.22.4 Set aside a penalty applied in relation to work alleged to have been plagiarised or in respect of which there is alleged collusion unless the case has been referred to the SSDC.

5.22.5 Require a Plagiarism Officer, not previously involved in the case, to investigate the case again in full and determine the level of any plagiarism and/ or collusion.

5.22.6 Grant retrospective approval of extension for late submitted work, or a delayed assessment, delayed reassessment or deferred event.

5.22.7 For PGR: Permit a student a further period of supervised study and/or submit a revised thesis within a period set by the Panel.

5.22.8 For PGR: Instruct a new set of internal and external examiners to examine a thesis.

5.22.9 For PGR: Permit the student a further upgrade attempt with a new transfer panel.

5.22.10 Recommend a concessional remedy to be approved by the relevant Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor as appropriate. Where Academic Registry hold Delegated Authority to approve the suggested concessional remedy, the Panel may recommend approval.

5.23 The possible remedies to an upheld Academic Complaint will, by the nature of Complaints, be too individual to summarise here.

5.23.1 The remedy shall be determined by the Panel.

5.23.2 The remedy will not involve any adjustment to academic outcomes since academic outcomes must be addressed through the Academic Appeals route.

5.23.3 The Panel may agree compensatory payments to be made to students in relation to upheld Complaints up to a limit of £500. If this limit is an insufficient remedy the Chair of the relevant Panel should seek advice from the relevant Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor who will exercise the powers they hold in relation to Stage Two cases in this regard.

5.24 Where a concession against the Award Regulations would be needed to allow the proposed remedy to apply, the Academic Registry will seek advice from the relevant Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor as appropriate on behalf of the Panel.

5.25 In all cases the Academic Registry shall email the student with the outcome of the case in accordance with 5.19 above and not wait for the implementation of the remedy approved.

5.25.1 The student shall be advised with their outcome that a Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint can only be submitted if the student believes that correct procedures were not followed at Stage One (for example, evidence was not fully and properly considered) by the Panel.

5.25.2 The submission of further information in relation to the previous Stage One Academic Appeal (eg the provision of additional evidence) or other procedures not followed by the student at Stage One do not merit a Stage Two Academic Appeal unless accompanied by a reasonable explanation of how 5.25.1 also applies.

5.25.3 The student shall be advised with their outcome that if they do not believe that they are able to pursue a Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint on the basis of 5.25.1 above, they may treat the Stage One outcome as a Completion of Procedures notification and, if they wish, exercise their entitlement to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

5.26 A student must submit a completed Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint Form with any supporting documentation to the Academic Registry within 15 working days of the email being sent as at 5.25. The student may include a reasonable explanation with evidence for any delay and 5.8.3 to 5.8.5 will apply.

5.27 A student may decide to withdraw a Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint at any time prior to its consideration by the Academic Registrar or their nominee and the relevant Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

5.28 Until such time as the Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint has been resolved the student situation should continue as per 5.13 above.

5.29 The Academic Registrar or their nominee will check that the Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint rests on a claim of procedural irregularity which shall include claims that evidence was not fully or properly considered, within 5 working days of submission.

5.29.1 Where this is not found the Stage Two submission will not be accepted for further consideration, and the student will be advised by email that the submission is not eligible for consideration as a Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint.

5.29.2 Where the Stage Two submission makes a claim of procedural irregularity at Stage One this will be investigated by the Academic Registrar or their nominee.

5.29.3 Where the Academic Registrar or their nominee is satisfied that there is evidence of procedural irregularity at Stage One the student will be advised that their Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint has been upheld.

5.29.4 Where the Academic Registrar or their nominee is not satisfied that there is evidence of procedural irregularity at Stage One, the case shall also be reviewed by the relevant Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor as appropriate.

5.30 In normal circumstances the student shall be advised of the outcome of their Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint within 20 working days of the date of receipt by the Academic Registry. Where the complexity of the case prevents this the student shall be notified of the delay.

5.31 Where a Stage Two Academic Appeal or Complaint is upheld:

5.31.1 It may be necessary for a Panel to consider the case again in accordance with correct procedures as an extraordinary review. The outcome of this review will conclude the University's formal procedures; the subsequent outcome letter will advise the student of their entitlement to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

5.31.2 Where the procedural irregularity giving rise to the Stage Two Academic Appeal being upheld relates to a failure by a Board of Examiners to follow the requirements and/ or recommendations of the Panel at Stage One fully and properly the Chair of the relevant Panel shall be advised that there is no need for a further consideration by the Panel and that the matter will be referred back to the Board of Examiners. This further consideration will conclude the formal procedures; the subsequent outcome letter will advise the student of their entitlement to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

5.32 Where there is no evidence that correct procedures have not been followed the Academic Appeal or Complaint shall be rejected and there shall be no further right of Appeal or Complaint within the University.

5.32.1 The outcome letter will constitute the Completion of Procedures advising the student of their entitlement to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator except in the case of Qualified Teacher Status for students commencing 2024/25 onwards.

5.32.2 For students commencing their study on PGCE programmes from academic year 2024/25 to 2025/26 and only where an academic appeal or complaint relates to the Qualified Teacher Status element of the programme accredited by the University of Worcester, there is a further right to appeal or complain to the University of Worcester at Stage Two of their Student Complaints Procedure. Where this is applicable, further details will be provided by Academic Registry.

6. Compliance and Monitoring

6.1 There will be an annual Meeting of Panel Members, Academic Registry Managers and other interested parties to review the application of these Regulations.

6.2 A Community of Practice will be maintained throughout the year by the Academic Registry to review the application of these Regulations between the annual meetings.

6.3 There will be an Annual Report to Learning and Teaching Committee to summarise Academic Appeals and Complaints over the previous year:

6.3.1 The Annual Report will provide aggregated data on the number, frequency and outcomes of Academic Appeals and Complaints at Stage One and Stage Two by School and Faculty.

6.3.2 The Annual Report will provide aggregated data on the reasons for Academic Appeals by School and Faculty, for the identification of themes and consideration of impact on Student Experience.

6.3.3 The Annual Report will not contain any individual identifiable student data.

6.3.4 The Annual Report will provide anonymized data aggregated by available demographic and equality monitoring categories.

7. Related Documents

This section intentionally left blank.

8. Revision History

Version number	Approval date	Approval mechanism	Details of change
1.0	17/06/26	Senate	Assimilation to new document structure for Regulations Change to Academic Registry processing from Learning and Teaching Service and PGR Service Implementation of previously approved changes (via Chairs Action) Definition of Natural Justice added, definition of Annual Meeting and Annual Reporting added, clarification of evidence requirements added, clarification of Stage Two processes added.