



UHI Shetland, UHI

# Further Education Academic Appeals Policy

## QA 002 PO UHI SP

Lead Officer (Post):	Principal
Responsible Office/ Department:	SMT
Responsible Committee:	Quality Improvement Committee (QIC)
Review Officer (Post):	Depute Principal
Date policy approved:	01/08/2021
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	June 2023
Date policy due for review:	01/06/2026 (or earlier if required)
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	24/02/2023
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request

## Policy Summary

Overview	This policy, together with the associated Academic Appeals Procedures, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by UHI Shetland, where there are grounds to do so.
Purpose	The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (e.g. a decision by a Progression Board).
Scope	This policy applies to all Further Education courses (normally up to and including SCQF Level 6)
Consultation	The policy was developed by a group of practitioners made up from across the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership. All relevant staff and students will be notified.
Implementation and Monitoring	Colleges will be responsible for local implementation of the policy. The policy is part of the business-as-usual function of the college.
Risk Implications	Failure to adopt a strong policy and follow the procedures would undermine the student experience and the academic reputation of the College.
Link with Strategy	How is this policy linked to University strategy?
Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment: 24/02/2023 – No negative impact.
	Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy, together with the associated Further Education Academic Appeals Procedure, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by UHI Shetland, where there are grounds to do so.
- 1.2 The policy aims to ensure appropriate, fair and consistent treatment of all parties involved in any further education academic appeal across the partnership.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Academic Appeal:** a procedure through which students may in certain circumstances ask for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress or award.
- 2.2 **Progression Board:** a panel of staff from the College who consider and determine student awards and progression to a more advanced stage.
- 2.3 **Awarding Body:** an organisation that designs, develops, delivers and awards the recognition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) of an individual following an assessment and quality assurance process.

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (e.g. a decision by a Progression Board).
- 3.2 The procedure allows the student to raise an appeal at an informal level and, if the outcome of this is not satisfactory, to use the formal procedure.

The internal formal Academic Appeal Procedure should be followed before escalation to external Awarding Body appeals processes. Students will be signposted to relevant external Awarding Body appeal processes at the start of their programme of study.

- 3.3 External appeals procedures vary, depending on the type of qualification for which the appeal is being made and the awarding body. The overriding principle is that all appeals will be treated fairly and objectively.
- 3.4 Without prejudice to the outcome of an appeal, a student may continue to attend classes and make use of the facilities of the College whilst their appeal is being heard.
- 3.5 Students who have completed their programme, who have grounds to appeal an award decision or programme progression board, will be unable to receive their award until the matter has been fully resolved.
- 3.6 The timescales set out in the Procedures must be followed. Students and staff should note where there may be variations between awarding bodies.
- 3.7 All students are to be made aware of their entitlement to make an appeal and should not be discriminated against from doing so owing to a protected characteristic as described in the Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to students enrolled on courses normally up to and including SCQF Level 6 (see Section 4.2 for variations to this criteria). Academic appeals relating to National and Higher qualifications must follow the SQA Results Service process, as detailed on the SQA website.
- 4.2 There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses for the purposes of the UHI Partnership. This policy applies to these students.
- 4.3 **Grounds for Appeal**
- Appeals against an assessment decision will normally only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:
- 4.3.1 That a student's performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors. The student must have been unable to, or have a valid reason not to, divulge the information to their lecturer prior to assessment. In the case of a Progression Board, the information must have been unavailable at the time the determination was made. In these cases, the appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence to the Depute Principal (see Appeals Procedure).
- 4.3.2 Evidence of College academic assessment administrative error or that an assessment was not conducted in accordance with the College's specific assessment policies/procedures.
- 4.3.3 That evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

## 5. Exceptions

- 5.1 This policy does not apply to Higher Education students, e.g. normally those students studying courses at SCQF Level 7 and above (see Section 4.2 for variations to this). These students should refer to the UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations.
- 5.2 Appeals that question the academic judgement of a member of staff or an academic assessment body will not be considered.
- 5.3 Students undertaking non-regulated qualifications (NQs), have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with the academic partner. External awarding bodies will not accept internal assessment appeals.
- 5.4 Appeals will not normally be permitted from third parties on behalf of a student.
- 5.5 SQA Post-results Services for National Qualifications and other external assessments. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.
- 5.6 Exceptional Circumstances Considerations. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.

## 6. Notification

- 6.1 All staff members will be notified of changes to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures through the normal channels.
- 6.2 Teaching staff and staff advising students should have a detailed knowledge of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures.

- 6.3 Any changes to awarding body regulations will be reflected in the annual review process of this policy and associated procedures.
- 6.4 Students will be made aware of the policy within four weeks of commencing their course.
- 6.5 The policy will be publicly available on the College's website.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 Boards of Management are responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is followed. Boards of Management are also responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.
- 7.2 Principals / Senior Management Teams are responsible for operational compliance with the policy set by the Board of Management and making recommendations to the Board about updates to the policy. Principals / Senior Management Teams are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for relevant staff.
- 7.3 The Further Education Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group is responsible for overseeing periodic updates to the Policy and Procedures.
- 7.4 Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff participate in training and follow the policy in their day-to-day role.
- 7.5 All relevant staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures.

## 8. Legislative Framework

- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulations](#)

## 9. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- Academic Standards and Quality Regulations
- Further Education Academic Appeals Procedure
- Shetland UHI Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity
- Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Student Conduct Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Support to Study Guidelines
- Learner Support Policy and Procedures
- Progression Board Guidance

## 10. Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0	01/08/21			FE Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group

1	June 23	Academic Board	Branding Responsible committee name Update to Related Policies	FE Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group
2				
3				