

## Higher Education Academic Appeals Code of Practice

### Review

Formal Review Cycle	Annual		
Latest Formal Review (date)	May 2024	Next Formal Review Due (date)	June 2025
Policy Owner	Associate Principal Quality, Teaching and Assessment		
Policy Author	Head of HE Academic Standards and Quality		

### Approvals

Board of Corp Y/N	Y	Committee	CQSE	Date Board approved	02.07.24
ELT Y/N	Y	ELT date approved	17 May 2024	Additional committee	HE Board

### Publication

Website Y/N	Y	Unify Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Other	
-------------	---	-----------	---	-----------------	---	-------	--

### Change History

Version	Date Reviewed/ Revised	Description of Change	Reviewed by	Approved by
1.0	24 May 2024- reviewed	New Academic Appeals Code of Practice for HE provision	HE Board	

# Higher Education Academic Appeals Code of Practice

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Practice (CoP) is a CoP of f City of Sunderland College, trading as Education Partnership North East (which includes Sunderland College, Hartlepool Sixth Form College and Northumberland College). These colleges will be referred to as “the College” throughout this document.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 The Code applies to all students on all credit bearing Higher Education provision at the College including Higher Apprenticeships.
- 2.2 For students registered on provision awarded by University partners, the programme handbook will outline the process to be followed  
Further detail can be accessed at:
  - University of Hull - [academic-appeals \(hull.ac.uk\)](http://academic-appeals (hull.ac.uk))
  - University of Cumbria - [Appendix 5 \(cumbria.ac.uk\)](http://Appendix 5 (cumbria.ac.uk))
- 2.3 An academic appeal is the request by a student for a review of decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progress, assessment and awards.
- 2.4 Complaints about College provision are covered by a separate Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy.
- 2.5 The Policy has been developed with reference to the principles of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)'s [Good Practice Framework – Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals](http://Good Practice Framework – Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals) and the QAA [UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Concerns, Complaints and Appeals](http://UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Concerns, Complaints and Appeals)

## 3 Grounds for Appeal

- 3.1 A student can appeal on one or more of the following grounds:
  - 3.1.1 A procedural irregularity in the assessment process which would have resulted in a different outcome if they had not occurred.
  - 3.1.2 Bias or perception of bias on the part of one of the examiners or members of the Programme Board/Board of Examiners.
  - 3.1.3 Circumstances which affected the student which the Programme Board/Board of Examiners was not aware of at the point of initial decision making.
- 3.2 The following areas are not grounds for an appeal:
  - 3.2.1 Challenging academic judgement, i.e. the disagreement on decisions on the quality of work and marks/grades awarded.
  - 3.2.2 Where the student disagrees with the outcome of the consideration of their mitigating circumstances application.

#### **4 Informal Stage – Early resolution**

- 4.1 The first stage in any academic appeal should be informal local resolution, which must include a face-to-face discussion with the student and the Programme Leader (or Curriculum Manager/Head of area where appropriate).
- 4.2 The outcomes of the informal stage should be communicated in a face-to-face meeting with the student.
- 4.3 Where local early resolution has not been possible a student may then submit a formal academic appeal.

#### **5 Stage 1 - Investigation of an Academic Appeal**

- 5.1 A student wishing to submit an appeal must submit the Academic Appeal Form with appropriate supporting evidence to [quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk](mailto:quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk) within 15 working days of their notification of the outcomes of the Programme Board/Board of Examiners.
- 5.2 Appeals submitted after this time will not normally be considered unless the student can demonstrate exceptional circumstances to why the appeal was not submitted within the normal timescales.
- 5.3 The appeal will be acknowledged by the Quality Office and progress of the application tracked. Updates will be sent to the student at each stage of the process.
- 5.4 On receipt of a Higher Education Academic Appeal the Head of HE Academic Standards and Quality or nominee will undertake an investigation into the claims which may include contact with the student, academic staff, or member of the Programme Board/Board of Examiners as appropriate.
- 5.5 A report on the outcomes of the investigation will be produced within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal.
- 5.6 In cases where there is clear evidence to support the Academic Appeal the student will be notified in writing with the proposed resolution.
- 5.7 In cases where there is no clear evidence to support the Academic Appeal the student will be notified in writing outlining to the student the opportunity to appeal this decision.

#### **6 Stage 2 – Review Stage**

- 6.1 A student may appeal the decision of the outcome of their Stage 1 investigation which must be within 10 days of receipt of the written notification. A student should submit their appeal to [quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk](mailto:quality@educationpartnershipne.ac.uk) with appropriate evidence to support their appeal.
- 6.2 An Academic Appeals sub-group of the HE Board will be established to consider the appeal. The group will be Chaired by a suitably qualified and experienced senior leader. Membership will include the Associate Principal Teaching, Learning and Quality and an Associate Principal / Faculty Director from outside the subject area of the student.
- 6.3 The outcomes of the sub-group consideration will be provided to the student within 10 working days with proposed resolutions if the appeal is upheld.

#### **7 Conclusion of College Internal Procedures**

- 7.1 On conclusion of the College's Academic Appeals process the student will be provided with a Completion of Procedures letter advising that they may submit an appeal to the

Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if they are unsatisfied with the outcome. This process must be undertaken within twelve months of the date of the letter.

7.2 For students registered on University of Hull and Pearson programmes, on conclusion of the College’s Academic Appeals process the student may submit an appeal to the University to follow their Academic Appeals process. For University of Hull programmes students must follow their process as noted in their programme handbook.

## 8 Privacy and confidentiality

8.1 All Academic Appeals received by the College will be treated confidentially and only information disclosed to those members of staff who are directly involved in the consideration of the appeals.

8.2 All Academic Appeals will be investigated by staff experienced in higher education who have not been involved in the teaching or assessment of the student.

## 9. Associated Documents

- Concerns, Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Code of Practice: Mitigating Circumstances

## 10. Policy Monitoring and Review

10.1 The HE Education Board will receive on an annual basis a summary report of:

- The number and type of cases considered at each stage of the process and the outcome of each by Faculty.
- The number of appeals submitted.
- The number of appeals upheld.
- Analysis of appeals by Protected Characteristic.

10.2 The HE Board will be submitted to ELT for annual monitoring.

## 11.0 Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Have you sought consultation on this policy?</b>		Consultation has taken place with Programme Leaders and the HE Board.		
<b>Details:</b>				
<b>Could a particular group be affected (negatively or positively)?</b>	<b>Impact Y/N</b>	<b>Description of Impact</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Mitigation/Justification</b>
<b>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010</b>				
Age	N			
Disability	N			
Gender Reassignment	N			
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N			

Pregnancy and maternity	N			
Race	N			
Religion or belief	N			
Sex	N			
Sexual Orientation	N			
<b>Additional characteristics to consider</b>				
Young Persons in Care & Care Leavers	N			
Young Carers & Care Givers	N			
Young Parents	N			
Youth Offenders	N			
Those Receiving Free School Meals	N			
<b>If there is no impact, please explain:</b>				