

Grade Appeal Policy

Academic Year 2020-21

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1. What does this Policy cover?

1.1 Process

This Grade Appeal Policy ensures that all UAL Approved Centres and students are given the opportunity to have a fair and effective system for handling grade appeals. This policy indicates what is considered grounds for a grade appeal, how it can be applied for, what to expect, and how to request review of that grade appeal should you not be happy with the outcome. **This policy only applies for the academic year 2020-21 and applies to all UAL Category B regulated qualifications that are subject to Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG).**

UAL Awarding Body has worked closely with UK qualification regulators and centres to apply the following process to provide a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG):

- centres objectively review assessment evidence generated by students and assign a Teacher Assessed Grade
- centres complete justification forms per student and a cohort form that confirms the justification for the grade and the evidence they used
- centres provide the information to UAL External Quality Assurers (EQAs) who then select a representative sample of students to ensure that the grades provided by the centre are objective, accurate and based on valid and authentic evidence
- grades are reviewed against national benchmarks
- EQA submits a report to UAL
- Chief Examiners present the results by qualification to the UAL Board of Examiners for scrutiny
- results are confirmed by the Board of Examiners
- results are released by UAL

Despite this rigorous quality assurance process, some students may feel that their results do not reflect their ability and that there may have been an error with their result, in which case they can follow the process set out in this document to appeal their grade.

1.2 Who can submit a grade appeal?

Only UAL Approved Centres can submit grade appeals on behalf of eligible students. Students (or parents/carers) must lodge appeal requests with their centre. You can lodge an appeal for a Category B qualification, via your centre, if you are:

- a student enrolled on a current UAL Awarding Body qualification in academic year 2020-21
- a parent or carer of a student under the age of 18 (or 25 for SEND) enrolled on a current UAL Awarding Body qualification in academic year 2020-21. However, in these circumstances UAL Awarding Body will conduct check to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, and will require written consent of the student
- an approved centre delivering UAL Awarding Body qualification for a student enrolled on a current UAL Awarding Body qualification in academic year 2020-21

1.3 Grounds for requesting a grade appeal

A student can request a centre to review their grade on the basis that they believe:

- there has been a procedural error
- there has been an administrative error
- there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement

When a student requests a review of their grade from a centre, it is important that they clearly outline the basis for their appeal. This should focus on whether:

- there are concerns that the centre has made an admin error in determining the Teacher Assessed Grade
- there are concerns that there was an error in the way the centre followed or applied its procedure for determining the Teacher Assessed Grade
- the centre did not make a reasonable judgement when deciding which evidence to use to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade, or that the centre did not make a reasonable judgement about the grade based on the evidence gathered

Important note: an appeal outcome may result in a higher or lower grade, or there may be no change.

There are no separate grounds for appeal on the basis of bias and discrimination. If a student is concerned that the decision on their grade has been affected by bias or discrimination they should appeal on the basis that there has been an error in the determination of the grade, giving the reasons why they believe the grade is not an accurate reflection of the standard of their work. However, any concerns about wrongdoing or evidence of malpractice and maladministration can be emailed to complaints.awarding@arts.ac.uk.

Important note: UAL's Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process embeds measures to prevent malpractice and maladministration including a requirement for centres to verify that at least two tutors have agreed each and every grading decision. Further guidance can be found [here](#).

2. Procedure

2.1 Step 1: Student submits appeal to the centre

All student grade appeals must be directed to UAL Approved Centres for review. Students need to contact their centre directly and not UAL.

Students can only appeal on the basis of the categories set out in section 1.3 of this document. Regardless of the basis of the appeal, students must appeal directly to their centre.

2.2 Step 2: Centre Review of student appeal

When a Centre receives an appeal, they are required to review all relevant records and check as a minimum that:

- the student has provided a statement to support the grounds and basis of the appeal
- the marksheet submitted to UAL Awarding Body matches the intended grade by checking:
 - Individual teacher assessed grade form
 - Group teacher assessed grade form
 - Internal verification documents
 - Head of Centre declaration
 - Any other internal tracking documents
- the justification and assessment evidence support the grade awarded
- any Reasonable Adjustment has been applied correctly
- any Special Consideration has been applied correctly

Once a centre review has taken place and regardless of the outcome, a centre must complete the Grade Appeal form and submit this along with supporting evidence to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team, via the email address gradeappeals.awarding@arts.ac.uk by **27 August 2021**. Appeals without completed forms and evidence will not be accepted. Grade Appeal Forms will be made directly available to UAL Approved Centres.

Any grade appeals received **after 27 August** may not be reviewed. It is important that a student contacts their centre as soon as possible following the results release.

2.3 Step 3: UAL Review and Recommendation

The UAL Awarding Body Quality Assurance and Enhancement team evaluate the grounds of the grade appeal and the evidence provided from the centre. The review consists of a procedural check to ensure that the centre has followed UAL's Teacher Assessed Grade requirement.

Important note: UAL Awarding Body does not grade student work. UAL Awarding Body quality assure the grade justification and evidence provided by the centre when determining a Teacher Assessed Grade.

The Quality Assurance and Enhancement team will review all grade appeal received by the 27 August 2021 and aim to finalise a response by the 30 September 2021. In some cases where a grade appeal is complex in nature it may exceed this deadline, in which case we would notify the centre of any delay.

Important Note: Having submitted a grade appeal, UAL Awarding Body will not be able to provide updates on progress on a regular basis. Updates will be provided once an outcome has been determined.

2.4 Step 4: Appeal Panel Decision

Following the review outlined in Step 3, the Senior Quality Assurance & Enhancement Officer, or nominee, will present recommendations and evidence of valid appeals to the Appeal Panel. The Appeal Panel will have independent external representation and will scrutinise the appeals evidence and confirm a decision.

There are three possible outcomes:

- the grade appeal is upheld - on the basis that the grounds and evidence justify the grade appeal, and the grade is amended (this could be amended up or down) following a recommendation from the Academic Standards team, on what is considered appropriate.
- the grade appeal is not upheld – on the basis that the grounds and evidence do not justify the grade appeal and the grade remains unchanged.
- the grade appeal decision cannot be reached and is referred back to Step 3 for further review

Once a decision has been reached the outcome of the grade appeal will be communicated by email within **2** working days, directly to centre who will then be responsible for communicating the outcome to the student. If a grade appeal decision cannot be reached by the panel the centre will be informed of any delay.

3. Grade appeal decision review

If a student is unhappy with the decision of the Appeals Panel, the student can submit a grade appeal decision review.

Step 1: Submitting a grade appeal decision review request

A request for a grade appeal decision review, must be made within **10** working days of receiving the outcome of the grade appeal and can only be submitted on the following grounds:

- procedures through which the original issue was investigated were not followed
- the outcome is considered unreasonable
- new material evidence is produced

In order to request a review of a grade appeal decision, the Grade Appeal Review form must be completed and can be requested, by the student or parent or carer of a student under the age of 18 (or 25 for SEND), by

contacting the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team at gradeappeals.awarding@arts.ac.uk. The form must then be submitted to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement team via email at gradeappeals.awarding@arts.ac.uk.

Within 5 working days of receiving the Grade Appeal Form the appellant will be notified if the grounds for appeal have been met.

Important note: grade appeal decision requests that do not state the grounds and are not supported by evidence, will be rejected.

Step 2: Review

The request will be reviewed by the Senior Quality Assurance & Enhancement Officer, or nominee, who will make a recommendation to the Associate Dean of Academic Standards, or nominee, and Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement, or nominee, for a decision. Decision making staff are independent from the original appeal and are not part of the Appeals Panel.

The following will be scrutinised as part of an Appeal Decision Review:

- whether UAL Awarding body followed its procedures during the grade appeal
- whether the outcome was reasonable
- has any new evidence been provided?

Step 3: Decision

The final decision will be communicated by a Quality Assurance and Enhancement Officer within 10 working days or receipt of the grade appeal decision review. The following outcomes are possible:

- the grade is unchanged
- the grade is changed

The outcome of the grade appeal decision review will be provided by email to the student within **10** working days of receipt of the grade appeal review request.

Important note: This decision is final and binding. No further correspondence will be entered in to following this decision.

4. Other related information

4.1 Confidentiality and GDPR

UAL Awarding Body is committed to protecting your privacy and being transparent about how your data is processed. At all times UAL Awarding Body aims to respect any personal information shared by or received from others, and to keep it safe. The information provided on this form will be used in accordance with the UAL Approved Centre Agreement.

Personal information, including special category data, is often required by UAL Awarding Body and stored in order to ensure reasonable adjustments are adequately processed and students are not disadvantaged. Data is stored by UAL Awarding Body in accordance with the UAL Awarding Body Transparency Notice.

The Transparency Notice, sometimes referred to as a 'Privacy Notice', sets out data processing practices and your rights and options regarding the ways in which your personal information is used and collected. If you have a query about the way in which UAL Awarding Body processes your data, contact information is provided at the end of the Transparency Notice.

4.2 Equality

UAL Awarding Body believe that equality and diversity is integral to our inclusive curriculum, our creative innovation, our global reputation and the richness of UAL Awarding Body. UAL Awarding Body is committed to addressing inequality and celebrating diversity in order to sustain an accessible and inclusive environment for all students, centres, governors, visitors, community and commercial partners, with whom we engage. For more information about accessibility please review our accessibility statement [here](#).

4.3 Where to go next

Those who have followed and exhausted the UAL Awarding Body Grade Appeal policy and are still dissatisfied with the outcome may contact the appropriate qualification regulator listed below:

- [The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation \(Ofqual\)](#)
- [Council for Curriculum Examination and Assessment \(CCEA\)](#)
- [Qualifications Wales \(QW\)](#)

4.4 Related documents

The following are UAL Awarding Body policies which relate to this Grade Appeal Policy:

- [Malpractice and Maladministration policy](#)
- [Complaints and Concerns Policy](#)
- [UAL Awarding Body Transparency Notice](#)
- [UAL Accessibility Statement](#)