

Appeal Procedure in Respect of Decisions by the Recognition Panel

Grounds for Appeal

1. Any applicant to the Recognition Panel is entitled to submit an appeal on the grounds that: there were defects or irregularities in the conduct of assessment or review of their application where there is a prima facie case that such defects, irregularities or advice could have had an adverse effect on the outcome.
2. Appeals which question the academic judgement of the Recognition Panel shall not be admissible.

Submitting an Appeal

3. Any appeal shall be sent to the Academic Office on the Unit's Appeal Form (**Appendix E2.25**) normally not later than 21 days after the official notification of judgement. Simple notice of appeal given in writing by an applicant within the above deadline shall not be deemed to constitute an appeal and shall not be accepted.
4. Appeals received after 21 days will be deemed to be out of time and will not be considered unless the appellant has provided independent evidence to show compelling reasons as to why the appeal was not submitted within the appropriate timeframe.
5. The University will not consider an appeal submitted more than 12 months after the relevant Recognition Panel meeting.
6. The Academic Office shall acknowledge receipt of an appeal normally within 7 days. On receipt of an appeal, a Case Officer shall be appointed.

Investigation

7. The appropriate officer shall ensure that the facts are verified and upon completion of his/her enquiries, shall submit a written report to the Academic Office setting out the circumstances of the case and confirming his/her findings.
8. The case officer shall be empowered to take one of the following decisions:
 - to reject the appeal and uphold the original judgement of the Recognition Panel;
 - to uphold the appeal and to refer the case to a special Recognition Panel for review of the initial judgement.
9. The Case Officer shall undertake an initial evaluation to check that the appeal:
 - is submitted under the correct procedures;
 - falls within the grounds upon which an appeal can be made;
 - is submitted within any deadline;
 - is in the required format.
10. Following the initial evaluation, the Case Officer will make a determination as to whether there is a clear case for appeal.
11. If there is not a case for appeal or the appeal is out of time, the Case Officer will disallow the appeal, normally within 28 days of its receipt. The appellant shall be informed that the appeal has been disallowed by means of an Appeal Outcome Letter.
12. If there is a case for appeal, then the case proceeds to investigation. The Case Officer will ensure that the facts of the case are verified and, where appropriate, may request clarification from relevant individuals.

13. If following the investigation, the Case Officer determines that the original judgement was inappropriate due to defects or irregularities in the conduct of assessment or review of the application which have had an adverse effect on the final judgement and outcome, then the Academic Office shall arrange for a special Recognition Panel to reconsider the judgement.
14. The appellant shall be informed that the case has been referred back to a special Recognition Panel and that he/she will be informed of the decision of the special Recognition Panel in due course. The special Recognition Panel, consisting of a Chair, an external representative and representation from the original Recognition Panel shall consider the report of the case officer, including recommendations or advice where appropriate to the circumstances of the case, together with all supporting documentation. The special Recognition Panel shall normally meet within 14 days of receipt of the case officer's report. The subsequent decision of the special Recognition Panel shall be sent to the Academic Office.
15. The special Recognition Panel decision may or may not alter the appellant's overall judgement outcome. The appellant shall be informed of the decision of the special Recognition Panel by means of an Appeal Outcome letter (which will normally take the form of an electronic communication) normally within 14 days of the meeting of the special Recognition Panel. There shall be no right of appeal under the University's internal procedures against the decision of a special Recognition Panel.
16. If the special Recognition Panel decides that the appellant has qualified for recognition, the appellant shall be notified of this and the award recorded with the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

Reporting on appeals

17. The Academic Office shall report annually to Advance HE on the operation of these procedures in a form that maintains confidentiality and enables the Unit to reflect upon lessons learnt from applicant appeals and disseminate advice accordingly.