

DUSA ADVICE

HOW TO WRITE AN ACADEMIC APPEAL

If you want to apply for a reconsideration of a grade for any module, exam or degree classification, you should consider the following points when writing your appeal letter. If you have any further questions once reading this guide please contact advice@dusa.co.uk



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before writing your appeal, please ensure that you have read the University's Academic Appeals Regulations and Procedural Notes - these can be found at the link below. Make sure you read the ones that are for your degree level (undergraduate or postgraduate) as there are different processes for the different levels.

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/governance/dca/appeals/>

DUSA can provide you with advice on how to prepare your appeal, can read drafts of your appeal and provide support through the process. If you would like assistance from DUSA please contact us via:

advice@dusa.co.uk

Please consider the deadline for your appeal when coming to DUSA for help - the earlier you come to us the more help we will be able to provide.



GROUNDS OF APPEAL, AS DESCRIBED IN THE ACADEMIC APPEALS REGULATIONS

Regulation 6(3) for Undergraduate

Regulation 7(2) for Postgraduate

(a) extenuating circumstances affecting the candidate's performance and of which the examiners were unaware when their decision was taken.

(b) procedural irregularities (including administrative error) in the conduct of a written or oral examination of such a nature as to give rise to reasonable doubt whether the examiners would have reached the same conclusion had they not occurred.

(c) prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners

You can only appeal using one or more of the above grounds. Please note that you cannot appeal the academic judgement of the examiner.

USEFUL LINKS

www.dundee.ac.uk/pgla/dca/appeals

www.dundee.ac.uk/pgla/dca/appeals/ug-appeals-regulations

www.spsso.org.uk

WHAT SHOULD MY APPEAL INCLUDE?

Who, What, Where, Why, When...

Be clear in your descriptions of the events, making sure that you refer back to the appeal ground/s you are relying on. It is suggested that you include a time line of events in order to make sure it is clear when the events happened in relation to the submission date/exam date of the grade/s your are appealing against. It needs to be clear exactly how these events affected your performance!

Remember to give examples.

Don't just say "my father's illness affected me". Explain to the reader in what way this affected you and your performance.

Example:

"I had trouble sleeping due to anxiety. This affected my ability to study as I could not concentrate due to lack of sleep"

"I had to travel home twice as often as usual to provide support to my younger siblings. This meant that I had to cut down my hours at work and I began to suffer financially. I was not able to afford to eat proper meals and this began to have an effect on my own health"

You may have to refer to issues which are upsetting or make you angry. It can be hard therefore not to include emotions into the letter, but you must avoid this where possible. At all times in your mind think back to this phrase:

"Write factually about the emotions, rather than writing emotionally about the facts"

Do not use emotive language, for example:

"I am absolutely furious that ..."

or

"I think it is disgraceful that..."

Your appeal may benefit from any supporting statements which are relevant to your case. Remember that without evidence your appeal is unlikely to be successful. These could include:

- A medical note from your GP
- Your academic transcript showing that you normally perform to a high level
- Supporting letter from family/ flatmates/placement provider to confirm the issues you were facing
- Phrases/paragraphs from your Course Handbook that show you suffered a procedural irregularity
- Copies of correspondence between you and members of staff

DESIRED OUTCOME

You should clearly state what it is you want from the appeal - this could be a grade reconsidered or the chance to submit the assignment/sit the exam again, but as the first attempt so it is not capped at a D3.

An outline of any action on you have taken so far like meeting with your markers or approaching the Academic Skills Centre for help should also be included.

Oral Representation

You should indicate if you wish to make an oral representation at a future hearing - for most cases this will not be given to you automatically.

Details of any representation you have accessed

You must list details of any help you have accessed with the writing of your appeal - for example DUSA, Student Services etc.

WHO TO SEND YOUR APPEAL TO

Academic Appeal (Undergraduate)

Regulation 6(2)

In the first instance the student shall seek to resolve the appeal with the **Dean of School**. Only if such resolution is unsuccessful shall referral be made to the Secretary of the University as required in Regulation 7(1).

Regulation 7(1)

Every appeal shall be in writing and shall be lodged with the **Secretary of the University** within four weeks of the date on which the candidate received intimation of the decision against which the appeal is directed.

Academic Appeal (Postgraduate)

Regulation 7(1)(iv)

In the first instance the student shall seek to resolve the appeal with the **Dean of School**. Only if such resolution is unsuccessful shall referral be made to the Secretary of the University as required in Regulation 8.

Regulation 8

Every appeal shall be in writing and shall be lodged with the **Secretary of the University** within four weeks of the date on which the candidate received intimation of the decision against which the appeal is directed.

In simple terms this means that the appeal is first sent to the dean of the school. If it is rejected it is then sent to Neale Laker at n.laker@dundee.ac.uk