



OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Policies and Procedures

Code: **QA235**

Title: Appeal of examination results

Date: November 2024

1. Purpose

To advise students of the procedures for the appeal of examination results. An appeal can only be submitted on the publication of official ratified examination results.

Examination Results may only be appealed after the complete current Academic Year (Semesters I & II and Overall result) official results are released online.

- Student appeals must be submitted within 7 calendar days of official results released in spring, summer, autumn and winter.

2. Procedures of appeal of examination results

The University shall arrange a Consultation Day, to fall, in so far as possible, within seven calendar days of issue of examination results, on which students may discuss their examination results with all Schools. (This arrangement to be in addition to any other arrangements which Schools may make.)

Students are advised to be aware of the difference between an appeal application (QA235) and a recheck application (QA091) and that both processes are independent of one another. There is no requirement for a student to apply for a formal recheck before making an exam appeal application or vice versa.

3. Appeal of examination results

3.1 Grounds for Appeal

An appeal of an examination result shall be considered either under Ground A or Ground B as set out below:

- 3.1.1 **Ground A:** if there is evidence of substantive irregularity in the conduct of the examination and/or the assessment process, or where a student presents evidence to support an assertion that the mark awarded was incorrect.
- 3.1.2 **Ground B:** If there are mitigating circumstances that impacted on the student's exam or assessment performance of which the Examinations Board were not aware when making its decision; or, the Examination Board was aware of the circumstances but, however, was not aware of the impact of those circumstances on the student's exam or assessment performance.

If the mitigating circumstances had not been made known previously to the Dean (or nominee such as a lecturer, Programme Director, College or

School Office or Student Services) of the College as required at 3.2.1 (iii) below, the appeal must include a supported explanation for the non-disclosure.

Where medical evidence is being relied upon, appropriate certification by an independent Medical Practitioner (excluding any Medical Practitioner who is a family relation of the student) should be attached.

Mitigating circumstances must be pertinent to the time of an exam or assessment, and comprise (including but not limited to below):

1. Involvement in an accident or serious incident
2. An acute illness, injury, or trauma
3. Deterioration in an ongoing medical or health condition, or adverse change in a fluctuating condition
4. Life-threatening illness or death of a person with whom you have a close relationship
5. Significant adverse personal or family circumstances
6. Serious or abrupt upheaval, such as a house fire, burglary, or eviction; or upheaval with respect to geopolitical change related to period(s) of study abroad or international study trip(s). Arrival at the exam late due to travel arrangements is not deemed to be mitigating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to ensure arrangements are made to arrive in time for the scheduled exam.
7. A victim of crime or threatening behaviour.
8. Other significant and relevant exceptional factors for which there is evidence that academic performance has been impaired.

3.2 Appeal Procedures:

3.2.1 Prerequisites for an Appeal - an appeal can only be considered where:

- i. A student considering an appeal has in the first instance reviewed their exam/assessment performance with the relevant Lecturer/Examiner and/or an appropriate alternate nominated by the Head of the relevant School. If a student is unable to do so in advance of the exam appeal application deadline, the student must include documentation with the exam appeal application outlining the student's attempts to do so *e.g.* email correspondence with the lecturer or evidence as to why it was not possible to do so.
- ii. In a case where a student is appealing under Ground B (see also 3.2.1 (iii) below), they have made every effort to discuss their circumstances with, and get feedback from, their lecturer/examiner and to avail themselves of opportunities such as Consultation Day. If a student is unable to do so in advance of the exam appeal application deadline, the student must include documentation with the exam appeal application outlining the student's attempts to do so *e.g.* email correspondence with the lecturer or evidence as to why it was not possible to do so.
- iii. In a case where a student is appealing under Ground B, the student has made known, in writing, to the appropriate Dean (or nominee

such as a lecturer, Programme Director, College or School Office or Student Services), as soon as possible after an examination or assessment and, unless lacking the capacity to do so, no later than two weeks thereafter, details of any mitigating circumstances (medical, personal, or other relevant) which, to a significant extent, may have adversely affected their performance in the examination or assessment and, when required, to provide evidence thereof.

- iv. The appeal application has been submitted within the deadlines for submission; late applications will not be accepted in any circumstances. For details of relevant dates see www.universityofgalway.ie/exams
- v. When the relevant appeal fee has been paid. For details of fees payable see www.universityofgalway.ie/exams

3.2.2 Appeal Submission Process

- i. A student who wishes to appeal an examination result must do so in writing, setting out the grounds for the appeal in full to the Examinations Office (on behalf of the Deputy President and Registrar). The specific deadlines will be as indicated on the Examinations Office website (www.universitygalway.ie/exams). Appeal application deadlines are strictly applied, and late applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. Students must use their University of Galway student email in all communications in respect of appeals.
- ii. An Examination Appeal Form (available online via the Examinations Office website www.universityofgalway.ie/exams) must be completed and submitted with the student's statement of appeal. There shall be a fee for an examination appeal (details available from the Examinations Office website www.universityofgalway.ie/exams). Students must lodge all documentation as part of the online exam appeal application; additional documents will not be accepted thereafter. If a student is awaiting documentation which cannot be provided by the appeal application deadline, the student is advised to state the detail of the outstanding documentation in their appeal statement. Students should note that it is not possible to submit any additional documents once the application has been submitted by the deadline.
- iii. The appeals process is a written process. All relevant information should be submitted by all parties in writing and uploaded via the on-line appeal submission facility (www.universityofgalway.ie/exams/results/appeals). Students are advised that the Examinations Appeals Committee does not invite anyone to discuss the appeal in person.
- iv. Upon receipt of a written appeal, the Examinations Office (on behalf of the Deputy President and Registrar) shall forward a copy of the documentation to the Chair of the Examination Appeals Committee (EAC), the Dean (or nominee such as a lecturer, Programme Director,

College or School Office or Student Services) of the relevant College and the relevant Head(s) of School.

In the case of Denominated Degree programmes, the Dean (or nominee such as a lecturer, Programme Director, College or School Office or Student Services) shall inform the Programme Director that an appeal has been lodged. They shall be requested to respond within the timeframe of five working days as set out in the EAC guidelines to Schools and Disciplines.

On receipt of the response from the relevant College and/or School the Examinations office will forward an electronic copy of the response to the student at their university email account. The student will have two working days to comment or make observations in relation to any matter included in the College/School response. Such comment or observations will form part of their appeal application. Note, in accordance with 3.2.2 (ii) above, the student is not permitted to include any additional material or documents not previously submitted with their appeal application.

3.2.3 Pending the outcome of an appeal, students are advised as follows:

- i. An appeal may not necessarily be successful.
- ii. Students should avail themselves of any opportunity to represent for examination, on the understanding that a re-sitting of an examination would not prejudice their appeal in any way.
- iii. The conferring of a degree, where relevant, may be deferred, pending the final outcome of the appeal.
- iv. Without prejudice, the student may, where appropriate and in accordance with the regulations for advancement as set out in the relevant programme/module regulations, advance to the next stage of their programme if students are passing overall before submission of an exam appeal.
- v. Students may submit only one appeal in connection with a specific examination in any given exam session.
- vi. The decision of the EAC is final. Following the decision, a student may request to view all information provided to the EAC concerning their appeal application and a copy of the relevant minute of the EAC meeting in relation to their appeal.
- vii. The appeal application fee for a module will be refunded if the appeal is upheld for the module or if the student withdraws the application before the appeal case is discussed by the EAC. If multiple modules are appealed by student in one application only the module/s that are upheld will be refunded.
- viii. The appeal application may be considered withdrawn if a change of mark for the module is returned by the College Office to the Examinations Office following the appeal application.

- 3.2.4 The Chairperson of the Committee shall inform the appellant, the Dean (or nominee such as a lecturer, Programme Director, College or School Office or Student Services) of the relevant College, the Examinations Office and the relevant Head of School, in writing, of the outcome of the appeal.
- 3.2.5 Where the EAC upholds an appeal they shall recommend one of the following as an appropriate remedy:
- i. That the student's examination/assessment is reassessed;
 - ii. In the case of first sittings only, instruct that the student be granted a retrospective deferral for that sitting;
 - iii. In exceptional circumstances any further course of action as deemed appropriate by the EAC, having regard to the policies as adopted by the University, and in no instance to include a revision of the student's exam/assessment grade other than as set out at 3.2.6 below.
- 3.2.6 If as the outcome of the appeal, a reassessment of the exam/assessment mark is considered appropriate, the EAC will, in accordance with their findings, instruct the appropriate School to arrange for such reassessment. On receipt of the outcome of the reassessment the EAC will consider the revised mark submitted by the School, if any, and, as appropriate, instruct the Examinations Office to make the necessary arrangements to have the result amended.
- 3.2.7 The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and will be communicated to the student where possible within five working days of the Committee meeting. After an appeal decision has been made a student cannot solicit the Appeals Committee Chair, members of the Committee or Examinations Office staff member.
- 3.2.8 If a student is dissatisfied with the University's handling of an appeal or decision in relation to an appeal, they may submit a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman.
- 3.2.9 Penalties arising from confirmed breaches of academic integrity should be appealed under QA220 Academic Integrity Policy and not QA235 Appeal of Examination Results.

3.3 Examination Appeals Committee (EAC) Operating Procedures

- 3.3.1 The EAC makes determinations on appeals of examination and module assessment results in accordance with the relevant statutes and policies of the University of Galway.
- 3.3.2 The composition of the EAC shall be in accordance with the relevant statutes and policies of University of Galway. The Deans of College, as advised by Academic Council, nominate a standing panel of academic staff for a four- year term. In addition, a nominee of the Students' Union is a member of the EAC. The presence of four members of the panel will constitute a quorum.

The Committee may seek legal advice from the University's solicitor, or an external legal advisor, and otherwise as it deems appropriate. The Deputy President and Registrar shall not be a member of the Committee.

- 3.3.3 The Chairperson of the Committee shall be appointed by the President, following consultation with the Deputy President and Registrar. The Chairperson shall be a full professor of the University.
- 3.3.4 The President of the University may, on the request of the Chairperson of the Committee, appoint additional alternate members, provided that such appointments shall lapse unless ratified by the next meeting of the Academic Council.
- 3.3.5 The EAC considers each appeal under the **Grounds** on which it is based, and the evidence presented to it in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The EAC may, if deemed necessary, seek additional information or documentation to that initially submitted from the Head(s) of School or College, or other relevant parties. It may consult with internal examiner(s) and may, if deemed necessary, consult with external examiner(s) or any other appropriate person. Evidence so considered must be relevant to the performance of the student in the examination/assessment that is the subject of the appeal.
- 3.3.6 The EAC shall determine the appeal by giving a decision as to whether the appeal is upheld or otherwise. The decision of the EAC will be based, where necessary, on a simple majority of those present and voting. The member of the Committee chairing the meeting shall have a casting and deliberate vote. A minute of the appeal decision will be entered in the record of the meeting as the formal record of the appeal decision.
- 3.3.7 The deliberations of the EAC and any information obtained in the course of such deliberations are confidential.
- 3.3.8 The EAC shall furnish an annual report to the Academic Council.
- 3.3.9 Any proposed amendments to the EAC operational procedures will be subject to the approval of the Secretary for Governance & Academic Affairs.

4. **Retention of Appeal Documentation**

All documentation in relation to appeals is retained by the Examinations Office for 13 months. After the retention period, all documentation is subject to confidential disposal.

5. **Data Protection**

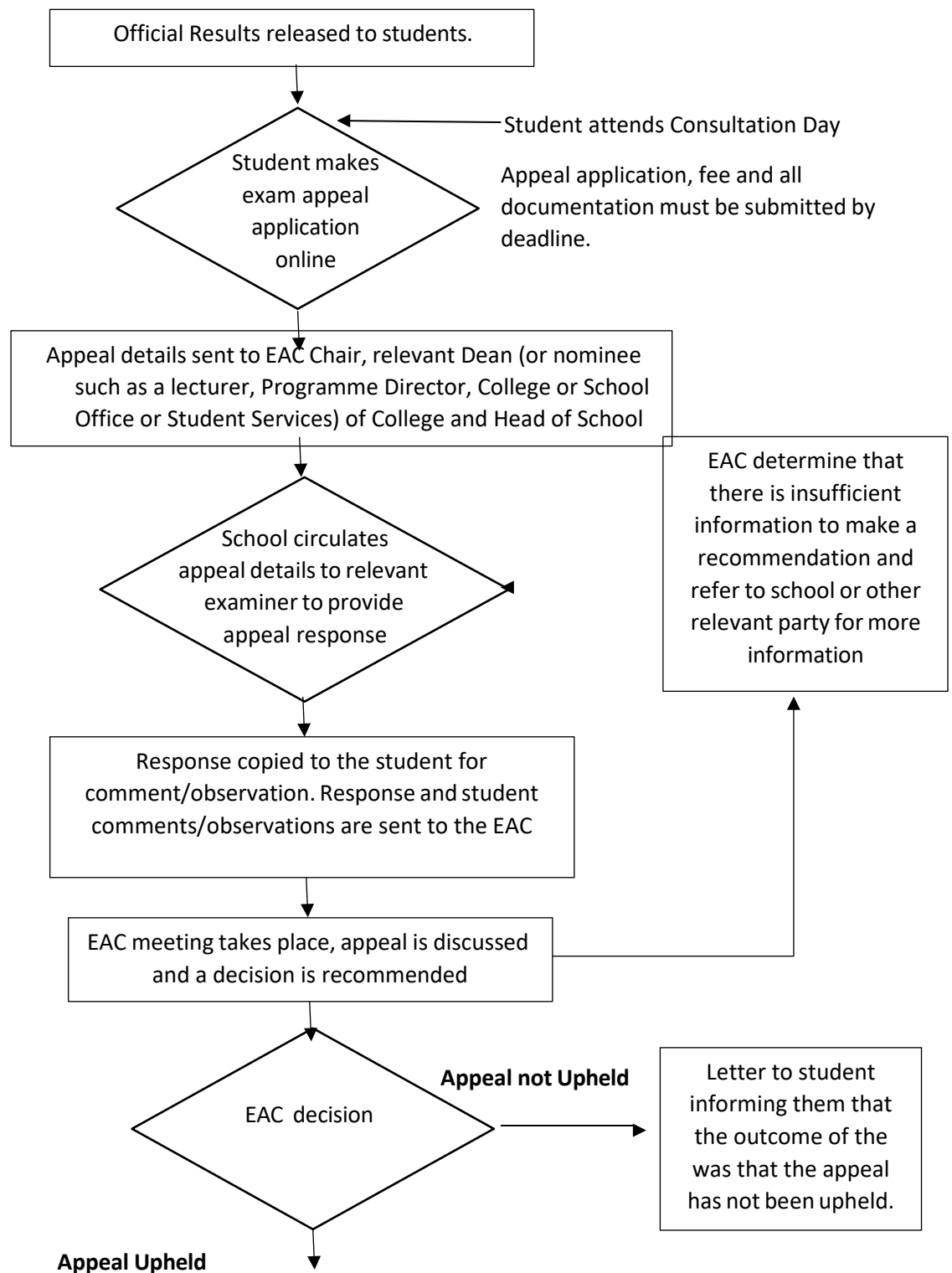
The University is committed to managing personal data properly – details available on the Data Protection website at <http://www.universityofgalway.ie/data-protection/>

Name	Responsibility
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Deputy President and Registrar	Policy Owner
All students of University of Galway	Compliance with policy
Colleges/Schools/Module Owners	Deal with student queries in relation to feedback and assessment results Facilitate timely feedback on assessment and examinations
Examinations Office	Ensuring implementation of policy Monitoring and reporting compliance with the policy Revisions to the policy

Policy Approved at Academic Council:

Appendix 1: Exam Appeal Process Workflow



After any requirement, if relevant, for a grading reassessment has been completed, a letter will be sent to the student informing them that the appeal has been upheld and the outcome thereof. The Examinations Office make the appropriate change and Records and Registration Office are informed.



Code: QA153
Title: Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines ¹
Date: Pilot documents approved June 28th 2019. Mainstreaming
approved October 15th 2020
Approval: Údarás na hOllscoile

Appendix 1 – Equality Impact Assessment Form

Policy Development/Review Equality Impact Assessment Form

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic and evidence-based process which verifies that the University's policies and practices are non-discriminatory, and are fair and inclusive in meeting the legitimate needs of the diverse groups that make up the University community. The key purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment Guidelines and Form is to help identify any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) impact (either positive or negative) associated with new or updated policies, along with any potential discrimination or gaps in policy development.

This form should be completed, with reference to the EIA Guidelines, and submitted for approval to the relevant governance body in advance of any policy development or major review of existing policy/practice. Equality impacts should continue to be considered throughout the policy drafting process (please see EIA Guidelines for details) and the completed Equality Impact Assessment Form should be signed and submitted again with the final policy/document for approval by the relevant approving body.

Section A: Initial Screening

Name of proposed policy/revised policy (name of policy or subject of review/decision)	QA235a Discussion Checking of Appeal of Examination Results
Purpose of proposed policy/revised policy (who is the intended target group?)	Students
College/School/Unit	All Colleges
Date	
Name(s) of assessor(s)	Prof. Pól Ó Dochartaigh, Ms Sally Connolly

¹This document draws significantly on similar work in UCD, The Royal Holloway, University of London and University of Cumbria.

STAGE 1 - Consider any potential impact (on staff, students and the public)				
<p>What is the potential impact on any of the following groups?</p> <p>i.e. How might the proposal affect people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances, either adversely or beneficially? This includes both direct effects and other effects as an indirect consequence of the policy. Remember we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate discrimination • Promote equality of opportunity and treatment of staff, students and other persons to whom we provide services • Protect human rights of our members, staff, students and other persons to whom we provide services 				
Characteristics	Potentially Beneficial	Potentially Adverse	No Anticipated Impact	Evidence/explanation of this impact
Gender			X	
Civil Status			X	
Family Status			X	
Age			X	
Disability			X	
Race			X	
Sexual Orientation			X	
Religious Belief			X	
Membership of the Traveller Community			X	
Other e.g. part-time, fixed-term			X	

EIA screening outcome	Mark below as appropriate	Next step
No impact identified		Go to Stage 5 of the Guidelines (pg. 10)
Only beneficial impact identified		Go to Stage 5 of the Guidelines (pg. 10)
Potential negative impact identified		Go to Section B (below)

Section B: Detailed Assessment

STAGE 2 - Collecting the relevant data	
What evidence have you gathered to help you to assess the impact of this policy on particular groups? Please give details.	
What consultation has been undertaken as part of this Equality Impact Assessment? Please state who has been consulted, how and when.	
What were the results of the consultation? Please summarise.	

STAGE 3 - Analysing the evidence		
	No	Yes
a) Does the proposed policy have the potential to advance equality of opportunity and protect human rights?	<i>Go to Stage 3(b)</i>	<i>Please Explain and then proceed to Stage 3(b)</i>
b) Is there an adverse impact on any of the following protected characteristics or groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Civil Status • Family Status • Age • Disability • Race • Sexual Orientation • Religious Belief • Membership of Traveller Community • Other e.g. part-time, fixed-term 	<i>Go to Stage 5 of the Guidelines</i>	<i>Please Explain and then proceed to Stage 4</i>

STAGE 4 – Identify and address any adverse impact		
	Analyse the evidence Comment on evidence and potential impact	Eliminate or reduce any adverse impact Recommended actions or specific requirements (e.g. reasonable accommodations for disability)
<i>Characteristics</i>		
Gender		
Civil Status		
Family Status		
Age		
Disability		
Race		
Sexual Orientation		

Religious Belief		
Membership of the Traveller Community		
Other e.g. part-time, fixed-term		

Stage 5 - Share results and keep evidence	Next steps
<p>Equality information published by the University (a legal requirement) must include evidence that we have paid 'due regard' to equality issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a digital copy of the completed EIA form and any attachments to the OVPED, so that the EIA can be kept (and published as appropriate): VPEqualityandDiversity@universityofgalway.ie. • A copy of the EIA should also be appended to the policy for the duration of the life of the policy. • Share the EIA results with the Trade Unions and/or Students' Union, as appropriate, as part of the normal consultation process • Keep a copy of the completed EIA form and any associated documents, emails, data, or information

Stage 6 – Monitor Actual Impact and Review Policy	Next Steps
<p>Equality Impact Assessment is an ongoing process that does not end once a policy has been agreed or implemented. This does not necessarily mean repeating the Equality Impact Assessment, but using the experience gained through implementation to check the findings and to make the necessary adjustments.</p> <p>At the proposed date of review, consider the actual impact of the policy taking into account any changes that have occurred (e.g. structural, organisational, demographic, customer requirements).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy should be reviewed at a future date which should be identified and clearly stated as part of the Equality Impact Assessment. The length of time between one analysis and the next will depend on the relevance of the policy to equality issues and any potential impact on groups with protected characteristics. • At the proposed date of review, consider the actual impact of the policy taking into account any changes that have occurred (e.g. structural, organisational, demographic, customer requirements).

Signed by the Chair of the Policy Development/Review Group:



Chair

15.02.2021