



## DCU EXAMINATION APPEALS BOARD

### EXAMINATION APPEALS PROCEDURE

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| Version       |                 |
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## 1. Context

- 1.1. An appeal is the procedure whereby a student may request a review of a decision by a Progression and Award Board relating to their academic progress or award, in accordance with specified grounds.
- 1.2. A student may appeal against a decision of a Progression & Award Board on the following grounds only:
  - (a) His/her performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors, which he/she was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling to divulge before the Progression & Award Board reached its decision.
  - (b) The Progression & Award Board did not give sufficient weight to any extenuating circumstances<sup>1</sup> previously notified to the Registry prior to the holding of the meeting of the Progression & Award Board.
  - (c) The examinations were not conducted in accordance with the current regulations as approved by Academic Council.
  - (d) There was a material administrative error or a material irregularity in assessment procedures which have made a real and substantial difference to his/her result.
- 1.3. There is no right of appeal against decisions of a Progression & Award Board which are matters of academic judgement. Disagreement with the academic judgement of a Progression & Award Board in assessing any information relating to a candidate's performance does not in itself constitute grounds for an appeal.
- 1.4. In exceptional circumstances, students may appeal a provisional<sup>2</sup> examination result that has not been formally approved by the relevant Progression and Award Board, namely, where students have failed the module concerned and the resit opportunity takes place before the examination result is formally approved by a Progression and Award Board.
  - 1.4.1. Where a student appeals a provisional result under such circumstances, the same ground(s) for appeal may not be used if a subsequent appeal is made in respect of the same module(s) following the Progression and Award Board.

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<sup>1</sup> Extenuating circumstances are interpreted as unforeseen circumstances, outside the control of the student, that are accepted by the Progression and Award Board as having temporarily prevented the student from submitting their work for assessment, undertaking an assessment, or from performing in an assessment at the level that might reasonably have been expected of them.

<sup>2</sup> Where examination results have been approved by a Programme Board Examination Review Committee or equivalent but have not been formally approved by a Progression and Award Board.

## 2. Lodging an Appeal

- 2.1. A student who opts to exercise his/her right to appeal the decision of a Progression and Award Board must present such an appeal on the Examinations Appeal Form (R-31) online at <https://www.dcu.ie/ovpaa/Appeals.shtml> with supporting documentation within a specified number of days<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.2. Appeals submitted after the closing date for lodging appeals (as published on the University's Academic Calendar) will not be considered.
- 2.3. A student lodging an appeal is required to submit the requisite fee<sup>4</sup> online with the application<sup>5</sup> at This fee is non-refundable except in the case of a student whose appeal is deemed by the Examination Appeals Board to be successful.
- 2.4. In the case of an appeal made on the basis of extenuating circumstances, the student is required to complete and submit, with the appeal, the most recently published version of Form R-30. Due to the Covid-19 crisis the usual requirement to provide supporting documentation with the completed extenuating circumstances form has been suspended for semester 2 and year-long modules, but should be submitted for semester 1.
- 2.5. Where an appeal is made on the grounds of extenuating circumstances which were not brought to the attention of the Progression and Award Board, the student is required to demonstrate the circumstances that prevented the relevant factors being disclosed at the appropriate time.
- 2.6. The appeal form should be completed as follows:
  - 2.6.1. All sections of the form should be completed
  - 2.6.2. Personal details should be provided in Section 1.
  - 2.6.3. Details of the degree programme and the modules being appealed should be included in Section 2.
  - 2.6.4. The grounds on which the student is appealing should be identified in Section 3. There are no grounds for appeal other than those listed in Section 1.2 of this document.
  - 2.6.5. Section 4 indicates the information which should be provided in the Personal Statement in Support of Appeal. Further details of this are listed in Section 2.8 below.
  - 2.6.6. Any documentary evidence included with the appeal should be listed in Section 5.
  - 2.6.7. You should provide your examination results for semester 1 and semester 2 in Section 6 in a legible format by screenshot, or scan and upload your results page.
  - 2.6.8. Section 7 contains a checklist to assist in ensuring the appeal is complete. Incomplete appeals are invalid and will be rejected.

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<sup>3</sup> Currently 10 days from the promulgation of examination results online

<sup>4</sup> Currently €100. This is a flat fee and it covers multiple modules.

<sup>5</sup> Fee to be submitted online at <https://dcu.cybernetsps.ie/dcupayments/dcu>

- 2.6.9. The appeal form should be submitted using a student **DCU e-mail account only**. Submissions which are made from other accounts will be considered invalid.
- 2.7. The Personal Statement in Support of Appeal should be concise.
- 2.7.1. It may include the action which the student would like the Examination Appeals Board to take.
- 2.7.2. If a student is appealing on the grounds of previously undisclosed extenuating circumstances, [ground (a)], it should include a valid reason why the student was unable or unwilling to notify the Progression and Award Board at the appropriate time.
- 2.7.3. If a student is appealing on the grounds that the examinations were not conducted in accordance with current regulations or that there was a material administrative error or irregularity in assessment procedures [grounds (c) or (d),] the error or irregularity should be stated in the personal statement.
- 2.8. The Examination Appeals Board does not make an independent academic judgement of the quality of a student's work. Students are therefore requested not to include any assessment materials (such as dissertations, essays, computer codes or reports) with their appeal submissions as they will not be considered.
- 2.9. Progression to the next year of study for the purposes of attending academic exercises is permitted in respect of a student who has lodged an appeal against the decisions of the Progression and Award Board in the resit examinations held in autumn of each academic year. However, such attendance must cease immediately upon notification of an unsuccessful outcome of the appeal or an upheld decision which does not permit progression by the following year. There may be circumstances where such attendance is not possible e.g. placements
- 2.10 Appellants are advised to postpone registering until completion of the Examination Appeals Board process. Upon receipt of the decision, students should visit the Registry Office immediately to complete registration. The late registration fee will be waived upon presentation of the letter/decision of the Examination Appeals Board.

### **3. Procedures following receipt of an Appeal**

- 3.1. The procedures relating to preparation for and conduct of the Examination Appeals Board meetings and notification of the decisions of the Board are outlined in the *Terms of Reference, Composition and Standing Orders of the Examination Appeals Board*.
- 3.2. The Examination Appeals Board shall in all cases consider the reasons for any failure by students to have brought extenuating circumstances to the attention of the Progression and Award Board prior to that Board reaching its decision. Where the Appeals Board considers that the extenuating circumstances should have been so notified, such a failure shall be a relevant consideration justifying the rejection of the appeal.

- 3.3. If the appeal is judged to be successful, the Examination Appeals Board will determine an appropriate course of action.
- 3.4. The decision of the Examination Appeals Board is communicated in writing.
- 3.5. In the case of a successful appeal, the appeal fee shall be fully refunded and an amended statement of results will be issued shortly afterwards.
- 3.6. As outlined in the *Terms of Reference, Composition and Standing Orders of the Examination Appeals Board*, decisions of the Examination Appeals Board are final and binding. Further representations made to any member of staff of the University will not be entertained.