



Academic Appeal Grounds

Identifying Grounds for an Academic Appeal

The first and most important step in any Academic Appeal is to establish whether you have grounds.

It is unlikely that your experience will fit neatly into one or more of the categories (so take time to reflect).

While an Adviser can help you think which grounds may apply to you, the decision is ultimately yours (we cannot 'tell you which grounds to use but have included questions in this document to help you decide).

What Appeal Grounds do not cover

- You cannot appeal to question academic judgement (you cannot appeal because you disagree with your mark)
- You cannot appeal because of poor teaching
- You cannot appeal because of poor supervision

What Appeal Grounds do cover

At every stage, a strong Academic Appeal is about demonstrating the link between your experience and one or more of these 3 Grounds:

Ground 4.1 *That they possess new substantive information supported by evidence which was not known by the student and/or the evidence could not reasonably have been obtained by the student in time to present to the board or panel of the University which made the original decision against which the student is appealing.*

Questions to ask yourself when considering these grounds:

- What is your new substantive information?
- How does it relate to what has happened?
- What evidence can you provide to back it up?
- Is this an isolated incident, or ongoing?
- Why were you not able to provide this information prior to the relevant body making its decision? What outcome are you seeking?

Ground 4.2 *That there has been significant failure of due process in the making of the original decision (including but not limited to irregularity in the procedures of the University or significant computational or administrative errors of fact in results published), which the student believes affected the University's original decision*



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Questions to ask yourself when considering these grounds:

- Which formal process do you feel the School has not adhered to?
- Can you point to where this is written down in the School or University Regulations/Handbook?
- How does this failure relate to what has happened?
- What outcome are you seeking?

Ground 4.3 *That their performance had been adversely affected by illness or by other factors (e.g. family crisis) which, in exceptional circumstances, they were unable or for valid reason unwilling to disclose to the University before it made its original decision*

Questions to ask yourself when considering these grounds:

- What factors affected your performance and how do they link to the decision you are appealing? What evidence can you provide to support your case?
- Why could you not provide this information/alert someone (within the faculty) to this problem (by utilising the Special Considerations procedure, for example) prior to the relevant body making its decision?
- Was this an isolated incident, or is it on-going?
- If it is on-going, what steps can you take/support can you engage with, to ensure it has a reduced impact on your performance in the future?

Why are the Grounds for Academic Appeal Important?

Your Grounds for Appeal are both the start of, and remain central to, any strong Academic Appeal. At each stage the decision maker/s will be making a judgement as to whether you have 'demonstrated' grounds for appeal. This means showing that your circumstances directly relate to **4.1** and/or **4.2** and/or **4.3**.

For further guidance on the Academic Appeals regulations, contact The Advice Centre Tel: 02380 592 085 Email: advice@susu.org

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