

Policy on

Academic Appeals

Approved on
April 2020

Approved by
Academic Policy Review Group

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This Policy applies to all activity undertaken by the College in pursuing its purpose as an educational institution whilst serving its students, community and wider stakeholder interests.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact records@newdur.ac.uk

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

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Head of Higher Education

Julie Coverley

Curriculum and Quality Directorate

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Equality Impact Assessment

A statement confirming that the policy has been subjected to a rigorous assessment for any potential impact on the full range of stakeholders with those impacts being assessed and considered and, where appropriate, suitable adjustments to the policy have been included prior to the adoption of the policy.

Footnote

In an effort to keep costs to a minimum a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant Appendices available on the Intranet.

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1. Rationale

This policy is a response to the quality agendas and requirements presented by the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and are underpinned by the QAA theme: Concerns, Complaints and Appeals. The definition provided within theme is adopted within this policy.

An academic appeal is defined as:

‘Academic Appeal – a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on assessment, student progression and awards.’

Whilst New College Durham is committed to providing excellent teaching, learning and assessment experiences for all students studying on all programmes, it recognises that there is a need to have a policy in place that allows students to initiate an academic appeal where they perceive that relevant Academic Regulations may have been breached or there were unknown extenuating circumstances.

2. Aim

The aim of the policy is to ensure the College provides a robust and transparent framework which enables any academic appeal to be fully and rigorously investigated. This will be carried out in accordance within the appropriate regulatory framework and with all appropriate safeguards in place to ensure the student and the College interests are protected at all times and stages of the process.

In order to fulfil the stated aim of the policy the College has established the following objectives which are to:

- a. ensure students, through induction and on-going academic support and guidance are provided with information about the regulations that are in use for the award they are studying;
- b. ensure the College provides information to students about the grounds for academic appeal;
- c. ensure an open and transparent process is in place which provides students with the opportunity to initiate an academic appeal;
- d. ensure any investigation held in relation to an academic appeal, will be conducted in full compliance with the regulations and associated procedures;

- e. ensure that throughout all stages of an investigation, communication will be maintained between the College and the student and support offered to the student.

3. Student Entitlements

Under the terms of this policy all students are entitled to:

- a. study on programmes that adhere to the relevant regulations of the awarding bodies and where appropriate Professional, Statutory, Regulatory Bodies (PSRB);
- b. have made available to them, at the commencement of their period of study, details of the assessment regulations that apply to their programme of study;
- c. receive information about the policy and procedure for initiating an academic appeal;
- d. receive appropriate advice and support from the College in cases where they are considering whether to bring an academic appeal;
- e. expect that any academic appeal they submit will be dealt with in accordance with the published policy and procedures of the College.

4. Student Responsibilities

This policy requires students to fully acknowledge and actively engage in fulfilling their responsibilities by:

- a. making themselves familiar with the academic regulations that apply to their programme of study;
- b. adhering to College procedures associated with assessment arrangements;
- c. at the earliest reasonable opportunity, bringing to the attention of teaching staff, Curriculum Manager or Head of School, matters of academic concern in order that, where possible they be resolved without recourse to the formal procedure.

5. Teaching Staff Responsibilities

The policy requires teaching and support staff to ensure that:

- a. they adhere to the regulations governing teaching, learning and assessment and the standards of professional practice expected of them by the College;
- b. students are informed about the academic regulations and assessment arrangements related to their programme of study at the start of their course and at regular points across the academic year;
- c. questions raised by students relating to the academic regulations, or concerns about their academic treatment are actioned within the published timescales.

6. College Management Responsibilities

College Management should ensure that:

- a. all staff involved in teaching and assessing students are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places upon them;
- b. staff development is made available to staff to support them in implementing this policy and to understand the procedures which underpin the policy;
- c. the policy is implemented consistently.

7. Standards by which the success of this policy can be evaluated

The following standards/measures will be considered when evaluating the success of this policy:

- a. positive feedback from students and external examiners on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure;
- b. course annual reports reflect the effectiveness of the policy and procedure.

8. Responsibility for implementing this policy

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy resides at all levels of the College specifically:

- a. Vice Principal;
- b. Head of School;
- c. Curriculum Manager;
- d. Course Leader;
- e. Course Tutor.

9. Associated Documentation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following supporting/related documentation:

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment;

Appendix C – Policy Development Request.

Related documentation:

- a. Complaints Procedure;
- b. HEQMP4-7-2 Academic Assessment Appeal Procedure;
- c. HEQMP4-7-2-1 Academic Assessment Appeal Application Form.

Appendices



New College Durham

Equality Impact Assessment Record

New College Durham actively promotes the basic British values of democracy, the rules of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

| |
|--|
| 1. Department/School: HEDQU |
| 2. People carrying out the assessment: Lesley Collinson |
| 3. Policy/procedure being assessed: Policy for Academic Appeals |
| 4. Main aims of the policy/procedure: The specific aim of the policy is to ensure accurate, fit for purpose and trustworthy information about the College and the higher education it provides, is available to identified stakeholders. Stakeholders include prospective and current higher/further education students, external organisations, partner organisations and government agencies. The Policy informs students of their rights with regard to an Academic Appeal. |
| 5. What examples of current good practice are there relating to the protected characteristics? a. Information presented in a variety of durable, accessible formats cognisant of the needs of people with protected characteristics. b. On-going scrutiny of published materials to ensure that all salient information is accessible to all stakeholders. c. Producers of information will take account of the need to communicate unambiguously and clearly to all. |

Cont'd...

6. For which of the protected characteristics could there be a negative impact? *(Please tick ✓)*

Age ☐

Disability ☐

Gender Re-assignment ☐

Marriage and Civil Partnership ☐

Pregnancy and Maternity ☐

Race ☐

Religion or Belief ☐

Sex ☐

Sexual Orientation ☐

7. Describe that impact

None.

8. What action needs to be taken to remove the impact?

The Policy has been written to protect all students.

9. Who will implement the action plan?

N/A

10. By when?

N/A

11. Monitoring Process

Outcome of the Academic Appeal Panel.

| | |
|---|---|
| Completed by: L Collinson | Endorsed by: A Shields |
| Signature:  | Signature:  |
| Printed Name: Lesley Collinson | Printed Name: A Shields |
| Role: HE Quality Manager | Role: Head of Inclusion |
| Date: 30/01/2020 | Date: 03/04/2020 |
| Date for Review: April 2025 | |

Cont'd...

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please complete the following Action Plan, based on the actions you have identified above, particularly in Section 8.


| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Department/School: | HEDQU |
| Policy Assessed: | |

| Issues identified None | Changes Required Mark with an asterisk (*) any changes that may be generic to other functions | Resource Implications | Responsibility for Implementation | Timescale | Progress Update |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| | | | | | |


Once completed, this should be e-mailed to Alyson Shields (alyson.shields@newdur.ac.uk) and a copy retained by the author.

Please note the policy author is responsible for completion of this action plan.

Appendix C – Academic Policy Review Group (APRG) Policy Review/Development Request

| | |
|--|--|
| Proposed/current title of policy: Academic Appeals (HE) | |
| Date of request: 29/1/2020 | |
| Is this a proposed new policy or a review of an existing policy: <i>Please tick (✓) whichever is appropriate</i> Proposed new policy <input type="checkbox"/> Review of an existing policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Due date for submission: 31.01.20 | Due date for review: 03.04.2025 |
| Rationale: <i>Please identify the drivers of the review/development of the stated policy</i> The Policy is due for review. | |
| Consultation <i>Please state where appropriate</i> Name of Forum/Meeting/Group: discussion within HEDQU | |
| Review/development undertaken by: Name: Julie Coverley/Lesley Collinson Signature:  Date submitted to APRG: 30/1/2020 | |
| Approval body use only (once completed in full please return to the Chair of the APRG) | |
| Approval body title: Academic Policy Review Group Date received: 30.01.2020 | |
| Policy approved <i>(please delete appropriately)</i> Yes If no, please specify the nature of the issue(s): | |

Chair: Dawn Fairlamb

Signature: 

Date: 03.04.20

APRG Chair's Actions


Date notifying policy author of approval: 03.04.20

Date sent to IT Services for upload to intranet: 03.04.20

Date intranet checked to ensure correct and timely upload: 14.04.20

Final Sign off by Chair of APRG

(Chair is fully satisfied that the policy, any accompanying procedure and Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) are fully completed)

Signature: 

Date: 03.04.20