



Policy on

Academic Appeals

Approved

27th October 2025

Approved by

Senior Leadership Team

Policy Title	Academic Appeals Policy
Document Owner	Vice Principal for HE

Directorates and Departments affected by this Procedure	All Curriculum Curriculum Admin
Procedure Effective From	August 2025
Next Review Date	July 2030

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.

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.

This policy has been assessed for its compliance with the principles of the OIA Good Practice Framework and we feel it is

- **Accessible and clear**
- **Fair, independent and confidential**
- **Inclusive**
- **Flexible, proportionate and timely; and**
- **Improves the student experience**

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Vice Principal for Higher Education

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1. Scope

This policy covers how academic appeals will be conducted to ensure compliance with awarding body regulations, including New College Durham, The Open University, Pearson, other relevant awarding bodies, the rules of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and the Office for Students (OfS).

Responsibilities

The Academic Board is responsible for ensuring a fair and transparent academic appeals policy is in place that reflects the requirements of the prevalent regulations and rules.

The Vice Principal for HE is responsible for ensuring a policy is in place regarding academic appeals.

The Director of HE is responsible for ensuring there are subordinate procedures in place meeting the requirements of the policy and adequate guidance is provided to appellants.

Staff appointed to investigate and determine the outcome of appeals must ensure that any investigation is fair, open and transparent.

Programme teams and support staff are responsible for ensuring:

- that through induction and other support mechanisms that students are made aware of the academic appeals process; and
- that they respond promptly to initial concerns raised by students that may lead to an application for an academic appeal.

The Students' Union can advise and support individual students on request.

2. Relationship with existing policies and regulations

This policy should be read in the context of the following College policies and related procedures:

- Complaints Policy;
- Complaints Procedure;
- Academic Appeals Procedure;
- HE Assessments Policy;
- HE Assessment and Moderation Procedure;
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy;
- Extenuating Circumstances Procedure;
- Academic Integrity Policy;
- Fitness to Practise.

3. Policy Statements

All Higher Education students have a right to appeal in relation to processes and procedures associated with College Higher Education awards. An Appeal¹ must comply with the following requirements

- An appeal must be made in writing before the deadline stated in official communication (i.e. Outcome letter) which is sent to the student following the completion of an associated College procedure;
- Any claims on the grounds of extenuating circumstances made after an assessment board must demonstrate that the student was unable or for valid reasons, unwilling, to divulge these prior to the Assessment Board;
- A claim on the grounds of maladministration or breach of regulations must demonstrate a material administration error; that College processes were not conducted in accordance with regulations, rules or published policies and procedures; or that agreed reasonable adjustments were not applied;
- A student cannot appeal against academic judgements of the Assessment Board.

The College is committed to minimising the amount of times a student must share information with it about a health condition or disability. Therefore, if a student has already made a declaration during their study with the College this information must be accessible to the appeals investigator.

4. Final right of Appeal and Complaints

All Students

If an Academic Appeal is not upheld, the appellant may make a formal complaint if dissatisfied with the service they have experienced during the appeals process, but they are not able challenge the outcome of the appeal.

A formal complaint about the service provided by the College should be directed to the College's complaints procedure.

Open University/Pearson Students

For programmes validated by the Open University (OU) and Pearson, appellants have a final right of appeal to the OU/Pearson (as appropriate) against an appeals decision where the appeal is against a decision related to either:

- a. progression from one stage to another of the programme to the next; or
- b. a final award; or
- c. an assessment

¹ As defined in the Academic Appeals Procedure

and both of the following criteria are met:

- a. all appropriate internal procedures at the College have been exhausted;
- b. there are reasonable grounds to believe that the College's internal procedures and regulations for dealing with appeals were not implemented correctly or fairly.

5. Evaluation and review

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 or conditions of registration may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.