PROPOSED

LUMINA OPEN UNIVERSITY

Academic Appeals Procedure

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Introduction

An academic appeal is a formal request to challenge or reconsider a decision made by an academic body, typically an examination board, regarding student progress, assessments, or awards. This may involve seeking changes to marks, progression decisions, or final classifications. The appeal must be based on valid grounds, such as significant mitigating circumstances that were not previously submitted, procedural errors, or evidence of bias or prejudice by examiners. Disagreements over academic judgments, marks, or outcomes are not valid grounds for an appeal.

If you wish to submit an academic appeal, you must follow the procedure outlined below.

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1. Who can make an academic appeal?

1.1 Any current undergraduate or postgraduate taught student enrolled at the University, or recent alumni, provided the appeal is made within the specified timeframes in Section 3.
1.2 Appeals must be submitted by individuals on their own behalf.
1.3 If you're unable or unwilling to make the appeal personally, you may request a third party to represent you by sending an email from your Lumina Open University address.
1.4 In exceptional cases, a group of students affected by the same issue may appeal together. One student must be nominated as the representative for the group and will act as the main point of contact.

2. Who cannot make an academic appeal?

2.1 B.Sc. students in the Study Centre (SC) should refer to SC’s separate appeals procedure.

2.2 Students at the Lumina Open University Study Centre should consult appeal process, which follows Lumina Open University procedures.

2.3 Students registered with other higher education providers should follow their respective appeal procedures.

3. What is the deadline for submitting an academic appeal?

3.1 Appeals must generally be made within 28 calendar days of the release of results. After this period, appeals are usually considered to be out of time.

3.2 If the appeal is out of time, a Completion of Procedures Letter will be issued, outlining why the appeal wasn't considered and how to escalate the complaint to the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

4. What can you appeal?

4.1 Academic appeals can be made on the following grounds:

- **Mitigating circumstances**: Serious circumstances that were not known to the exam board at the time of decision and were not submitted previously for valid reasons.
- **Procedural irregularities**: Errors in the assessment or examination process that may have affected the decision.
- **Prejudice or bias**: Evidence of unfair treatment during assessment or progression decisions.

5. What cannot be appealed?

5.1 Appeals against academic judgment, such as disagreement with marks or outcomes, are not valid grounds.

5.2 Appeals cannot be made on unconfirmed assessment outcomes (e.g., mid-term results).

5.3 You cannot appeal against the final decisions regarding mitigating circumstances or reasonable adjustments for assessments.

5.4 This procedure does not cover:

- Administrative decisions, academic provision, or services (covered by the Student Complaints Procedure).
- Allegations of academic misconduct (covered by the Procedure for Allegations of Assessment Offense).
- Allegations of non-academic misconduct.
- Appeals against admission decisions (covered by the Admissions Appeals Procedure).

6. How to submit an appeal?

6.1 To initiate the appeal process, email **luminaopenuniversity@gmail.com** for an appeal submission form

6.2 Clearly state the issue(s) and desired outcome in your submission. Include any relevant evidence at the time of submission.

6.3 If you need reasonable adjustments, inform the Head of Department and Head of Faculty team as soon as possible.

7. How will your appeal be processed?

7.1 **General Information**:

- The appeal process typically takes up to 90 days, but the University will aim to expedite cases with significant health or distress impacts.
- You should proceed with academic decisions (such as resits or registration) based on your current results while awaiting the appeal outcome.
- Appealing will not negatively affect your standing unless it's deemed vexatious.
- The appeal will be treated confidentially, with information shared only when necessary.

7.2 **Stage 1 – Initial Screening**:

- Appeals must be submitted within 28 days of result publication. After this, it will be at the discretion of the Head of Department and Head of Faculty team whether to accept the appeal.
- The team will review the appeal within 14 days and notify you of the outcome.
- If the appeal does not meet the grounds for consideration, you will be informed and provided a Completion of Procedures Letter.

7.3 **Stage 2 – Formal Review by Chair of the Board of Examiners**:

- If the appeal is accepted, the team will compile a case file for review by the Chair of the Board of Examiners.
- The Chair will make a decision within 21 days, which will be communicated to you.

7.4 **Stage 3 – Review by the Representations Panel**:

- If you're dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2, you can escalate to Stage 3 for further review.
- Grounds for escalation include failure to follow procedure, new evidence, or unreasonable decisions.
- Stage 3 will involve the Chair of the Representations Panel, and the full panel may review the case. A decision will be made within 10 working days.

8. What if you're still dissatisfied with the outcome?

8.1 If Stage 3 is completed and you're not satisfied, you may appeal to the Office of the Vice Chancellor.

8.2 The VC will typically only accept complaints if you have a Completion of Procedures Letter and submit the complaint within one year of the decision.

9. Wellbeing Support

9.1 Lumina Open University distance learning students can access the Wellbeing platform for mental health support, including the Talk Campus app and a 24/7 crisis helpline.