

Academic Appeals

Students on Taught Programmes

Last Reviewed: April 2018

Next Review Date: April 2019

Version Number: v1

Academic Appeals

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This procedure relates to appeals against an assessment result or the decision of an Assessment Board for taught programmes only.
- 1.2 Assessment may take a variety of forms including dissertation, examination, project, essay, presentation, practical work or any other exercise which is designed to enable students to demonstrate achievement.
- 1.3 Prior to submitting an appeal, students should raise issues informally with members of the Programme Team and attempt to resolve any concerns.
- 1.5 It is important that students ensure that any circumstance which they feel could adversely affect their performance is recorded in accordance with the published procedures and within the deadlines set down in those procedures. It is unlikely that an appeal on this basis will be successful if the student has not reported it and followed the appropriate procedures.
- 1.6 All staff involved in an appeal will maintain confidentiality.

2 Valid Grounds for Appeal

- 2.1 Students can only appeal against an assessment result or a decision of an Assessment Board for one or more of the following reasons:
 - i. That the student's performance in an assessment suffered through illness or other compelling circumstances which could not have been reasonably reported at the time of the assessment; students who base an appeal on this ground will be expected to show why the circumstances could not have been reported earlier;
 - ii. That the assessment was not carried out in accordance with the programme and/or module regulations and procedures;
 - iii. That the administrative procedures were not correctly followed or that a significant mistake was made in the administrative process;
 - iv. That the assessor(s) or the Assessment Board did not consider all the previously reported circumstances which may have significantly affected the student's performance. Students are reminded that such circumstances must be recorded at the time they arise.

3 In valid Grounds for Appeal

- 3.1 Students cannot appeal against academic judgement.

- 3.2 Students cannot make an appeal based on a complaint which was not formally recorded at least 7 days prior to completion of the assessment process. In cases where such a formal complaint has been made, but not satisfactorily resolved, the complaint investigation will be completed before consideration of the appeal. If the circumstances can be shown to have had an effect on the student's performance any relevant findings may be subsequently taken into account in considering the appeal.

4 Making an Appeal

- 4.1 There is only one route by which students can make an appeal. This route is used for all programmes leading to an award of Software Academy or its affiliated awarding bodies.

5 Appeal Procedure:

5.1 This procedure relates to appeals against formally-released module/unit results or the decision of an Assessment Board regarding a module/unit or group of modules/units.

5.2 Initially the student will approach members of the Programme Team or the Module/Unit Leader to seek clarification.

5.3 If not resolved the student completes and submits a Formal Appeal Form to the Examinations within 21 days of the date of formal publication of module results.

5.4 On receipt, the form will be checked to ensure that it complies with the following:

- (i) It is fully completed (including desired outcome, signature)
- (ii) All relevant evidence is attached
- (iii) The case is clearly stated and relates to one of the previously listed grounds for appeal.

5.5 The Centre reserves the right to reject an appeal submission without further investigation if it fails to comply with all of the above.

5.6 Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged to the student by the Examinations team, who will advise the student on whether the appeal submission has been

accepted and the anticipated timescale for the investigation. Students are advised that full consideration of an appeal including a panel may take up to 90 calendar days depending on the complexity of the circumstances.

5.7 The form is copied to the Chair of the Assessment Board, Head of Quality and the Programme Leader, with responsibility for the student's programme.

5.8 The Director of Quality or nominee may collect written evidence from relevant members of staff or from the Assessment Board and will consult with the Chair of the Board.

5.9 If after the above consultation the Director of Quality or nominee establishes that the appeal is not properly based on one of the acceptable grounds set out in paragraph 2 above, s/he will recommend that the appeal be turned down.

5.10 If the Director of Quality or nominee and Chair of the Assessment Board establish that the student does have grounds for appeal, a consultation will be held with relevant members of the Board. The consultation will agree what action, if any, should be taken to address the appeal without the need for a Formal Appeals Panel hearing. Any such action may be confirmed by Chair's action and reported to the next meeting of the Assessment Board.

5.11 The Director of Quality or nominee will notify the student of the decision and indicate the reasons why.

5.12 The student will be deemed to have accepted this decision unless s/he rejects it by informing the Director of Quality or nominee in writing giving reasons, within 14 days of receiving formal notification. Where the outcome is rejected by the student, s/he may request that the matter be referred to a formal Appeals Panel.

6 Appeals Panel

6.1 The Director of Quality or nominee will convene the Appeals Panel which will comprise:

- (i) A Course leader with responsibility for the student's programme, as Chair;
- (ii) A member of academic staff, normally drawn from the membership of Academic Board or Quality and Standard Committee.
- (iii) A student representative, normally class representative;
- (iv) Director of Quality or nominee will act as Secretary to the Panel.

6.2 The Director of Quality or nominee will notify the student, at least 14 days in advance, of the time, date and place of the panel hearing. This timescale can be reduced by mutual agreement.

6.3 It is the student's responsibility to prepare and present her/his case and s/he is entitled to bring a friend. This person should be a member of class representative. The friend may make representations on the student's behalf with permission of the Chair of the Panel.

6.4 The student is entitled to call witnesses, but must notify the Director of Quality or nominee 7 days in advance of the panel hearing if s/he intends to do so.

6.5 The student is entitled to see in advance of the hearing all relevant evidence, except provisional assessment marks or grades, but must keep all such information confidential. S/he is entitled to be present throughout the hearing except for the private meetings of the panel.

6.6 The panel may also call witnesses and may seek information from the Chair of the Assessment Board.

6.7 Members of the panel may question the student and the witnesses. The student may also question the witness. All witnesses will leave the meeting after giving their evidence.

6.8 When all the evidence has been heard, including the student's closing statement, the student and her/his friend will leave the meeting and the panel will consider its decision in private.

6.9 Based upon the evidence the Appeals Panel will either:

- (i) Determine whether to uphold the decision of the Assessment Board or published result; OR
- (ii) Require the Assessment Board to annul its decision or rescind the published result.

6.10 The decision of the Appeals Panel is final.

6.11 The panel's decision will normally be communicated to the student immediately after the meeting and subsequently confirmed in writing by the Chair. The report of the panel hearing, once approved by the Chair of the panel, will be submitted in confidence to the members of the panel, the Chair of the Assessment Board and to the Chairs of Academic Board and Quality and Standard Committee and, where appropriate.

6.12 If the Assessment Board is required to annul its decision or rescind the published result, then it must agree appropriate arrangements for the student to complete any outstanding assessment requirements as quickly as practicable and notify the student accordingly. Such arrangements may be agreed by a full meeting of the Assessment Board.

The End