



PROCEDURE 002 ACADEMIC APPEALS

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PROCEDURE 002: ACADEMIC APPEALS

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 This Procedure describes how ACM ensures the equitable, transparent and timely consideration of a student's appeal against an academic decision in relation to assessment, progression, grades, and award outcomes.

1.2 This Procedure aims to explain the reasonable due course which students are required to consider and follow when submitting an Academic Appeal.

1.3 This Procedure applies to ACM students on HE programmes, including Foundation programmes.

FE students

1.4 ACM applies RSL's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure to its RSL-validated Level 3 Diploma programmes. FE students should therefore follow RSL's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure and pay close attention to Section 2 in the RSL Policy in order to determine whether they have grounds to appeal. All appeals from ACM FE students should be sent to diplomaleadership@acm.ac.uk

2. PROCEDURE

2.1. ACM seeks to resolve all appeals and complaints in a timely manner through considered escalation of matters as outlined in this procedure.

Early Resolution Stage 1:

2.2. Students should note that formal academic appeals (stage 2) should usually be submitted in writing to appeals@acm.ac.uk within **21 working days** of the publication of the academic decision that is being disputed. Early resolution should be undertaken and completed within this timeframe. Where a student wishes to dispute an academic outcome they should, in the first instance, seek further advice and clarification via assessment@acm.ac.uk. They will assign staff who will facilitate meetings and responses to the student's queries. This is considered the first early resolution stage. Normally, consultation through this stage will provide further clarity around the academic decision and provide guidance in relation to the formal appeals process, where relevant.

2.3 Where there are reasonable grounds to remedy the academic decision due to a clear material or administrative error, the investigating staff may take actions to remedy the matter. Any resolutions and actions that are agreed with the appellant must be kept on record and communicated to the student and Assessment and Programme Team in writing.

2.4 Where a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the informal stage, they may escalate their appeal to the formal stage.

2.5 If the ACM Assessment Board or Final Exam Board (FEB) considers that there may be grounds for an academic appeal, it may request, through the Assessment and Programme Team, that a written statement be provided to the Board providing the required information. These written statements should be in a form suitable for use as evidence at an Appeal Panel as they may be escalated to the first formal stage.

Formal Stage 2:

2.6 All academic appeals should usually be submitted in writing to appeals@acm.ac.uk within **21 working days** of the publication of the academic decision that is being disputed. This should allow students to undertake and complete early resolution within this timeframe. The appellant should attach relevant supporting materials and evidence to support their appeal. Appeals that lack relevant supporting documentation may be dismissed. Appeals that are submitted after the 21-working day timeframe without clear and compelling reasons may be dismissed.

2.7 The Quality Assurance Team or an appointed nominee will assess whether the application meets conditions for an academic appeal and may request further information from the appellant, relevant programme team, or independent staff, to ensure a fair assessment is made of the appeal.

2.8 The Quality Assurance Team or an appointed nominee will acknowledge receipt of the appeal in writing and notify the appellant of the next steps within 10 working days of receiving the appeal. Normally one of the following will apply:

1. the matter the appellant has raised does not meet conditions for academic appeal and no action will be taken;
2. the matter the appellant has raised does not meet conditions for academic appeal, whereupon they may seek further recourse through the Complaints and Grievances provisions;
3. the matter will be referred to an Appeal Panel, the Assessment Board or Finalist Exam Board for consideration.

Appeal Panel

2.9 An Appeal Panel will be constituted by the Quality Assurance Team or an appointed nominee and will consist of a minimum of three staff members, chaired by a staff member of suitable seniority and who has not been directly involved in the matter that is subject to appeal. The panel will examine the evidence that has been submitted, and may opt to call meetings with the appellant and/or staff involved in order to gather further evidence to make a reasonable determination of the outcome of appeal.

2.10 For an appeal against a penalty imposed for academic misconduct, the documentation used in relation to the academic misconduct shall be provided to the Appeal Panel.

Assessment and Progression Panel, Final Exam Board (Appeal Panel)

2.11 In compelling circumstances, the Chair of the Assessment Board or FEB may take Chair's Action in the student's favour, and this decision must be reported at the first

opportunity at the sitting of the ACM Assessment Board or Final Exam Board. The Chair shall formally communicate this decision to the Academic Leadership Team who will notify the appellant within 5 working days.

2.12 A record of all panel interviews and a record of the panel outcome(s) will be provided to the Academic Leadership Team in writing.

2.13 Panel proceedings should normally be concluded within **28 working days** of the appeal being acknowledged. The outcome reached by the Panel will be communicated to the appellant in writing within 5 working days of the Panel's decision.

2.14 A decision on an appeal by the Appeal Panel (Assessment Board or FEB) is final and at this stage the academic appeal procedures of ACM are concluded. Where the appellant is dissatisfied with the outcome they may escalate the matter to the awarding body for their programme.

2.15 An appellant's failure to reply in writing within 21 working days of the date on the letter offering an informal settlement shall be taken as acceptance of the offer.

Student Progression:

2.16 Until the appeal is concluded, the appellant:

- Will be allowed to continue their studies, except under circumstances where the academic decision being disputed is in relation to a progression decision in accordance with institutional progression regulations;
- Must continue to meet the attendance, engagement, and assessment requirements for the programme, and is responsible for the consequence of not complying with these requirements should the subsequent decision of the appeal process not be in the student's favour.

Formal Stage 3:

2.17 Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of ACM's Academic Appeal procedure, they may escalate their appeal to Middlesex University. Students may request a review of the outcome of the Stage 2 investigation carried out by ACM, by completing a CPULR form (Collaborative Partner University Level Review) available from Middlesex University. The CPULR form must be submitted to the Director of Affairs at Middlesex University within 20 working days of the date of the Stage 2 Outcome Letter. Middlesex University Regulations for Appeals apply to all Higher Education programmes and these are set out in Section G: Appeal Regulations and Procedures, of the Middlesex University Regulations which are available online at: <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/policies/>

2.18 The receipt of the CPULR form will normally be acknowledged within 7 working days, and ACM will be informed of the nature and substance of the complaint.

2.19 The CPULR form will be reviewed by the Director of Student Affairs or nominee. The University review will consider whether a) there has been a procedural irregularity in the

investigation of the appeal by ACM, or b) any new evidence has come to light which would have had a material impact on the investigation. Discussion may be held with the student and/ or subject of the appeal and with members of staff involved in ACM's investigation process.

2.20 Where possible, reviews should normally take no more than 28 working days to investigate. The Director of Student Affairs or nominee will establish appropriate timescales based on the nature and complexity of the case. These timescales should be communicated to the student and the student kept informed of any changes.

2.21 The Director of Student Affairs or nominee will inform all parties of the proposed outcome of their investigation and give all parties the opportunity to comment. Following consideration of any comments, the Director of Student Affairs or nominee will communicate the outcome of the review, with reasons and in writing, to all parties within 21 working days.

Formal Stage 4:

2.22 The University will issue a Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter at the end of Formal Stage 3 Review. Where the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the University proceedings, they may escalate their complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for students in Higher Education. The University can provide further guidance to the appellant if they wish to escalate their appeal. Information about the OIA is available here: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

3. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

3.1 This Policy is under the responsibility of the Academic Board. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this Policy is carried out under ACM's Quality Assurance Framework.

3.2 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Policy will be authorised by the following designated staff:

- Academic Registrar
- Quality Assurance and Enhancement Manager
- Executive Dean of Education
- Dean of Academic Practice and Enhancement
- Head of Assessments
- Chair and Secretariat of the ACM Assessment Board / Final Exam Board

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 Internal

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Student Conduct and Discipline Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy

- Data Protection Policy

4.2 External

- Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework (Conditions B1 – B6)
- Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) Good Practice Framework
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Middlesex University (MDX) Regulations
- Middlesex University (MDX) Learning and Quality Enhancement Handbook (LQEH), Section 1: An Overview of Quality Assurance and Enhancement Activity at Middlesex University
- The UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024 Framework and Sector-Agreed Principles)

5. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Version	3.5
Approved on	01 September 2026
Approved by	Academic Board
Next review	August 2027