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**HIGHER EDUCATION**

**(Programmes regulated by the Office for Students)**

**ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURE**

**1.** **Scope and Purpose**

1.1 This procedure is available to all Higher Education students at Strode College who are studying a course validated by the University of Plymouth or Pearson Higher National Certificate/Diploma

1.2 It has been developed to offer all students the same rights as are available through the University of Plymouth appeal mechanisms with respect to accredited courses delivered through partner colleges.

1.3 It has been implemented with the agreement of University of Plymouth, but applies equally to all Pearson taught courses delivered as part of Strode College Higher Education provision.

1.4 The purpose of the procedure is to outline the context in which an appeal may be made and also to explain the precise fashion in which such appeals will be considered.

1.5 This procedure is only concerned with Award Assessment Board decisions and the assessment processes leading up to them. It is not designed to deal with disciplinary action or complaints regarding the delivery of the course or the availability of facilities for which separate processes are in place.

**2. Appeals**

2.1 Strode College is committed to offering the best possible Higher Education provision and promises to treat all academic appeals seriously.

2.2 This appeals procedure only applies to decisions on results and therefore can only be utilised after the relevant Award Assessment Board has taken place. Appeals cannot be made against provisional results (i.e. those that have not yet been agreed by the Board).

2.3 Students are strongly recommended to submit appeals as soon as possible. However, all appeals must be made by the date specified in the results information document, which will normally be sent no later than 10 working days after the Award Assessment Board.

2.4 Appeals submitted after the deadline will not normally be accepted.

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| **Stage 1**  This is an informal stage in the process where the matter can be addressed verbally.  If a student has a query regarding a mark or grade awarded, this should in most cases be raised initially with either the student’s personal tutor or the Programme Manager for the course in question, as it could prove possible to resolve the issue without requiring the submission of a formal appeal. If, however, this is felt to be inappropriate or too sensitive, the matter may be taken up with the Head of Faculty, Higher Education directly.  In all instances the conversation will be held to be private and confidential and information will only be shared as is necessary for safeguarding purposes or in order to address the issue. It should prove possible to respond to most queries regarding results informally, without the need to invoke a formal written procedure. |

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| **Stage 2**  A formal appeal will only be considered where evidence can be produced that:   * Assessments were not conducted in accordance with the current Strode College Higher Education Assessment Policy and/or regulations established by the relevant validating body (e.g. Pearson or the University of Plymouth) * Some other material irregularity, related to assessment, has occurred   An appeal cannot be made against the academic or professional judgement of the examiners. Providing that marks or grades were accurately recorded, assessment regulations were followed and the assessment has been conducted fairly and appropriately, dissatisfaction or disappointment with results does not constitute grounds for appeal.  Extenuating circumstances which were not declared before the Award Assessment Board will only be taken into account in the appeal process in the most exceptional of situations. It would need to be clearly demonstrated that the student making the appeal had been prevented from engaging with the process of considering extenuating circumstances at the relevant time.  \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*  In order to submit a formal appeal, it is necessary to follow the course of action outlined below, depending on the nature of the of the Higher Education programme being studied:   1. **University of Plymouth programmes:**   All students on HE courses accredited through University of Plymouth should appeal to the Complaints and Appeals Office (CAO) at the University of Plymouth using the University of Plymouth Appeal Proforma (Appendix B). The form must be received by University of Plymouth by the deadline stated in the student’s ‘Results Information’ document. Students wishing to make appeal against their awards should also read the University of Plymouth document ‘Appeal against the decision of an Assessment Board’ in full, which can be found at <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/16/16221/Appeal_Against_the_Decision_of_an_Assessment_Board.pdf>  Once an appeal is received, the University Appeals Office will contact Academic Partnerships (AP), the section of University that verifies delivery at external partners, and the case will be reviewed and investigated. AP will liaise with Strode College in order that the matter can be dealt with most effectively. Students are advised that it is in their best interests to respond as quickly as possible to any requests for additional information, so as to ensure that the case can be considered without delay.  The appeal investigation will first ascertain that all of the conditions for submitting a valid appeal as outlined above have been met. If the appeal is rejected following initial scrutiny, this decision will be communicated directly to the student concerned within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the appeal and all supporting evidence. In this instance, the decision of the CAO will be final and AP will notify Strode College of the outcome.  If it is determined that the appeal is able to proceed, an Appeal Panel will be set up consisting of three members of University staff across the faculties and the Students’ Union, none of whom will be from the faculty area responsible for the programme in question. After due consideration of all the facts, the Panel will arrive at a firm and final decision and communicate this to the student directly and in writing. AP will notify Strode College of the outcome of the process.   1. **Other Strode College HE programmes (e.g. Pearson, Higher Nationals awards):**   Students on all other HE programmes, including HNC/HND courses validated by Pearson, should complete the Strode College Appeal Proforma (Appendix A) and present it to the Head of Faculty, Higher Education within the date stated on the student’s ‘Results Information’ document.  Once an appeal is received, the case will be reviewed and investigated with direct reference to the rules and regulations in operation for the programme concerned. Students should recognise that it is in their best interests to respond as quickly as possible to any requests for additional information, so as to ensure that the case can be considered without delay.  The appeal investigation will first ascertain that all of the conditions for submitting a valid appeal as outlined above have been met. If the appeal is rejected following initial scrutiny, this decision will be communicated directly to the student concerned within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the appeal and all supporting evidence. In this instance, the decision on behalf of the College will be final.  If it is determined that the appeal is able to proceed, it will be reviewed by a panel including the Deputy Principal, Curriculum and Quality. After due consideration of all the facts, the panel will arrive at a firm and final decision and communicate this to the student in writing within 15 working days.  \*\*\*\*\*\*  Students on all courses should remember that the decision of an Award Assessment Board stands until formally changed following a successful appeal. All requirements to resubmit coursework or resit an examination made by the original decision of the Award Assessment Board must therefore be met until the student making the appeal has been officially told that the decision has been altered.  In certain circumstances (e.g. if an appeal is submitted following resit results), it is possible that the outcome of the appeal may not be finalised before the next stage of the course is due to commence. If this situation occurs, the student making the appeal may request to attend classes for the next stage. This is to ensure that in cases where an appeal is successful, students are not placed at a disadvantage. It is, however, on the understanding that should the appeal be rejected, students will be required to resume their studies in accordance with the decision of the Award Assessment Board. |

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| **Stage 3**  When the appeal procedure for both University of Plymouth accredited programmes and other Higher Education courses at Strode College reaches its conclusion – either because the appeal is deemed to be invalid or a decision in response to the appeal is reached – the student having submitted the appeal will be issued with a ‘Completion of Procedures’ letter (either by the University of Plymouth or by Strode College) explaining how a further review of the outcome may be requested from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA*)*.  \*\*\*\*\*\*  **A Student’s further right of appeal to Pearson, awarding body\***  Following completion of Stage 3, students studying Higher National Diploma or Certificate, validated by Pearson have a final right of appeal directly to Pearson.  Pearson’s ‘enquiries and appeals process’ ***focusses on*** ***procedure and is not concerned with making judgments about learner’s work.*** The process does not normally involve the re-assessment of learner’s work but a review may be needed if the outcome of Pearson’s enquiry or appeal requires it.  Students will not be able to appeal to Pearson unless they have first completed the Strode College appeals process, detailed above. If a student wishes to enquire about or appeal against the Strode College, appeal panel’s decision they should contact Pearson within 14 calendar days of being d of the outcome of the appeals process at Strode College via the Pearson Student Support portal <https://support.pearson.com/uk/s/>. All cases are reviewed by Pearson’s experts who have responsibility for the matter being appealed. Pearson will acknowledge an enquiry within 3 days and respond to the enquiry within 30 days of receipt. If the student is not happy with the outcome, the student has 14 days in which to contact Pearson to request a Preliminary Appeal Review to be undertaken.  \* This information is taken from *Pearson Enquiries and appeals about Pearson vocational qualifications January 2020* |

3. **Response Time for Appeals**

3.1 The time periods set out in this procedure are for guidance and may be subject to extension, particularly if the processing of the appeal coincides with a holiday period.

3.2 If the response time needs to be extended for any reason, the complainant will be notified in writing.

**Academic Appeal Proforma**

Appendix A

**(Pearson Validated Award)**

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| If you are studying a ***Higher National Certificate or Higher National Diploma***, use this form if you wish to appeal against the decision of an Award Assessment Board. This form must be submitted via the Principal’s Office and received by the Senior Higher Education Administrator by the Appeal Deadline indicated in your Results Information document which accompanied your Results Transcript. The process is explained in full in the Strode College HE Academic Appeals Procedure (above) |
| Strode College Student Number : |
| Name (in full): |
| Course: |
| Year/Stage: |
| Address at which you can be contacted about your appeal:  *Please let us know if your address changes while your appeal is ongoing.* |
| Please indicate any periods when we will be unable to contact you about your appeal:  e.g. holidays: |
| Telephone number: |
| Email: |
| About your appeal: State the decision of the Assessment Board against which you are appealing  (e.g. requirement to re-take specified modules, degree classification etc.): |
| If your appeal relates to your results in particular Units, list the Unit name and Unit Title: |
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| What are the grounds for your appeal?  (NB Appeals against academic or professional judgement will not be considered. Providing that marks were accurately recorded, assessment regulations were followed and the assessment has been conducted fairly and appropriately, dissatisfaction or disappointment with results does not constitute grounds for appeal.) |
| Please provide additional information to support your appeal:  If you are appealing on the basis of extenuating circumstances, please explain why you were unable to reveal these before the Award Assessment Board met. |
| **I confirm that I have attached evidence to support my appeal and any relevant documents.**  (please tick this box)  **Claims of extenuating circumstances must be accompanied by corroborating evidence.** |
| Please say what outcome you would wish your appeal to achieve. |
| Signed: …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….  Date: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………. |
| **Present this completed form to the Senior Higher Education Administrator, Principal’s Office, Strode College, Church Road, Street, BA16 0AB by the Appeal Deadline stated in your Results Information document.** |

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| **For office use only: Principal’s Office date stamp and signature confirming receipt of this appeal pro-forma:**  Signed by: ……………………………………………… Print name: ………………………………………………  Date: ……………………………………………………. |

**University of Plymouth**

Appendix B

**Appeal Proforma**

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| If you are studying ***a Foundation Degree or BA / BSc (Hons) top up***, use this form if you wish to submit an appeal. You should also refer to the document “Appeals Procedure”, which explains how the appeal process works.  The University expects a student to complete the appeal form in full and submit the appeal themselves. Only in exceptional situations can a student ask a supporter or relative to submit an appeal on their behalf. If you would like someone to submit an appeal on your behalf, please contact [appeals@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@plymouth.ac.uk) from your University email account to give your written consent. The Complaints and Appeals Team will then liaise directly with your representative, unless you specify otherwise. | | |
| University of Plymouth student number: | | |
| Name (in full): | | |
| Course: | Stage/Level: | |
| Faculty: **Partnerships** | | |
| Are you studying at a Partner institution? If so, please state which institution: **Strode College** | | |
| Address at which you can be contacted about your appeal:    **Please let us know if your address changes while your appeal is ongoing.** | | |
| Telephone number: | | |
| Email: | | |
| I am appealing against: *Please tick* | | |
| * The decision of an Award Assessment Board * An in-year Extenuating Circumstances decision * A decision/penalty applied by an Assessment Offences Panel * The decision of a Fitness to Practise / Fitness to Study Panel |  |  |
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| **About your appeal:** State the decision against which you are appealing | | |
| **If your appeal relates to particular modules, list the modules and module codes:** | | |
| **What are the grounds for your appeal?** Please provide as much information about your case as you can. | | |
| **The Appeals Procedure is evidence-based and all appeal forms must be accompanied by independent corroborating evidence.** Please list the evidence that you have provided with this form to support your case. | | |
| **If you are appealing on the basis of extenuating circumstances, explain why you were unable to reveal these before the Award Assessment Board met.** Remember that these can only be considered as grounds for appeal in exceptional circumstances. | | |
| **Say what outcome you would wish your appeal to achieve.** | | |
| Signed: ………………………………………………….  Date: ……………………………………………………. | | |
| This form must be submitted by email to: [appeals@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@plymouth.ac.uk) | | |