

Student Review and Appeals Procedures

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Related documents

[Student Review and Appeals Policy](#)
[Staff Guidelines on Decision-Making in Student Cases](#)
[Review of Decision Form](#)
[Academic Transcripts](#)
[Application for Removal of Exclusion \(Disciplinary\) Noting from Transcript](#)
[Request for Readmission](#)
[Student Complaints Policy](#)
[Student Complaints Procedures](#)
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[Student Misconduct Policy](#)
[Student Misconduct Procedures](#)
[Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#)
[Academic Misconduct Policy – Higher Degree Research Candidates](#)
[Institutional Framework for Promoting Academic Integrity Among Students](#)
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[Academic Standing, Progression and Exclusion Policy](#)
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[Griffith University Privacy Plan](#)
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1. SCOPE

These procedures support the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*. The processes of review and appeal described in this document apply to all students (non-award, undergraduate, postgraduate and research) of the University who request:

- a review of an academic decision (the exercise of academic judgement) of the University in relation to their studies
- a review of an administrative decision (the application of policy and process) of the University in relation to the student

regardless of the location of those studies and whether they are conducted on-campus or off-campus.

2. CONSIDERATIONS WHEN APPLYING FOR REVIEW AND APPEAL OF DECISIONS

To apply for a review of a decision or to appeal a decision by the University there are two requirements:

- the student's application must be in writing using the Review of Decision form; and
- the student's application must be made within the timeframe specified in [section 2.2](#) of these procedures.

If the application is not submitted in accordance with these requirements the application is deemed invalid. In such cases the review officer or appeal body in acknowledging, within 10 working days of lodgement, receipt of the application will advise that the application is invalid and which of the above two requirements the application failed to meet. The application will not be further considered unless the review officer or the appeal body waives non-compliance in their absolute discretion.

2.1 Process

In applying for a review and/or appeal of a decision, students are expected to follow the process set out below. This process is illustrated in Diagram 1 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*:

2.1.1. Step 1 Understanding the Decision

The student informally contacts the decision-maker in person or in writing to obtain an explanation of the decision, any additional information about the decision, check any details and correct any misunderstandings. The outcomes of Step 1 may include:

- The decision-maker sets aside the decision.
- The decision-maker affirms the decision.
- The student, with a better understanding of the grounds upon which the decision was made, does not seek a review of the decision.
- The student submits a formal application to review the decision.

2.1.2. Step 2 Reviewing the Decision

The student submits a formal written application in accordance with [section 3](#) to the review officer who has not been involved in making the decision. The review officer is set out in Tables 1 and 2 for academic decisions and Table 3 for administrative decisions of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*. The outcomes of Step 2 may include:

- The review officer deems the application to be invalid.
- The review officer sets aside the decision.
- The review officer affirms the decision.
- The student, with a better understanding of the grounds upon which the decision was made, does not seek to appeal the review decision.

- The student submits a formal application to appeal the decision (for decisions where an appeal to an appeal body is available).
- If no appeal within the University is available, the student lodges a complaint with an agency external to the University (where relevant).

2.1.3. Step 3 Appealing the Decision

The student submits a formal application in accordance with [sections 4](#) or [5](#). The appropriate internal body for appeal is set out in Tables 1 and 2 for academic decisions and Table 3 for administrative decisions of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*. The outcomes of Step 3 may include:

- The appeal body deems the application to be invalid.
- The appeal body sets aside the decision.
- The appeal body affirms the decision.
- The student, with a better understanding of the grounds upon which the decision was made, does not pursue the matter further.
- The student lodges a complaint with an agency external to the University (where relevant).

2.2 Timeframe for Review and/or Appeal of a Decision

Unless specified otherwise the timeframe for applying for a review of a decision (Step 2) is within 10 working days of notification of the original decision. Step 1 must be completed prior to the lodgement of an application for a review of a decision (Step 2). The timeframe for Step 3 is normally within 10 working days of notification of the review of the decision (Step 2). Exceptions to this timeframe are specified within Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*. If the application for review or appeal is not made within the required timeframe, the review officer or appeal body may decline to consider the matter in their absolute discretion.

The normal timeframe for review and/or appeal of a decision is as follows:

Steps 1 and 2

Within 10 working days of the original decision:

- The student is to lodge a *Review of Decision Form*.

Within 10 working days of lodgement of the *Review of Decision Form*:

- The review officer acknowledges receipt of the form, advising the timeframe for reviewing the decision.
- The review officer commences a review of all relevant material.

Within 20 working days of lodgement of the *Review of Decision Form*:

- The review officer provides written advice to the student on the outcome of the review.
- The review officer advises the student of any rights to appeal the decision and the timeframe for the appeal process.

Step 3

Within 10 working days of the student receiving the review decision:

- The student is to lodge an updated *Review of Decision Form* requesting an appeal.

Within 10 working days of lodgement of the updated *Review of Decision Form*:

- The Secretary of the University Appeals Committee or the appeal body acknowledges receipt of the Form and the timeframe for the appeal process.
- The appeal body commences a review of all relevant material.
- If the matter is under consideration by the University Appeals Committee, the Chair will determine whether to dismiss the appeal or refer the student's appeal to the University Appeals Committee in accordance with these procedures.

Within 20 working days of lodgement of the updated *Review of Decision Form*:

- The appeal body provides written advice to the student on the outcome of the appeal.
- The appeal body advises the student of their rights to make a complaint about the decision to the Queensland Ombudsman.

2.3 Role of the Decision-Maker

Academic and professional staff who make decisions:

- about those matters for which their role (e.g. course convenor, program director) or their position (e.g. Manager, Examinations & Timetabling Manager, Student Administration Centre) is designated as the responsible officer within a University policy or delegation schedule;
- in accordance with conditions, criteria and timeframes specified within the University's policies, processes and business systems;
- on the basis of documentation specified in the University's policies, processes, websites and business systems, including Programs and Courses website, Course Profiles, Learning@Griffith;
- through identification of the key issues and relevant considerations;
- in a manner that is reasonable, fair and impartial including evaluating all relevant facts, disclosing any conflicts of interest and maintaining the student's privacy and the confidentiality of the matter.

2.4 Role of the Review Officer or Relevant Senior Officer as an Appeal Body

An academic or professional staff member not involved in making the decision who is designated as the review officer or appeal body within these procedures or a University policy and who decides the review or appeal in accordance with [section 5](#) of these procedures.

2.5 Role of the University Appeals Committee

A committee constituted in accordance with its constitution that is designated as the appeal body within these procedures or another University policy and which decides the appeal in accordance with [section 4](#) of these procedures.

3. APPLYING FOR REVIEW OF A DECISION

In applying for review of a decision to a review officer or appeal body the student is required to specify the grounds in writing using the *Review of Decision* form and attaching copies of all documents relevant to the decision.

4. MAKING AN APPEAL TO THE UNIVERSITY APPEALS COMMITTEE

4.1 Lodgement of Appeal

To apply for an appeal of a decision in Table 1 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* a student must complete a new *Review of Decision* form.

The student should provide copies of all relevant documentation, including documentation from *Step 1 Understanding the Decision* and *Step 2 Reviewing the Decision*. A student must attach all correspondence from the Step 2 review officer, including the letter advising the student of the outcome of the review process and supporting reasons.

A student who provides false or misleading information shall have their application to appeal the decision deemed to be invalid and may be dealt with in accordance with the University's *Student Misconduct Policy*.

The *Review of Decision* is to be addressed to the Secretary of the University Appeals Committee, Registrar's Office.

4.2 Consideration of Appeal

The University Appeals Committee Constitution allows for the Chair of the Appeals Committee to act executively in making a decision on behalf of the Committee in all matters. The Chair's executive decisions are reported to the next meeting of the Appeals Committee for ratification.

4.2.1 In considering the student's appeal the Chair, University Appeals Committee may:

- Evaluate the application for review and make a preliminary assessment as to whether there is sufficient evidence to make a decision.
- Request further information from the student, the Dean (Learning & Teaching) or Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) responsible for the student's program or another relevant person, including from the Deputy Registrar, in relation to the application of policies and procedures of the University.

4.2.2 Prior to a decision being made under 4.2.3 the student must be given access or an opportunity to inspect all documents before the Chair, University Appeals Committee and a reasonable opportunity to provide any written response.

4.2.3 The Chair, University Appeals Committee may take the following actions:

Deem the appeal to be invalid in accordance with [section 2](#) of these procedures.

- Decide to dismiss the appeal because the academic decision seems to the Chair to have been properly taken and the student has not presented sufficient evidence to justify further consideration of the appeal. The student is advised of the outcome with supporting reasons. The Chair reports the decision to the next meeting of the University Appeals Committee.
- Refer the student's appeal for decision as to whether the grounds of appeal have been established and there is sufficient evidence to support the finding that the decision was an unreasonable decision in a meeting of the Committee in accordance with section 4.2.4.

4.2.4 If the student's appeal is referred for a decision in a meeting of the University Appeals Committee, the Committee may take the following actions:

- Dismiss the appeal and affirm the decision in its original form.
- Uphold the appeal and set aside the decision.
 - Find that the appeal presented by the student constitutes sufficient justification to require the Dean (Learning & Teaching) or Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) to take certain actions in order to review the original academic decision and report back to Committee. In this case the appeal is held over to a future meeting of the Committee and the student must first be given access or an opportunity to inspect all further documents before the Committee and a reasonable opportunity to provide any written response.
 - Request further information from the student, the Dean (Learning & Teaching), Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) or other relevant person, including from the Deputy Registrar in relation to the application of policies and procedures of the University. In this case the appeal is held over to a future meeting of the Committee and the student must first be given access or an opportunity to inspect all further documents before the Committee and a reasonable opportunity to provide any written response.

4.3 Response to Student

Once a decision has been made, the Chair, University Appeals Committee will provide written advice to the student on the outcome of the consideration of the appeal with reasons via the Secretary, University Appeals Committee. This advice is provided to the student, to the Step 2 review officer and the original decision-maker.

5. MAKING AN APPEAL TO THE RELEVANT SENIOR OFFICER

5.1 Lodgement of Appeal

To apply for an appeal of a decision in Tables 2 or 3 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* a student must complete a new *Review of Decision* form.

The student should provide copies of all relevant documentation, including documentation from *Step 1 Understanding the Decision* and *Step 2 Reviewing the Decision*. A student must attach all correspondence from the Step 2 review officer, including the letter advising the student of the outcome of the review process.

A student who provides false or misleading information shall have their application to appeal the decision deemed to be invalid and may be dealt with in accordance with the University's *Student Misconduct Policy*.

Where the student is unsure of who is the Relevant Senior Officer, the student may lodge the *Review of a Decision* form to the Office of the Registrar who shall direct it to the Relevant Senior Officer.

5.2 Consideration of Appeal

On considering the student's appeal, the Relevant Senior Officer may:

- 5.2.1 Evaluate the application for review and make a preliminary assessment as to whether there is sufficient evidence to make a decision.
- 5.2.2 Request further information from the student or staff involved in relation to the matters which are the subject of the review and the Deputy Registrar in relation to the application of policies and procedures of the University. The Relevant Senior Officer may request to interview a student.
- 5.2.3 Decide to refer the appeal to a relevant member of staff to inquire into the matter and make a recommendation to the Relevant Senior Officer.
- 5.2.4 Prior to decision being made under 5.2.5 the student must be given access or an opportunity to inspect all documents before the Relevant Senior Officer and a reasonable opportunity to provide any written response.
- 5.2.5 Make a decision as to whether the grounds of appeal have been established and there is sufficient evidence to support the finding that the decision was an unreasonable decision.
- 5.2.6 Take the following actions:
 - Deem the appeal to be invalid in accordance with [section 2](#) of these procedures.
 - Dismiss the appeal, and affirm the decision in its original form.
 - Uphold the appeal and set aside the decision.
 - Take such other action which, in the opinion of the Relevant Senior Officer, will assist the resolution of the appeal.

5.3 Response to Student

Once a decision has been made, the Relevant Senior Officer will provide written advice to the student on the outcome of the consideration of the appeal with reasons. This advice is provided to the student, to the Step 2 review officer and the original decision-maker.

6. STUDENT SUPPORT

Students applying for review of a decision are advised that assistance and advice can be sought from the student representative organisations (The Griffith University Student Representative Council, the Gold Coast Student Guild and the Griffith University Postgraduate Students Association), Student Connect Centres, Student Services, HDR Advocates and Griffith International.

Where students are requested to attend meetings with a decision-maker, review officer or an appeal body they may be accompanied or represented by a support person. The support person must not be a currently practising solicitor or barrister. The role of the support person is to bear witness to the meeting and what is discussed. Where authorised in writing by the student the support person may assist in representing the student in the presentation of their case.

7. MULTIPLE REVIEWS / APPEALS

As a general principle where a student is requesting a review and/or appeal of more than one decision at a time, the matters are conducted separately, although the outcome in one may impact the other. For example, a review about an academic grade and an appeal about exclusion by the same student will be conducted separately, although the decision about the academic grade may impact the decision about exclusion.

If there is any uncertainty or dispute about how multiple reviews / appeals are to be conducted, including whether they be conducted simultaneously or consecutively (and if so in which order), the matter shall be referred to the Deputy Registrar for advice.

8. DEFINITIONS

academic decision means a decision referred to in Tables 1 and 2 of section 3.2 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*.

academic judgement refers to the considered application of academic expertise to matters by an academic staff member of the University. It is a judgement that is made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert will suffice.

administrative decision means a decision referred to in Table 3 of section 3.2 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*.

affirms decision refers to a determination that the original decision shall stand.

appeal means a review of a decision by an officer or body specified in Step 3 in the Tables in section 3.2 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*.

appeal body refers to the University Appeals Committee or the relevant officer who is authorised to hear appeals in relation to decisions made by academic and professional staff on academic or administrative matters specified in Step 3 in Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*.

course convenor is the academic staff member appointed by the Head of School to have responsibility for the management of teaching and assessment of a course. The Course Convenor is a decision-maker as specified in these procedures.

Dean (Griffith Graduate Research School) is the academic staff member responsible for handling negotiations regarding disputes related to all aspects of research training, as referred to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research). The Dean (Griffith Graduate Research School) is a decision-maker in these procedures.

Dean (Learning and Teaching) is the academic staff member within each Group responsible for matters relating to learning and teaching in non-award, undergraduate and postgraduate programs. The Dean (Learning and Teaching) is a review officer or an appeal body as specified in these procedures.

decision-maker refers to academic and professional staff who through their role or position are authorised as the responsible officer within a University policy or delegation schedule to make decisions about those matters.

program director is the academic staff member appointed by the Group Board to provide curriculum leadership for and quality enhancement of one or a suite of the University's programs while ensuring an effective and positive student learning experience. The Program Director is a decision-maker or review officer as specified in these procedures.

relevant senior officer for each decision refers to the officer/s identified in Steps 2 and 3 of the Tables in section 3.2 the *Student Review and Appeals Policy* but does not include a reference to the University Appeals Committee.

review means a review of a decision by an officer specified in Step 2 in the Tables in section 3.2 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*

review officer refers to an academic or professional staff member not involved in making the original decision who is designated as the review officer specified in Step 2 in the Tables in section 3.2 of the *Student Review and Appeals Policy*.

set aside the decision refers to a determination that the original decision shall be set aside, in which case the review officer or the appeal body as the case may be may substitute their own decision or refer the matter back to the decision-maker to make the decision afresh.

student refers to a person who has an active enrolment status in a program of the University. To have an active enrolment status, the student shall have:

- accepted an offer of admission to a program and shall have completed the enrolment procedures prescribed by the University;
- paid such fees and charges as the University may require to be paid as a condition of enrolment;
- fulfilled the conditions prescribed for Commonwealth supported students, in the case of a student admitted to a program as a Commonwealth supported student; and
- completed any other procedures which may be required as a condition of enrolment.

In some instances a student undertaking a program classified as a Higher Degree by Research (HDR) may be referred to as an HDR candidate.

unreasonable decision is a decision which is not reasonably open to the decision-maker. A decision will not be an unreasonable decision merely because the review officer or appeal body may have arrived at a different decision.

An unreasonable decision may (but will not necessarily) include a decision:

- made without a documented reason at the time of the decision or the documented reasons are not supported under scrutiny or examination;
- the decision-maker did not have authority to make;
- where the decision-maker failed to take into account a relevant consideration or took into account an irrelevant consideration in making the decision and this materially affected the decision;
- the decision-maker failed to follow University policy and procedures where they were required to do so and this materially affected the decision;
- the decision-maker was biased or exercised their discretion in an unprofessional manner; or
- where the penalty applied to a student was unduly harsh.

In determining whether an academic decision was an unreasonable decision, the review officer or the appeal body may determine that the decision was reasonably open to the decision-maker by reference only to a review of the process followed by the decision-maker in the exercise of the academic judgment and is not required to assess the academic judgment of the academic decision.

University Appeals Committee refers to the body as described in the University Appeals Committee constitution.