

## Academic Appeal Policy

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V.2.4	June 2024	Updated for currency	Quality Manager/Quality Officer (casework)	Annually
V.2.3	July 2023	Updated for post-UEL process	Quality Manager	Annually
V. 2.2	June 2023 Chair's Action, Registrar/COO	Updated for Academic Appeals Form	Quality Manager	Biennially and as required
V2.0	June 2022 Academic Board	Updated for ICMP awards	Quality Manager	Biennially and as required
V1.0	June 2019 Academic Board	Creation of procedure	Deputy Registrar	Biennially and as required
<b>Related policies</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Complaints Policy</li> </ul>				
<b>External Reference</b>				
<a href="#">OIA Good Practice Framework</a> , Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals.				

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Decisions concerning student marks, progression and overall award can only be made through the Assessment Board.
- 1.2. The decisions of the Assessment Board are final, and only in exceptional circumstances can a decision of an Assessment Board be modified.
- 1.3. An academic appeal, as described by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), is a request for a review of a decision made at the Assessment Board.
- 1.4. This procedure provides a framework for any student seeking to challenge a decision of an Assessment Board and remedy any errors on the part of ICMP.
- 1.5. The appeals procedure applies to all students enrolled or previously enrolled on award-bearing or non-accredited (short) programmes at ICMP.

## **2. Grounds for appeal**

- 2.1. In order to be considered, an appeal will need to meet one or more of the specific grounds for appeal as set below:
  - 2.1.1 There has been an administrative error in the information considered through the extenuating circumstances process or at the Assessment Board, or an error in the procedure that was followed.
  - 2.1.2 The student was prevented from attending an exam or submitting coursework by illness or another personal reason but could not apply for extenuating circumstances before the deadline.
  - 2.1.3 There is evidence of bias against the student on the part of one or more individuals involved in the assessment process.
- 2.2. Appeals regarding the academic judgement of the Assessment Board about a grade or other outcome will not be accepted.

## **3. General Principles**

### **3.1. Timely and transparent procedures**

- 3.1.1. All appeals are dealt with in a timely manner and through processes which are clear, straightforward, and transparent.

### **3.2. Anonymity or third-party appeals**

- 3.2.1. ICMP expects that students submit the appeal themselves. Appeals made by a third-party will only be admitted under exceptional circumstances and with the student's written consent. The Quality Office will determine whether the appeal can proceed.

### **3.3. Submission in good faith**

- 3.3.1. ICMP presumes that all appeals are submitted in good faith and will not disadvantage any student for bringing forward an appeal.

- 1.1.1. A vexatious appeal is one that is repetitive, unreasonable, frivolous, and/or without foundation. It may be made for the sole purpose to intimidate or to annoy.

If an appeal is deemed to be vexatious, the Quality Office will write to the student to explain that the appeal cannot be progressed for this reason.

### **3.4. Impartiality in investigations**

3.4.1. All appeals are investigated by the Investigating Officer, a senior staff member who was not involved in the initial decision by the Assessment Board and who is appointed by the Quality Office.

3.5. ICMP's final position on an appeal investigation is confirmed by the Investigating Officer to provide assurance that this is the definitive response of the provider and that the case has been managed professionally.

### **3.6. Privacy**

3.6.1. The appeal is investigated with due regard for the privacy of all parties. The appeal is only disclosed to those immediately involved and/or those whose participation is necessary for a resolution. All parties are required to respect the confidentiality of the process.

### **3.7. Immediate Action**

3.7.1. Some academic appeals may require immediate action. These may include, but are not limited to:

- i. cases where the impact of the issues raised has detrimental consequences for the student's mental health;
- ii. cases where external time limits apply, such as where delay may cause significant difficulties regarding the student's visa status.

3.7.2 In such cases the Quality Office will expedite the matter and ensure that the outcome is resolved in the shortest possible time.

### **3.8. Group Appeals**

3.8.1. Where an appeal is submitted by a group of students, one member of the group must be nominated as the main contact. Each member of the group must confirm in writing that they wish the nominated individual to act in this capacity and that the appeal reflects their concerns. The nominated contact will receive updates on the appeal on behalf of the group. All members of the group will receive notification of the outcome individually.

### **3.9. Attendance at graduation**

3.9.1. Students who are eligible to receive an award and wish to appeal against the decision of the Assessment Board should seek advice from the Quality Office by emailing [appeals@icmp.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@icmp.ac.uk).

### **3.10. Appeals and Complaints**

3.10.1. ICMP operates separate Appeals and Complaints procedures.

3.10.2. Where it is considered that an appeal contains elements of a complaint, a decision will be made by the Quality Office on what elements should be processed through the Student Complaints Policy.

- 3.11. All appeals must be processed by the Quality Office, who will work with Programme Administration and Assessment to ensure that accurate and comprehensive records are maintained.
- 3.12. Outcomes from appeal investigations will be used to improve the overall student experience. Recommendations are monitored by the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC).
- 3.13. Appeals will be dealt with in strategic alignment with ICMP's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion policies, free from bias. Where a student has declared a disability, ICMP will endeavour where appropriate to ensure that information is available to them in appropriate formats, with reasonable adjustments made to proceedings within the procedure as required.

#### 4. Process

- 4.1. If a student has questions or concerns about a grade or other Assessment Board decision, they should in the first instance seek to resolve this through informal means. This typically involves a discussion with the relevant member of academic or Programme Administration staff. All parties should work together to seek resolution at this informal stage, noting that a formal appeal can only be launched if there are sufficient grounds, as described in section 2.
- 4.2. If resolution at this stage is not possible, and if there are grounds for appeal, the student must complete the [Student Appeal Form](#) in full. If they have questions about whether there are sufficient grounds for appeal, or if they require assistance completing the form, they should contact the Quality Office by emailing [appeals@icmp.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@icmp.ac.uk). The form must be submitted within 10 working days of receiving the outcome of the Assessment Board.
- 4.3 The Quality Office will review the form to confirm that the academic appeal is submitted under the correct procedures, falls within the grounds upon which an appeal may be made, is submitted within the deadline and is accompanied by the necessary evidence. If the grounds for appeal are not sufficient, the Quality Office will notify the student in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the appeal to say that the appeal cannot proceed with the form and evidence submitted.
- 4.4 If there are sufficient grounds for appeal, the Quality Office will notify the student within 5 working days and make the necessary arrangements for a formal investigation. That investigation will be conducted by the Investigating Officer, a senior staff member not involved in the initial decision by the Assessment Board. They will speak to key staff and consider all documents and other evidence. The investigator will report the outcome to the Quality Office in the form of an Investigation Report.
- 4.5 In the case of a successful appeal citing extenuating circumstances, the student may be permitted to re-sit the relevant component capped or uncapped.
- 4.6 The Quality Office will normally notify the student in writing of the outcome within 10 working days. More complex investigations may require a longer period, in which case the Quality Office will notify the student of the delay.

- 4.7 If the appeal has been upheld, the letter will explain what actions will be taken and by whom. The Quality Office will notify Programme Administration and Assessment by email of the outcome.
- 4.8 If the appeal is not upheld, reasons for the decision will be clearly stated. The student will also be told how to access support from Student Services and the Student Voice system.
- 4.9 The letter will also explain the student's right to proceed to the review stage, the grounds on which they can do so, and the time limit for escalating to the review. (See section 5.)

## **5. Review**

- 5.1 Where a student is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may submit a request for review. Grounds for requesting a review for a decision are limited to the following:
- 5.1.1 There is evidence that there has been a material procedural irregularity in the conduct of the process;
  - 5.1.2 There is additional evidence that has not previously been considered and could not reasonably have been made available at an earlier stage;
  - 5.1.3 There is bias or reasonable perception of bias during the procedure;
- 5.2 Any student wishing to request a review must email [appeals@icmp.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@icmp.ac.uk) stating the ground(s) for the request. This must happen within 10 working days of the date that the student was informed of the outcome.
- 5.3 If the Quality Office determines that there are reasonable grounds for a review, they will forward the request to the reviewer, a senior member of ICMP staff not previously involved in the case. The reviewer will consider the evidence and make a recommendation. If the recommendation is that the review is upheld, the Quality Office will notify the student and Programme Administration and Assessment. If the request for review is denied, the case will be closed. A decision will be made and communicated to the student within 20 working days of receipt of the request.
- 5.4 The decision of the Reviewer is final. This is considered the end of ICMP's internal procedures.

## **6. Completion of Procedures (COP)**

- 6.1 Following the outcome of the review, the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures (COP) Letter. Information about Completion of Procedures Letters can be found in the [OIA Framework](#).

## **7. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator**

- 7.1. Following the issue of a Completion of Procedures letter, the student may lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education. Details of the OIA and the relevant information in relation to the Scheme can be accessed at [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk). Further information and advice can be obtained from the Quality Office at [appeals@icmp.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@icmp.ac.uk).

7.2. The grounds and eligibility for review and outcomes shall be determined by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.