



University of the  
Highlands and Islands  
West Highland College

Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd  
agus nan Eilean  
Colaiste na Gàidhealtachd an Iar

West Highland College, University of the Highlands and Islands

## Further Education Academic Appeals Policy

### POL

Lead Officer (Post):	Assistant Principal Quality, Learning & Teaching
Responsible Office/ Department:	Quality
Responsible Committee:	F&GP
Review Officer (Post):	Quality & Registry Manager / Head of Centre
Date policy approved:	27/03/2019
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	n/a
Date policy due for review:	January 2022 (or earlier if required)
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	21/01/2019
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	n/a

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance and Policy Officer on 01463 279000.

## Policy Summary

Overview	<p>Why is the policy required?</p> <p>This policy, together with the associated Academic Appeals Procedures, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by West Highland College, where there are grounds to do so.</p>
Purpose	<p>What will the policy achieve?</p> <p>The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (e.g. a decision by a Progression Board).</p>
Scope	<p>Who does the policy apply to?</p> <p>This policy applies to all Further Education courses (normally up to and including SCQF Level 6)</p>
Consultation	<p>Who has been consulted on the policy, and who will be notified?</p> <p>The policy was developed by a group of practitioners made up from across the University of the Highlands and Islands partnership. All relevant staff and students will be notified.</p>
Implementation and Monitoring	<p>Who will be responsible for implementing and monitoring the policy, and what resources/ costs will be incurred?</p> <p>Colleges will be responsible for local implementation of the policy. The policy is part of the business-as-usual function of the college.</p>
Risk Implications	<p>What are the risk implications of this policy?</p> <p>Failure to adopt a strong policy and follow the procedures would undermine the student experience and the academic reputation of the College.</p>
Link with Strategy	<p>How is this policy linked to University strategy?</p> <p>To deliver excellent and sustainable learning for all Ensure that the student voice is central to our decision making processes in governance and management.</p>
Impact Assessment	<p>Equality Impact Assessment: 21/01/2019 – No negative impact.</p> <p>Privacy Impact Assessment: n/a</p>

## 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy, together with the associated Academic Appeals Procedures, represents an appeals framework that ensures students can request a review of an assessment decision made by West Highland College, where there are grounds to do so.
- 1.2 The policy aims to ensure appropriate, fair and consistent treatment of all parties involved in any further education academic appeal across the partnership.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Academic Appeal:** a procedure through which students may in certain circumstances ask for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress or award.
- 2.2 **Progression Board:** a panel of staff from the College who consider and determine student awards and progression to a more advanced stage.
- 2.3 **Awarding Body:** an organisation that designs, develops, delivers and awards the recognition of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and/or competences) of an individual following an assessment and quality assurance process.

## 3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the policy is to set out the circumstances in which a student may wish to appeal against a decision provided during an assessment process or against a decision about progress between levels (e.g. a decision by a Progression Board).
- 3.2 The procedure allows the student to raise an appeal at an informal level and, if the outcome of this is not satisfactory, to use the formal procedure.

The internal formal Academic Appeal Procedure should be followed before escalation to external Awarding Body appeals processes. Students will be signposted to relevant external Awarding Body appeal processes at the start of their programme of study.

- 3.3 External appeals procedures vary, depending on the type of qualification for which the appeal is being made and the awarding body. The overriding principle is that all appeals will be treated fairly and objectively.
- 3.4 Without prejudice to the outcome of an appeal, a student may continue to attend classes and make use of the facilities of the College whilst their appeal is being heard.
- 3.5 Students who have completed their programme, who have grounds to appeal an award decision or programme progression board, will be unable to receive their award until the matter has been fully resolved.
- 3.6 The timescales set out in the Procedures must be followed. Students and staff should note where there may be variations between awarding bodies.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to students enrolled on courses normally up to and including SCQF Level 6 (see Section 4.2 for variations to this criteria).

4.2 There are a small number of Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ) courses at SCQF Level 7 that are considered as Further Education courses for the purposes of the UHI Partnership. This policy applies to these students.

#### 4.3 **Grounds for Appeal**

Appeals against an assessment decision will normally only be considered on one or more of the following grounds:

4.3.1 That a student's performance in the assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors. The student must have been unable to, or have a valid reason not to, divulge the information to their lecturer prior to assessment. In the case of a Progression Board, the information must have been unavailable at the time the determination was made. In these cases, the appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence to the Head of Curriculum (see Procedures).

4.3.2 Evidence of College academic assessment administrative error or that an assessment was not conducted in accordance with the College's specific assessment policies/procedures.

4.3.3 That evidence is produced that some other material irregularity has occurred.

## 5. Exceptions

5.1 This policy does not apply to Higher Education students, e.g. normally those students studying courses at SCQF Level 7 and above (see Section 4.2 for variations to this). These students should refer to the UHI Academic Standards and Quality Regulations.

5.2 Appeals that question the academic judgement of a member of staff or an academic assessment body will not be considered.

5.3 Students undertaking non-regulated qualifications (NQs), have no further right of appeal against internal assessment decisions. The final decision rests with the academic partner. External awarding bodies will not accept internal assessment appeals.

5.4 Appeals will not normally be permitted from third parties on behalf of a student.

5.5 SQA Post-results Services for National Qualifications and other external assessments. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.

5.6 Exceptional Circumstances Considerations. Please refer to relevant Awarding Body Guidance for further details.

## 6. Notification

6.1 All staff members will be notified of changes to the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures through the normal channels.

6.2 Teaching staff and staff advising students should have a detailed knowledge of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures.

6.3 Any changes to awarding body regulations will be reflected in the annual review process of this policy and associated procedures.

6.4 Students will be made aware of the policy within four weeks of commencing their course.

6.5 The policy will be publicly available on the College's website.

## 7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 West Highland College UHI Board of Management are responsible for approving the policy and ensuring that it is followed. West Highland College UHI Board of Management are also responsible for ensuring the strategic effectiveness of the policy.
- 7.2 The Principal / College Management Team are responsible for operational compliance with the policy set by the West Highland College UHI Board of Management, and making recommendations to the Board about updates to the policy. The Principal / College Management Team are also responsible for ensuring the operational effectiveness of the policy and making provision for training for relevant staff.
- 7.3 The Further Education Academic Appeals Policy Ownership Group is responsible for overseeing annual updates to the Policy and Procedures.
- 7.4 Line managers are responsible for ensuring staff participate in training and follow the policy in their day-to-day role.
- 7.5 All relevant staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with the policy and procedures.

## 8. Legislative Framework

- [Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [General Data Protection Regulations](#)

## 9. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

- [Academic Standards and Quality Regulations](#)
- Further Education Academic Appeals Procedure
- [West Highland College Access and Inclusion Strategy](#)
- [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)
- Positive Learning Environment Policy and Disciplinary Procedure
- Fitness to Study Guidelines
- [Learner Support Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Progression Board Guidance](#)

## 10. Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0				
1				
2				
3				
4				