

Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results: overview of the appeals process in respect of overall results

1. If you consider that you have genuine grounds for appeal against your overall result in a Final Examination or in an Examination for a Part, you have the right to submit an appeal to the Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results. The process for appealing to the Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results is described below.
2. The Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results is not responsible for considering appeals against a module mark except in those cases where the module mark has affected the overall result. If you wish to appeal against a module mark, you should refer to the procedures for review of module marks, which can be found at: <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/exa-appeal.aspx>.
3. A student may not appeal against the academic judgment of Examiners, i.e. a student cannot appeal simply because he or she believes she deserved a better result. Admissible grounds for appeal would normally relate to procedural defects in the conduct of the examinations or in the determination of a result, or to a student's failure, due to insurmountable circumstances, to inform the Examiners of an extenuating circumstance.

In respect of research students, it should be noted that, in accordance with the University's Code of Practice on Research Students, section 8, the panel will not normally consider complaints about the inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the period of study; such problems should have been raised with the Head of School (and, if necessary with the Sub-Dean or Director of Administration of the appropriate Faculty) before a student submits.

4. If you are contemplating appealing against your result, you should consult your Head of School/Department or School Director of Teaching and Learning, or, in the case of research students, your supervisor as soon as possible after you receive your result. You may also wish to consult the Director of Academic Quality Support in relation to the appeals process.

You are strongly encouraged to consult the Student Advisors in Reading University Students' Union (RUSU). The RUSU Student Advisors are professional staff with knowledge and experience of the University's appeal procedures. They can offer confidential and independent advice on the appeals process, help you to consider whether you have grounds for appeal, support you in the preparation of your case, and accompany you at the hearing as a 'friend'. You are strongly encouraged to consult a Student Advisor before preparing your statement of appeal. Further information is available at: http://www.rusu.co.uk/advice/academic_advice/appeals/.

5. Meetings of the Standing Committee on Examination Results in the Session 2010/11 are scheduled for Friday 4 February 2011 and on Wednesday 13 July/Thursday 14 July 2011. There will also be a meeting on Thursday 17 November/Friday 18 November 2011.
6. In order to pursue an appeal, you must write to the Director of Academic Quality Support (c/o Examinations Office) stating that you wish to submit an appeal, and such notification must be received by the Director of Academic Quality Support no later than Monday 6 December 2010 for the Winter meeting, noon on Wednesday 29 June 2011 for the Summer meeting, and noon on Wednesday 12 October 2011 for the Autumn meeting. The statement of appeal, together with any supporting evidence, must reach the Examinations Office no later than noon on Wednesday 8 December 2010 for the Winter meeting, no later than noon on Friday 1 July 2011 for the Summer meeting, and no later than Friday 14 October 2011 for the Autumn meeting.
7. Once you have notified your intention to appeal, your graduation will be postponed until the Degree Congregation following the settlement of the case.
8. Each case must be submitted to the appropriate meeting of the Committee, i.e. the meeting next following the announcement of a candidate's result (unless the student can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Chair of the Committee that the request for a review is based on a factor which could not have been known at the time).
9. The written case will first be considered by the Chair to decide if there is a case to hear. If the Chair decides that there is not a case, you may still request to meet with the panel to defend your case, and, if at that stage the panel decides that there is a case to hear, it will hear your case at its next subsequent meeting. If the Chair determines that there is a case, the statement will be given to your Head of School as well as to members of the panel, and the Head of School will be required to provide a written reply, which will be sent to you as well as to the panel in advance of the meeting.
10. You and the Head of School will be summoned to attend the meeting of the panel hearing the case. No other member of the School will normally be present, but the panel has discretion to call other members of the School or of the Faculty if this proves necessary. The advice of the University Medical Advisor, the Director of the University Counselling Service or an appropriate professional will be available to the panel in appropriate cases, as determined by the Chair. You may, if desired, be accompanied by a 'friend', who should normally be a currently registered student of the University or a member of staff or a sabbatical officer of RUSU or a student advisor working within RUSU.
11. The Chair is responsible for the conduct of the meeting but the following procedures will normally be observed. The panel will see the student and, if present, the student's friend, and the Head of School. The student will not be expected to repeat the written evidence which has been submitted in advance of the meeting, but will be given an opportunity to emphasise any points in this submission and to comment on the Head of School's reply, and may then be questioned by members of the panel. A similar procedure will operate in the panel's interview with the Head of School which follows. The panel will then meet in private to identify the issues which it considers relevant to the case and to determine its conclusions.
12. The Chair has the power to make reasonable adjustments to the arrangements for a meeting in the case of an appellant with a disability or disabling condition in order

to enable the appellant fully to participate in the hearing. If you are concerned that you may not be able fully to participate in the hearing due to a disability or disabling condition, you should contact the Secretary not later than five working days prior to the hearing to request that consideration be given to an adjustment to the arrangements.

13. The outcome of the panel's deliberations will be:

(a) In the case of undergraduate and taught postgraduate students:

either (i) A decision not to vary the result. In this case, the decision of the panel is final, subject to the normal rights of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education;

or (ii) A recommendation to vary the result. In this case, the views of the appropriate External Examiner(s) shall be sought, and, if the External Examiner(s) agree with the recommendation of the panel, the recommendation shall be referred to the Senate for approval. If any External Examiner disagrees with the recommendation of the panel, the Minute of the hearing and the response(s) of the External Examiner(s) shall be referred to the Senate for resolution;

The decision of the Senate is final, subject to the normal rights of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

(b) In the case of students for a higher degree by research (including PhD, MPhil by thesis, LLM by thesis, and professional doctorates):

either (i) A recommendation not to vary the result. In this case, the decision of the panel is final, subject to the normal rights of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education;

or (ii) A recommendation that a candidate be deemed not to have submitted his or her thesis or that the examination be set aside. In this case, the recommendation shall be referred to the Senate for approval;

or (iii) Exceptionally, a recommendation that a specified higher degree be awarded. In this case, the recommendation shall be referred to an Independent Assessor, who shall submit a brief report to the Senate. If the Independent Assessor agrees with the recommendation of the panel, the recommendation shall be referred to the Senate for approval. If the Independent Assessor disagrees with the recommendation of the panel, the case shall be referred to the Senate for resolution.

The decision of the Senate in respect of (ii) or (iii) is final, subject to the normal rights of appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.

14. In the case of research students, no decision by the panel can affect a student's normal right (if any) to re-submit his or her thesis for re-examination under Ordinance V.

15. You are advised to read the full procedures of the Committee, which are available at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/exams/Policies/exa-appeal.aspx>. The membership of the Committee is given in the University Calendar at <http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/Calendar>. The Committee's status and function are those of a 'domestic tribunal' and it is not therefore bound to follow legal procedures.

1 June 2011

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Director of Academic Quality Support