

Academic Appeals Procedure



A1

GC Academy Limited

Fair review of academic decisions

Revision date 9 September 2026

Institutional approval pending

This procedure explains how students challenge an academic decision, the grounds and deadlines that apply, and how an independent Appeals Panel reaches and implements a reasoned outcome. It covers assessment and academic progression, including Final Projects and academic-misconduct decisions. Forms at the end support submission and a complete decision record.

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Responsibility and approval

The Head of Institution owns this procedure and ensures implementation of authorised outcomes. The Head of Quality Assurance Office coordinates procedural administration, records, access and review. The QA and Curriculum Committee reviews proposed amendments and Academic Board approves the academic procedure under A16 and A17.

Revision date: 9 September 2026. Review: annually and after a material change in academic regulations, assessment or governance. The approval record establishes the effective date and the version made available to students. This revision date does not itself establish institutional approval.

Approval reference and date: _____

Effective date and next review: _____

Related procedures and readiness

A4 governs first-instance academic-misconduct cases; this procedure governs their independent appeal. A16 and A17 define academic authority and Panel independence. A18 governs assessment, mitigation, progression and Final Project review. A23 sets ethical and conflict requirements, and A25 governs student records. General complaints follow A2 and retain their own investigation, decision and review arrangements.

The original appeal grounds and ten-working-day submission period are retained. Academic-misconduct appeals proceed directly to the formal route. Other academic matters retain early clarification with the tutor or module coordinator, without preventing timely formal submission. The formal written outcome is due within fifteen working days of receipt.

Before the first assessment is issued, the Head of Institution confirms aligned and approved procedures, access to suitable independent Panel members, staff preparation, secure records and working submission and alternative-contact arrangements. Actual approvals, appointments, communications and case records are retained separately.

Scope and grounds for academic appeal

1 Purpose and scope

GC Academy provides a fair, impartial and timely process for students to challenge academic decisions. An appeal requests review of an identified grade, assessment, academic progression or mitigating-circumstances decision. The procedure also applies to Final Project results and to findings or sanctions under A4.

The student identifies the decision, explains the grounds and supplies relevant evidence or identifies material held by the Academy. The Panel reviews whether the decision was reached fairly and is supported by the applicable rules and evidence. The same safeguards apply where teaching or assessment involves an academic partner; GC Academy retains responsibility for the appeal.

Concerns about services, administration, harassment or staff conduct follow A2 or A23 as appropriate. Where a submission contains both a complaint and an academic appeal, QA explains and coordinates the routes while preserving the appeal deadline and the separate decision-making powers.

2 Grounds for appeal

The following grounds retain the protections in the existing A1 procedure. A student can rely on more than one ground and should explain how it affected the disputed decision.

- Procedural irregularity in assessment or decision-making, such as failure to apply the published requirements, an error in the recorded result, or omission of a required assessment or moderation step.
- Perceived unfairness or bias, including a relevant conflict of interest or inconsistent application of the published criteria. Identify the concern and the available supporting information.
- New relevant evidence unavailable at the original submission or decision. Explain its relevance and why it could not reasonably have been provided earlier.
- Inadequate consideration of mitigating circumstances, including relevant evidence, an approved adjustment or a reported technical disruption affecting assessment.

For a decision under A4, the grounds also include a finding not reasonably supported by the evidence or a materially disproportionate sanction. Alleged procedural irregularity, bias, conflict and relevant new evidence are considered within the same independent route.

The appeal should relate the requested change to a stated ground. A wish for a higher mark alone does not identify a procedural or evidential problem, but an alleged misapplication of a rubric, overlooked work, unfair treatment or incorrect calculation can be considered on its merits. Seeking clarification does not waive the right to appeal.

Students can raise concerns in good faith without retaliation. The fact that an appeal is unsuccessful does not establish misconduct or bad faith. Any separate allegation of deliberate deception follows the applicable fair procedure.

Submission and early resolution

3 Deadline and information to submit

Submit an appeal within ten working days of notification of the official grade or decision. The outcome notice identifies the notification date and the actual calendar deadline, including the submission time and time zone. QA records the applicable working-day calendar and receipt date so that online and international students can understand the deadline.

Use the formal academic-appeal channel in the LMS or the published alternative institutional contact. Annex 1 provides a submission form; a written submission containing the same information is accepted. Include student and programme details, the decision and date, grounds, supporting material, remedy sought and any need for access or support arrangements. Identify evidence held by the Academy if it is not available to attach.

Informal resolution for other academic matters

For an assessment matter outside A4, the student normally seeks prompt clarification from the tutor or module coordinator. The tutor explains the feedback, criteria or recorded result and identifies any apparent error. Record the contact, explanation and proposed action. A grade correction follows the authorised assessment and validation process; an informal agreement alone does not change the official result.

If the matter remains unresolved or informal contact is inappropriate, the student submits a formal appeal. Formal submission can be made within the original ten-working-day period while clarification is still pending. The institution does not require completion of the informal stage at the expense of that deadline. Informal contact does not create a second ten-working-day period or allow the tutor to block formal review.

Direct route for academic misconduct

An appeal against an Academic Integrity Panel finding or sanction goes directly to the formal Appeals Panel under this procedure. The student is not required to seek informal resolution from the original tutor, referrer or first-instance Panel. Include the A4 case reference, written decision and the disputed finding or sanction.

Handling receipt and submission difficulties

QA or an unconflicted procedural administrator registers and acknowledges the formal appeal, confirms the case reference, date received and expected outcome date, and checks completeness and conflicts. Missing information is requested promptly. Administrative clarification does not silently restart the formal outcome clock, and QA does not decide the merits.

If access failure, notification problems, illness or other material circumstances prevented timely submission, the student explains the reason and provides available evidence as soon as practicable. The independent Appeals Panel determines whether a late submission is justified and records its reasons. The original decision-maker does not rule on admission. No automatic extension is presumed.

Where the correct route or admissibility is uncertain, the administrator seeks clarification and refers disputed academic admissibility to the independent Panel. Any decision not to proceed is reasoned and notified in writing, identifying the applicable route. A timely appeal is not lost merely because institutional staff initially routed it incorrectly.

Independent Panel and review process

4 Appointment and independence

Unconflicted Academic Board members appoint three independent voters, including a senior academic chair and the academic expertise required for the case. No original assessor, moderator, referrer, first-instance Panel member or person involved in the disputed decision or its implementation decides the appeal. A supervisor or external reviewer involved in the original work is also excluded from adjudicating the same case.

Use external members where internal separation or expertise is insufficient. Student representation is included only where appropriate, competent and compatible with confidentiality and independence. The absence of a student representative does not prevent an appeal. The appointment record identifies the three voters, their competence and the independence assessment.

The Head of Quality Assurance Office, or an unconflicted substitute, provides non-voting procedural support and record keeping. Procedural support is separate from advice on the merits at first instance. A person declares a conflict as soon as it arises and is replaced before further deliberation. Disclosure alone does not resolve a conflict.

If the Head of Institution or QA lead is involved, unconflicted Board of Directors members arrange substitute oversight or administration under A16 and A23. Allegations against a senior office-holder follow the separate independent ethical route. Neither the person concerned nor the institutional substitute directs the Appeals Panel's findings.

5 Evidence and fair participation

The Panel receives the appeal and complete relevant record: decision and reasons, brief and rubric, submitted work, marks and moderation, applicable rules, relevant mitigating or technical evidence and any first-instance case record. It identifies the grounds to be considered and requests clarification where necessary. The original tutor or decision-maker can provide evidence but cannot direct the review.

The student has access to the material relied upon and an opportunity to answer significant new evidence. Protect unrelated third-party information while providing sufficient detail for a fair response. The student can submit written observations and request a meeting. The chair records whether a meeting is needed to resolve the grounds and communicates the arrangements and reasons.

A meeting can take place securely online. Record the participants, material questions and answers, relevant evidence and any agreed adjustment or support arrangement. An appropriate support person can accompany the student without becoming a Panel member or supplying the student's academic evidence in their place. Recordings follow the applicable privacy arrangements.

If the student does not respond or attend, check notification, access, any explanation and requests for further time before deciding whether it is fair to proceed on the available record. Non-attendance is not itself a reason to reject the appeal or treat a disputed allegation as admitted.

All three voters participate and decide by majority. The Panel records which grounds are upheld or not upheld, the evidence accepted or rejected, the student's explanation and its reasons. Automated plagiarism or AI outputs remain indicators; the Panel applies the human evidence review and task-specific rules in A4 and the existing AI guidance.

Outcomes remedies and implementation

6 Reasoned outcome and available remedies

The Panel communicates a written outcome within fifteen working days of receipt of the formal appeal. It identifies the decision reviewed, grounds, evidence considered, findings and reasons, and any required action. If exceptional circumstances cause delay, the administrator gives the student the reason and a revised expected date and keeps the case under review.

For an academic assessment or progression appeal, the Panel can uphold the original decision or require an appropriate remedy under the applicable rules. Remedies include correction of an established recording or calculation error, re-marking by a suitably qualified unconflicted academic, reassessment under approved conditions, reconsideration of mitigation or progression, and academic advice. The remedy addresses the substantiated problem and preserves the required academic standard.

For an A4 misconduct appeal, the Panel can uphold the decision, vary the sanction within A4, set the decision aside or remit the matter to a differently constituted Academic Integrity Panel. It gives reasons for the selected remedy and any required new consideration. The original Panel cannot veto the appeal outcome.

Final Projects and assessment evidence

For a Final Project appeal, review the project, presentation or defence evidence, individual assessment judgements, moderation and required external input relevant to the grounds. External moderation is academic evidence; it does not itself constitute independent appeal adjudication. A person who assessed, supervised or moderated the disputed work cannot decide the appeal.

Where further academic evaluation is required, the instruction identifies the work, criteria, qualified unconflicted reviewer, scope and due date. A re-mark uses the applicable approved criteria; reassessment addresses the same learning outcomes at the required standard. A successful appeal does not by itself demonstrate that an outcome has been achieved or guarantee a particular grade.

Authorised execution and records

The Head of Institution arranges implementation by the appropriate unconflicted officers. The Board of Examiners validates results and progression using the authorised decision and any resulting assessment record. Administration preserves the earlier result, amended result or status, evidence, authority, reason and date under A25. The student receives the confirmed action and resulting position.

For the BA, A18 provides three total formal opportunities per assessment and a minimum of 51% in each assessment component. A remedy states its effect on deadlines, remaining assessments and attempt records under the applicable regulations. Filing or winning an appeal does not automatically create a fourth attempt, reset previous attempts or waive the component pass requirement.

The outcome identifies action owners and completion dates and any authorised interim arrangements while reconsideration or reassessment is pending. Any restriction on assessment, progression or enrolment needs a recorded basis in the applicable rules. Institutional implementation does not reopen the Panel's findings or replace them with a personal decision by the Head of Institution.

The written outcome states any further route available under the applicable procedure. No additional institutional appeal tier or external entitlement is created by this document. General complaints and other statutory rights are not removed by the academic appeal process.

Access to records and quality review

7 Confidential records and institutional learning

QA maintains the appeal, receipt and deadline record, relevant original decision and evidence, conflicts and appointments, communications, student observations, meeting record, Panel findings, outcome and implementation. Use Annex 2 to link the record and record actual dates. A25 governs access and retention; identifiable information is shared only with authorised participants who need it.

The QA and Curriculum Committee and Academic Board receive anonymised information on grounds, outcomes, timeliness, consistency, recurring problems and the effectiveness of remedies through the Annual QA Calendar. Their quality oversight does not reopen individual cases outside the applicable appeal route.

Actions address the evidenced cause, such as unclear instructions, inconsistent marking, inadequate mitigation handling, record errors, staff preparation or inaccessible submission channels. The Quality Enhancement Log identifies the finding, evidence, owner, deadline and expected result. QA checks completion and whether the problem has been resolved.

8 Publication and preparation

Before assessment begins, the Academy provides the current approved procedure in full through a direct website link and the LMS, with a clear summary in student guidance, orientation and onboarding. Information identifies what can be appealed, the grounds, ten-working-day submission period, formal route, expected outcome time, available remedies and contacts. Academic decisions and feedback direct students to that information.

Students receive practical instructions for online submission, attaching evidence and using an alternative contact when access fails. Support and accessibility requests are considered without changing the academic standard. Staff explain the process without promising an outcome or discouraging a good-faith appeal.

The Head of Institution confirms the monitored formal submission channel, confidential access, cover and alternative contacts before publication. Procedural enquiries go to the QA contact communicated in the LMS and student guidance. If that contact is involved, use the unconflicted alternative under A23; concerns involving the Head of Institution or a senior office-holder can be directed to unconflicted Board members through the published route.

Staff and partner personnel receive the procedure and role-specific preparation under A7 and A21 before relevant duties. Students acknowledge the applicable conduct and appeal information through the A3 and learning-agreement arrangements. Record actual publication, communication, preparation and acknowledgement with the version and date; these actions are not established merely by this policy's existence.

Review A1 annually and when assessment or governance changes require revision. Reconcile it with A4, A16, A17, A18, A23, the applicable rubrics, existing AI guidance and student information before implementation. Academic Board approves material changes and document control records the effective version.

The annexes are newly prepared blank records within this revision. Genuine appeal and implementation evidence is created only when a real case arises. Practice material, preparedness checks and completed student cases remain distinguishable in the institutional evidence record.

Annex 1 Student academic appeal form

Send this form or equivalent written information through the formal academic-appeal channel within ten working days of notification of the official grade or decision. An A4 misconduct appeal goes directly to formal review. Expand the response spaces or attach numbered pages as needed.

Student name and identifier: _____

Programme, module and assessment: _____

Contact details for this appeal: _____

Decision date and date notified: _____

Original case reference if applicable: _____

Decision and grounds

Grade or decision being challenged: _____

Grounds from section 2 and how the decision was affected: _____

Remedy requested and reasons: _____

Supporting evidence and circumstances

Attached evidence with file names and relevance: _____

Relevant evidence held by the Academy: _____

For new evidence, why it was previously unavailable: _____

Informal contact and outcome if relevant: _____

Any delay in submission and supporting explanation: _____

Meeting request and any access or support needs: _____

I confirm that the information and evidence I provide are accurate to the best of my knowledge. I identify any information I cannot verify and understand that the Panel considers the grounds and evidence before deciding the appeal.

Student confirmation and date: _____

For administration: receipt date, case reference and expected outcome date are recorded separately. The student receives confirmation of the formal route and any clarification needed. This form does not require the student to waive response, privacy or appeal rights.

Annex 2 Panel outcome and action record

Confidential. Appeal reference: _____

Link the full appeal, original evidence and reasoned decision. Expand fields or add continuation pages. The record documents an actual review and is not completed in advance of a case.

Receipt and review arrangements

Original decision and notification date: _____

Receipt date, submission deadline and expected outcome date: _____

Grounds and any admissibility or late submission decision: _____

Appointing authority and appointment reference: _____

Three voters including chair and independence declarations: _____

Non-voting administrator and any substitute: _____

Evidence reviewed and student access or response: _____

Meeting request, decision, participants and record: _____

Decision and notification

All three voters present and majority decision: _____

Findings for each ground and reasons record reference: _____

Remedy scope and any new academic review required: _____

Effects on results, attempts or progression under the rules: _____

Outcome notice date and any explained delay: _____

Further applicable route communicated: _____

Implementation and quality follow up

Action owner, due date and completion evidence: _____

BoE validation and prior and revised result if applicable: _____

Student notification and central record update: _____

QA closure and anonymised improvement action: _____

Retain the original and revised records, full written reasons, authority for each change and evidence of completed implementation. Quality review identifies systemic improvements and does not substitute a new finding in the individual appeal.