

APPEALS PROCESS



Student Help
on Campus

Education
& Equity



STEP 1: FORMAL LETTER IS SENT TO YOU BY THE UNIVERSITY

All official decisions are required to be communicated to you in writing, using your student email address. In this communication, the decision maker (UQ) is required to detail the decision and all factors that led to the decision being made.

An outline of the processes followed by the University will be clearly laid out, with important interactions (between University staff, or staff and you) noted, any interventions or opportunities provided and relevant policies that have led to the decision being made.

The decision letter will outline your right to appeal to the Student Senate Appeals Committee (SSAC) and give a timeframe you must submit within.

Note: *Not all appeals go to the SSAC (ie Removal Of Financial Liability (ROFL) and Deferred exams).*

STEP 2: YOUR APPEAL

The amount of time you are given to formulate and submit your appeal varies depending on the type of appeal. See below for further information on timeframes.

Your appeal should be focused on the information that is provided in the decision letter, countering any misinformation and adding new information to strengthen your argument.

You need to tell a story that the decision maker either did not have access to, or was not aware of at the time of making the decision. Anything that is put into an appeal needs to be based on sound academic argument. Your argument should make clear that you are not seeking academic advantage and that upholding your appeal is not going to lower the academic standards of the University.

| Type of Appeal | Timeframe to formulate and submit your appeal |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Removal of Financial Liability (ROFL) | 28 days |
| Removal of Academic Penalty | 6 months of the decision |
| Show Cause | 10 days |
| Student Grievance | 45 days |
| Misconduct* | 20 days |
| Deferred Exams | 5 days |
| Change to Finalised Results | 40 days |

*Not decided by the Academic Registrar

STEP 3: FACULTY RESPONSE

After you submit your appeal, the decision maker will be sent the appeal to review and make a response within seven (7) days.

The response will include one of two actions: withdraw their decision, or recommend the appeal be upheld:

1. The decision maker may realise after seeing the new information supplied in your appeal, that they did not have all of the possible information available to them at the time of making the decision. They can then withdraw their decision and award the appeal to you.
2. After considering the new information presented in the appeal, the decision maker may feel that they made the correct decision, and they will provide further supporting evidence and information in response to your appeal. This supporting evidence could include evidence from meeting minutes, specific interactions between you and staff, specific policy that counters your argument, and further details that help strengthen their decision.

STEP 4: YOUR COUNTER

After the decision maker has made a response to the appeal, you will be provided an opportunity to counter the response within the next seven (7) business days.

This counter needs to focus exclusively on the response of the decision maker, adding new information and supporting documentation to counter the decision. If you are not capable of providing new information that can be supported with further evidence, then your chances of having the appeal awarded decrease.

This will be your last chance to argue your case, so it needs to be based directly on the decision-maker's response. Avoid emotive reasons for the appeal. Support your appeal with evidence.

Note: *Not all appeals decisions allow a counter response.*

STEP 5: PROCESS FOR SSAC DECISIONS

When the SSAC meets, they will be presented with the following information:

- Any records of misconduct (general or academic)
- Past applications made (Appeals, Withdrawal without academic penalty, Change to finalised results, Removal of financial liability, deferred exam requests, and extension requests)
- The original decision (the initial one issued to you)
- Your appeal
- The decision maker's response to your appeal
- Your counter to the response

Using this information, the SSAC will make their decision. This decision will be made on procedural and evidence-based grounds, not emotional. Presenting a highly emotive appeal will not be enough to persuade the Committee.

Once the SSAC has reviewed your appeal and made a decision, you may be sent an informal notice of the decision, with a formal decision to be issued in the following weeks.

If your appeal is not upheld, then you can make a claim to the Ombudsman, an external commission who reviews the fairness of decisions made by the University.

SHOC can assist you by:

- Being aware of all relevant policies that have been cited in making the decision. They will use this knowledge in providing the best advice for you.
- Helping you in formulating, structuring and presenting your argument in your appeal and providing you with advice to add more strength to your appeal.
- Providing feedback on the quality of your supporting evidence and providing information about how to obtain more supporting evidence.
- Helping you understand the strength of the decisions maker's argument and options to pursue the matter further once a decision has been given.