**Stage 1 Academic Appeal Form for a Research Degree Candidate**

**STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

**Request for an academic appeal against a decision of the graduate school board relating to an assessment or examination decision or a decision to exclude a candidate’s enrolment as a research degree candidate**

**IMPORTANT – READ THE** [**GUIDANCE NOTES**](#Guidance_notes) **CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM**

**PERSONAL DETAILS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student ID number |  |
| First name |  |
| Surname |  |
| Date of Birth |  |
| Programme Title |  |
| College |  |
| Address for correspondence |  |
| Personal email address |  |

**STATEMENT**

**1. Please list below the authentic independent documentary evidence you are enclosing with this appeal application.**

A final decision will be made on the evidence submitted with this form but to fully investigate your case, additional information submitted to the Graduate School Board relating to Mitigating Circumstances may also be considered as appropriate. All evidence must be included at the time of submission.

|  |
| --- |
| ***This box will expand as you type.*** |

**2. Please detail below your grounds for review**.

You must clearly state the grounds for review on which you are appealing (by indicating the appropriate letter(s) listed under [grounds for review](#Grounds_for_review) below) and give specific details of the alleged irregularity. For reasons of confidentiality and impartiality, we are unable to discuss the details of your case with you and can only provide guidance on the academic appeal procedure. The [University Students’ Union](https://www.uwsu.com/) have some experience in this area and may be able to assist you further. Please be assured that any information you give us will be treated sensitively and in the strictest confidence.

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| ***This box will expand as you type.*** |

**3. How do you propose your appeal can be resolved to your satisfaction?**

If an appeal is upheld the decision will be in line with the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees. Normally the appeal process cannot alter or amend published regulations.

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| ***This box will expand as you type.*** |

**Important**

* **Please ensure that you have completed all sections of this form and then return via email to:** [**academicstandards@westminster.ac.uk**](mailto:academicstandards@westminster.ac.uk)**. This form and supporting evidence can only be** **considered if it is submitted to the above email address.**
* Your request for an academic appeal will be acknowledged in writing.
* This form must be received **within 15 working days** of the notification of the decision of the Graduate School Board being appealed.
* It is the candidate’s responsibility to obtain their results as soon as they are published online.
* Make sure that you keep a copy of this form and all evidence submitted.
* Please complete the sections below.

**Please sign and date the form after completing the following checklist**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Have you read the [guidance notes](#Guidance_notes) before completing your appeal? |  |
| Have you selected the [grounds](#Grounds_for_review) you are appealing under? |  |
| Have you included all documentary evidence to be considered? |  |
| Have you explained why you are submitting an appeal? |  |
| Is your claim being submitted within the published deadline? If not, please explain why in section 2 above. |  |

**SIGNATURE AND DATE**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type name |  | Date |  |

**Guidance Notes for Research Degree Academic Appeals**

Candidates may only appeal against a decision of the Graduate School Board or its Sub-Committees, e.g. Research Degrees Progression Committee, which has been confirmed in writing. **Candidates may not appeal against provisional results.** Any application for appeal must be received **within 15 working days** of the official notification of the decision of the Graduate School Board.

**Late applications will not be considered unless supported by evidence of a good reason and this will be at the discretion of the Academic Standards Manager.**

You must continue to abide by the decision of the Graduate School Board, including the completion of any remediation or reassessment requirements, where appropriate, pending the outcome of the Academic Appeals process.

**The regulations regarding requests for an Academic Appeal can be found in** **Section B8 of the Academic Regulations for Research Degrees and the supporting procedure in Section 2.13 of the Research Degrees Handbook, which are available on the** [**Graduate School Academic Programme**](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme) **webpage.**

**You are strongly advised to seek guidance from the** [**University of Westminster Students’ Union**](https://www.uwsu.com/) **BEFORE you submit your appeal.**

**Appeals will only be considered on the grounds for review as set out below and when they are submitted within the deadlines stated on this form. Incomplete forms will not be investigated.**

**1. You may not appeal against the academic judgement of your assessors.**

You may not appeal against the academic judgement of your assessors and may not therefore challenge progression or award decisions made by the Graduate School Board. If you believe that an error has been made in the recording of any assessment decision, this should be raised with the Graduate School Registry as a results enquiry.

**2. If you wish to raise matters relating to the supervision or management of your research programme, do not use this form. Please follow the online** [**Complaints Procedure**](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/current-students/guides-and-policies/student-matters/student-complaints)**.**

**3. Late claims for Mitigating Circumstances (MCs)**

These should be submitted to the Graduate School Registry via the [Virtual Research Environment](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/virtual-research-environment) (VRE). They will be considered by the next meeting of the Research Degrees Progression Committee

Where a claim for MCs has been rejected for the first time because of insufficient or inadequate documentary evidence, a student should resubmit their second claim to a later Mitigating Circumstances Board, but only if they are providing additional documentary evidence.

**Grounds for Review**

**Please indicate in your statement on which of the grounds you are making your appeal:**

1. **That there is evidence that a procedural irregularity (including administrative error)** has occurred in the assessment of the candidate’s progress and performance (measured against the performance and rate of progress that would be required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the [Research Degree Academic Regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme) and the supporting [Research Degrees Handbook](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme)) and that the procedural irregularity is of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the decision might have been different had there not been such irregularity; and/or
2. **That there is evidence of improper assessment by the assessors of the adequacy of the candidate’s progress and performance** in relation to the rate of progress required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the [Research Degree Academic Regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme) and the supporting [Research Degrees Handbook](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme); a candidate may not otherwise challenge the academic judgment of the assessors; and/or
3. **That there is evidence of improper assessment of an application of Mitigating Circumstances**, which resulted in the candidate being put at a disadvantage during subsequent assessments of progress and performance (measured against the performance and rate of progress that would be required for a timely and successful completion as defined in the [Research Degree Academic Regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme) and the supporting [Research Degrees Handbook](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme)), which would not otherwise have occurred had reasonable and appropriate adjustments been made; and/or
4. **That there were circumstances affecting the candidate's performance of which the examiners were not aware at an oral examination (viva)**[[1]](#footnote-1); and/or
5. **That there is evidence of procedural irregularity in the conduct of the** examination (including administrative error) of such a nature as to cause doubt as to whether the result might have been different had there not been such irregularity; and/or
6. **That there is evidence of unfair or improper assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners**.

A ‘demonstrable material irregularity’ may mean either an error in the processing of your results or that the University has not acted in accordance with its own regulations.

**NOW COMPLETE THE** [**STAGE 1 APPEAL FORM**](#Stage1_Academic_Appeal_Form)

1. This criteria will only be considered in exceptional circumstances as the University operates a “Fit to Sit” policy, i.e. it is the responsibility of the candidate to determine if they are fit to participate in an assessment or if a mitigating circumstances claim, or in the case of the final *viva voce* oral examination an “application to postpone an examination” request should be submitted for non-participation (see Sections B of the [Research Degree Academic Regulations](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme) and the [Research Degree Handbook](https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/graduate-school/academic-programme)). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)