

Quick guide to student appeals

What is an appeal?

All currently registered Birkbeck students can appeal. An appeal is a request for reviewing a sub-board of examiners decision (taught students) or a decision made by your examiners or academic department (research students). Sub-board decisions include but are not limited to: marks for exams and coursework, overall award classifications, acceptance or rejection of mitigating circumstances claims.

An appeal gives you the opportunity to challenge a decision if you have evidence that it has not been made correctly, or if you've got evidence you believe the examiners should have seen before they made their decision. Please note you cannot appeal the academic judgements of the markers/examiners. Academic judgement does not mean any judgement made by an academic; it means the considered view of a subject specialist on your academic performance.

Who can appeal?

If you have concerns about a sub-board or examination decision, you should try and resolve this informally in the first instance, by discussing it with your tutor, supervisor or other relevant member of staff.

When can I appeal?

Any formal appeal to the Registry must be made within 6 weeks of the official notification of results. This means within 6 weeks of the marks or award being published on your MyBirkbeck profile, 6 weeks after you have been written to regarding the result of a mitigating circumstances claim, or 6 weeks after the Registry letter confirming the outcome of your research degree exam. Any appeal submitted after the six week deadline may not be accepted. **Please do not try to appeal a mark before it has been published on your MyBirkbeck profile, as we will not be able to process the appeal. This includes instances where your mark has been published on Moodle or has been communicated to you via email.**

How do I submit an appeal?

You submit a formal appeal by completing the [appeals form](#) and sending it to studentappeals@bbk.ac.uk, or by handing the paper form in to the Student Advice Centre in the Malet Street building. Any relevant evidence to your appeal must be attached to the appeal form. It must be clear from your appeal which module result(s) you are appealing.

Grounds for appealing and providing evidence

The College will only consider your appeal if it falls under one of the three permissible grounds for appeal. These are:

- a) You have undisclosed mitigating circumstances
- b) There has been an administrative error
- c) The assessment or assessment decision was not conducted in accordance with the relevant regulations and/or policies

If appealing on the basis of mitigating circumstances, suitable evidence should be an official document e.g. a letter on official headed paper, and should normally include the dates during which the circumstances applied. Claims and evidence for financial and accommodation problems are considered on a case-by-case basis and must fulfil the principles of the Mitigating Circumstances process. Students who have been granted special examination arrangements for assessments would normally not have a claim of mitigating circumstances accepted for the same piece of assessment unless the arrangements were shown to be inadequate or the mitigating circumstances affected the student over and above the special examination arrangements that had been made for them. Please refer to the [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#) for more information.

If appealing on grounds b) and c) above, you must also submit some form of written evidence (e.g. emails or screenshots) which suggest administrative error or procedural irregularity. For example: an email providing you with misleading information, which you followed and as a result of which you failed your assessment. If you appeal on the basis of c) above, we would normally expect you to refer directly to the relevant policy, and explain how you believe it was contravened.

What happens when I appeal?

All appeals forms will be considered by a case handler in Registry. The case handler will assess whether the appeal is in time and appears valid. If this is the case, they will investigate your appeal and refer it to the chair of the sub-board of examiners (taught students) or the chair of the Research Student Sub-Committee (research students). The chair will then make a decision on the appeal outcome, which will be communicated to you by the case handler. If the appeal is made out of time or is not sufficiently supported by evidence, it will be rejected.

What if I'm not happy with the appeal outcome?

If you believe that the appeal outcome is unreasonable or against College regulation or policy, or that a mistake was made in the handling of your appeal, you can request that the appeal is reviewed. You should do this within 2 weeks of getting the appeal outcome. If your request is accepted by the Academic Registrar or nominee, the appeal outcome may change, or it may be referred to an appeal panel.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator

If you've completed the College's internal appeals process and remain unsatisfied, you can refer your appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). In order to contact the OIA the College needs to provide you with a Completion of Procedures letter.

Appeals for Research Students

Research Appeals are dealt with under a dedicated [Appeals Policy for Research Students](#). The appeal form for research students can be found here. This policy applies to students being examined for the degrees of MPhil and PhD, and for students who have been examined for the MPhilStud in respect of the thesis only. Research appeals must also be submitted within six weeks of notification of any formal decision taken by your examiners. Just like Taught Appeals, Research appeals have an early resolution stage, during which students are encouraged to discuss their case informally with the PGR director in their department. If the appeal is accepted at the formal stage (Stage 2), it is referred to an

independent member of the RSSC for a formal response. The grounds for research appeals also differ slightly. The following are acceptable grounds for research appeals:

- a) You have undisclosed mitigating circumstances
- b) The examination was not conducted in accordance with the regulations
- c) The assessment or assessment decision was not conducted in accordance with the relevant policies.

Further Advice

Birkbeck Students' Union has a dedicated advice service for students and can provide guidance and help with submitting casework (including academic appeals and student complaints). You can reach a Student Advisor by email at su-advice@bbk.ac.uk or by telephone on 020 7631 6655.