

Royal Academy of Dance Faculty of Education

Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. In accordance with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance for Concerns, Complaints and Appeals, the Faculty of Education accepts the definition of an appeal to be “a request for a review of a decision of an academic body around a mark, outcome or decision”. For the purposes of these procedures the term ‘student’ includes “current students, including those on placement and those who have recently left their programme”. The timescale in which to request a review is normally within 10 working days of notification of the decision on which the appeal is based (see paragraph 5.2.2 below).
- 1.2. In compliance with its Equality Duty under section 92 of the Equality Act 2010, the Faculty of Education undertakes to apply these procedures equally to all students and recent students, to act fairly, legally and without bias or prejudice in all its dealings with students. Students who choose to lodge an appeal will not be disadvantaged by so doing. Faculty of Education staff will endeavour to resolve appeals amicably and informally without recourse to the formal appeals procedure. The Faculty of Education aims to deal with all properly lodged appeals in an efficient, impartial and transparent manner, having due regard for the interests and well-being of students lodging an appeal or complaint, and of staff who may be named or otherwise involved.
- 1.3. Matters of academic judgement cannot be appealed. The Faculty of Education defines “academic judgement” as the professional and scholarly knowledge and expertise which members of Faculty of Education staff and the External Examiners draw upon in reaching an academic decision. Academic judgement therefore includes, but is not restricted to, decisions about the academic standard attained by students, marks and grades to be awarded for individual pieces of work or modules, and qualifications and qualification classifications to be awarded, or not.
- 1.4. Correction of marks does not require an appeal and applies when there has been a demonstrable failure in the administration of marking, for example the incorrect addition of components leading to a total. The correction of marks is actioned by the Registrar, who will report to the Board of Examiners.

- 1.5. If at any stage of an academic appeal the evidence put forward to support the appeal can be shown to have been dishonestly acquired or is itself dishonest and/or can be shown to be vexatious (that is, the appeal can be shown to be malicious, or represent a way of harassing the Faculty of Education by consuming the time and resources of its staff or a way of harassing members of staff or other students) the appeal will be dismissed and the evidence submitted to the Faculty of Education's disciplinary procedures as specified in the Academic Misconduct and other Disciplinary Offences:

<https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/teacher-training/policy-procedures/>

- 1.6. Under this *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure*, students may not make an appeal about the nature of the learning opportunities they have received (for example tuition, library provision, teaching and learning spaces, equipment). The Faculty of Education addresses concerns about these matters through its Student Grievance and Complaints Procedure:

<https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/teacher-training/policy-procedures/>

2. Royal Academy of Dance university-validated Awards and RAD Awards

- 2.1. The Faculty of Education of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) delivers the following programmes of study and awards:

- 2.2. Royal Academy of Dance programmes validated by the University of Bath

- MA in Education (Dance Teaching) (including Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Dance Teaching), Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Dance Teaching))
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education: Dance Teaching with Qualified Teacher Status*
- BA (Hons) Ballet Education
- BA (Hons) Dance Education (including Diploma of Higher Education: Dance Education, Certificate of Higher Education: Dance Education)

- 2.3. Royal Academy of Dance Awards

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education: Dance Teaching with Qualified Teacher Status*
- Professional Dancers' Postgraduate Teaching Certificate

- Professional Dancers' Teaching Diploma
- Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Dance
- Diploma in Dance Teaching Studies
- Certificate in Ballet Teaching Studies

*The Postgraduate Certificate in Education: Dance Teaching with Qualified Teacher Status leads to two awards: the Postgraduate Certificate in Education: Dance Teaching is awarded by the validating university and Qualified Teacher Status is awarded by the Royal Academy of Dance.

3. Areas covered by the Appeals Procedure:

3.1. Decisions made by Faculty of Education staff, panels, boards, committees, or examination boards regarding:

- 3.1.1. Progression and Continuation
- 3.1.2. Award
- 3.1.3. Award Classification

3.2. An appeal cannot be made where a student questions the exercise of academic judgement, that is, the decision made by academic staff on the quality of the work itself or the criteria being applied to mark the work (see paragraph 1.3 above).

4. Grounds for Appeal

4.1. A student has grounds for appeal if they can establish that:

- 4.1.1. There have been procedural irregularities in respect of any of the areas covered in section 3 above.
- 4.1.2. There were circumstances affecting the student that were not known to the student in time for them to advise the Faculty of Education before a decision was made and that the circumstances could provide reasonable doubt that the same decision would have been made in light of this new evidence.
- 4.1.3. There was evidence of bias or prejudice on the part of a member or members of Faculty of Education staff or External Examiners.

4.2. No other grounds for appeal will be considered admissible.

5. Method of Appeal

5.1. The Appellant

- 5.1.1. The person making the appeal must be the student (a person, fully paid to date, registered for or enrolled on a programme of study, or who has recently left their programme) who has requested a review of the decision based on the grounds open to them as stated in paragraph 4 above, or an elected representative if there is a group of students who wish to make one appeal in respect of a common complaint. This policy will refer throughout to the person(s) when a group, who lodge the appeal as the Appellant(s).
- 5.1.2. The Faculty of Education will not accept an academic appeal, or a request to review the decision to dismiss an appeal, from a third party on behalf of an appellant, other than when the student is incapacitated or there are other extenuating circumstances. In such cases, the student must first give their consent before the appeal, or review of an appeal decision, can be considered. The third party must show why the student was unable to make the appeal on their own behalf, and submit the application to appeal, together with the required supporting evidence. The third party will act on behalf of the appellant in all matters thereafter.
- 5.1.3. The decision against which a student is appealing remains in force until such time as the appeal is completed.

5.2. Procedure

- 5.2.1. The appellant may discuss the matter informally with a member of the Faculty of Education staff in order to try to resolve the situation without recourse to the formal appeals procedure or to establish that the grounds for appeal are admissible.
- 5.2.2. The appeal must be made using the Academic Appeal form and submitted to the Registrar within ten working days of notification of the decision on which the appeal is based and should:
 - 5.2.2.1. Indicate the date on which the appeal, including all supporting evidence, is received;
 - 5.2.2.2. State the decision that is appealed;
 - 5.2.2.3. State the grounds for appeal (which must relate to the Grounds for Appeal listed in section 4 above);
 - 5.2.2.4. State the circumstances leading to the appeal;
 - 5.2.2.5. Provide evidence in support of the appeal;

- 5.2.2.6. State the desired outcome.
- 5.2.3. Appeals lodged after ten working days from the notification of the decision on which the appeal is based will not normally be considered. If an appeal is received after the ten working days deadline, the student will be asked to provide any extenuating circumstances and evidence as to why the appeal is late. A decision on the validity of the extenuating circumstances will be made normally within five working days of receiving the information. If there are no valid extenuating circumstances, the appeal will not be considered and the student will be offered a Completion of Procedure letter. If there are valid extenuating circumstances the appeal will be admitted.
- 5.2.4. The timescale for dealing with the appeal will commence from the date upon which all accompanying evidence was received and not the date on which the Appeal form was submitted.
- 5.2.5. Receipt of the appeal will be acknowledged in writing to the appellant or to the third party who will represent them, within five working days of receipt of the Appeal form and all supporting evidence.
- 5.2.6. The Director of Education, or designate, will be advised of the existence of the appeal.
- 5.2.7. The Registrar will initially consider if the appeal is based on admissible grounds (detailed in section 4 above).
- 5.2.8. If the appeal lodged is not admissible, it will be rejected. A Completion of Procedures letter will be sent to the appellant with an explanation of the reason(s) for the rejection. Requests for a review of the decision should be made in line with Section 7 of the Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure.
- 5.2.9. If the grounds for appeal are admissible, the Registrar will consult the people or bodies referred to in the appeal who should normally provide a written report to support the decision reached. At this point, the appellant may be asked to submit further evidence or additional explanations within five working days. The Registrar will also use documentation, such as examination board minutes, marking and moderating documents and module reports, when considering an appeal. All parties will have equal access to all the evidence that will be used to determine the outcome of deliberation and to reach a decision.

- 5.2.10. Where the interpretation of evidence is disputed and/or where the impact of the decision of the Registrar is very significant for the student, provision will be made for a meeting.
- 5.2.11. Appellants on London-based programmes of study might reasonably be expected to attend a meeting, in connection with the appeal. Appellants on distance-learning programmes will not be required to attend a meeting at the Academy's headquarters; instead communications will be made by video conferencing and/or email. In either case, the student will have the right to be accompanied by a person of their choosing during this interview. Where a student wishes to be accompanied, she/he must notify the Registrar at least three working days before the date of the interview.
- 5.2.12. Any person accompanying an appellant during an interview to determine an appeal will be advised that their role is that of providing support to the appellant. They will not have the opportunity to contribute to the interview.
- 5.2.13. Records of all communications will be lodged on the Appellant's appeal file.

6. The Appeal Outcome

- 6.1. Where an appeal has been admitted, there are two possible outcomes resulting from the appeals procedure:
 - 6.1.1. The appeal is upheld. In this case, depending on the nature of the appeal the student will be reassessed or the decision reconsidered and amended if appropriate. Any reasonable expenses incurred by the appellant will be reimbursed.
 - 6.1.2. The appeal is denied. In this case, the original decision is upheld.
- 6.2. The appellant will normally be notified in writing of the decision of the panel on the appeal within 15 working days from the date the appeal was lodged with the Registrar. If the appellant is not advised of the decision in the prescribed time frame she/he may lodge a complaint against the Faculty of Education.
- 6.3. A Completion of Procedures letter closes the appeal and will be sent to the appellant.
- 6.4. The Education Sub-committee of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Academy of Dance will be notified of the decisions of all appeals by appeal reference number.

7. Review of appeal outcome

- 7.1. If an appellant is not satisfied with the decision of the appeal, the appellant can request a review of the appeal decision. The review procedure to follow will depend on whether the appellant is enrolled on a university-validated programme of study or a RAD Award programme.
- 7.2. University-validated programmes of study
 - 7.2.1. Reviews of appeal outcomes for appellants enrolled on university-validated programmes (detailed in section 2.2 above) are undertaken by the University of Bath.
 - 7.2.2. Students will find guidance on the University's Student Academic Appeals and Reviews webpage:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/request-a-review-of-a-stage-1-academic-appeal-outcome>
 - 7.2.3. An appeal following the Faculty of Education's Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures is the equivalent to Stage 1 in the University's appeal regulations.
 - 7.2.4. A request for review of the decision by the University of Bath must be submitted to the university within five working days of notification of the decision reached by the Faculty of Education on the appeal.
 - 7.2.5. If an appeal is not admitted (see Section 5.2.8 above), the appellant should follow the University's Stage 2(A) procedure as detailed in Regulation 17 (<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/regulations-for-students-2021-22/>). The request for a Stage 2(A) review should be made to the Director of Academic Registry of the University of Bath using the University's AA2A Stage 2A Review of Stage 1 Academic Appeal form:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/request-a-review-of-a-stage-1-academic-appeal-outcome>
 - 7.2.6. If an appeal has been admitted (see Sections 5.2.9 to 6 above), the appellant should follow the University's Stage 2(B) procedure as detailed in Regulation 17 (<https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/regulations-for-students-2021-22/>). The request for a Stage 2(B) review should be made to the Secretary to Senate of the University of Bath using

the University's AA2B Stage 2B Review of Stage 1 Academic Appeal form:

<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/request-a-review-of-a-stage-1-academic-appeal-outcome>

- 7.2.7. The University of Bath will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to the appellant once the review has been completed.
- 7.2.8. A student who remains dissatisfied after receiving a Stage 2 (A or B) outcome from the University of Bath has the right to request an independent review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). Guidance can be found on the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's website:

<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

7.3. RAD Awards programmes of study

- 7.3.1. Reviews of appeal decisions for students enrolled on RAD Awards programmes of study (detailed in section 2.3 above) are undertaken by the Director of Education or senior members of Faculty of Education staff nominated by the Director of Education for the review.

- 7.3.2. A request for review must be submitted to the Director of Education within five working days of notification of the appeal outcome using the Faculty of Education's Review of Academic Appeal Outcome form:

<https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/teacher-training/policy-procedures/>

- 7.3.3. If the request for review includes evidence that was not part of the initial appeal, a valid explanation must be given as to why the evidence was not presented at the time.
- 7.3.4. The appellant will normally be notified in writing of the outcome of the review within 15 working days from the date the request for review was lodged with the Director of Education.
- 7.3.5. The Director of Education or nominated senior member of Faculty of Education staff will issue a Completion of Procedures letter to the appellant once the review has been completed.

7.4. The Education Sub-committee of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Academy of Dance will be notified of the outcome of all reviews by review reference number.

8. Confidentiality

8.1. The Faculty of Education deals with academic appeals made by students in confidence, to the extent that this is compatible with making enquiries and holding meetings to consider the appeal.

8.2. The records resulting from the appeal will be kept separately to the student's file and will be destroyed at a time appropriate and in line with the Records Retention Schedule of the Faculty of Education.

8.2.1. The records may contain the following:

8.2.1.1. The written appeal;

8.2.1.2. The Faculty of Education record of the process and outcome;

8.2.1.3. Supporting evidence provided by the appellant and the personnel involved;

8.2.1.4. Documentation related to a review of the appeal and the decision reached.

8.3. Anonymous details of the appeal may be kept separately for reference at a later date in order to ensure consistency of decision making in future appeals.

9. Policy Implementation

9.1. The *Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure* will be mentioned in the Learning and Teaching Handbook and is available on the RAD website:

<https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/teacher-training/policy-procedures/>

9.2. Students will be made aware on induction to a programme of study of the Faculty of Education policy on appeals and will be directed to consult the Learning and Teaching Handbook.

9.3. Staff will be made aware on induction of the Faculty of Education policy on appeals and will be directed to consult the Learning and Teaching Handbook.

9.4. Staff will be fully conversant with the policy through INSET sessions delivered by the Head of Quality Assurance, and be confident in its operation.

10. Policy Monitoring and Review

- 10.1. The Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually by the Education Sub-committee of the Board of Trustees of the Royal Academy of Dance or when external legislation necessitates a review of Faculty of Education practice.
- 10.2. The final decision of appeals, including any review undertaken by the validating university, will be considered in the Periodic Reviews of programmes of study.
- 10.3. Anonymous records of appeals and the outcomes will be maintained so that recurring causes of appeals are referred to, and this data used to enhance the effectiveness of the appeals process and the overall quality of the learning experience.

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