Academic Appeals Procedure 2014 / 2015
1.0 AIM

1.1 The aim of the procedure is to enable students who believe they have a grievance concerning an assessment (including a decision where the result of the assessment may require the student's withdrawal from the programme) to request a review of that decision. This procedure does not deal with disciplinary matters for which there is a separate disciplinary procedure.

1.2 This procedure applies only to those students whose Assessment/Examinations are constituted under the internal authority of WLCBMS. Where examinations are set and assessed externally, the College has no powers to reconsider assessment decisions but will advise students how to make an appeal to the external bodies concerned.

1.3 The terms "examination" and "assessment" are to be treated synonymously and refer to all forms of student assessment.

1.4 Academic Judgement: There is no formal appeal against the academic judgement of assessors/verifiers i.e. in relation to marks or grades awarded. However, a student who is disappointed with an assessment grade/mark awarded may approach the Programme Tutor concerned to request an independent re-assessment. Refusal by the College to undertake re-assessment by a second examiner would constitute grounds for an appeal.

2.0 GROUNDS OF WHICH AN APPEAL CAN BE MADE

2.1. There are only two sets of circumstances in which the decision of a constituted Programme Team may be changed by a higher authority within the College.

2.2. Material error or irregularity:
(a) There has been an administrative error, or
(b) That the assessment was not conducted in accordance with the programme regulations, or
(c) The College failed or refused to undertake re-assessment by a second examiner, or
(d) That some other material irregularity has occurred.

2.3. Personal circumstances:
(a) If a student establishes to the satisfaction of the Programme Team that his/her performance in the examination or other form of assessment was adversely affected by illness or other factors which he/she was unable or for valid reasons unwilling to divulge prior to assessment.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1. In the first instance, any student with a grievance should
(a) Discuss this with the Programme Tutor
(b) If the student is not satisfied he/she should be advised of the Academic Appeals Procedure
(c) If the student decides to appeal, he/she should write to the Programme Manager (or Principal) stating the grounds for appeal. This should be done as soon as possible and normally within four weeks of the notification of the assessment results to the student.
(d) The Programme Manager (or Principal) will investigate the grievance and determine whether the student has valid grounds for an appeal. If he/she rules that valid grounds for an appeal exist, he/she will attempt to resolve the case to the student's satisfaction without referral to an appeal hearing. Details of action taken will be communicated to all parties concerned, including the Principal.
(e) If the grievance is not resolved within one calendar month of the appeal being lodged, the Principal shall convene an Assessment Appeals Committee and prepare a report about the case.

4.0 ASSESSMENT APPEALS COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

4.1. Where it is necessary formally to hear an appeal, an Assessment Appeals Committee shall be convened. The Committee shall consist of the following:
(i) Chairman - Principal (or a senior member of the academic staff representing the Principal)
(ii) At least one other member of academic staff
(iii) At least one student Secretary - member of the administrative staff.

4.2. No members of the Assessment Appeals Committee shall be from the Section directly involved in the appeal. A quorum for a meeting of the Academic Appeals Committee should be four.
5.0 ASSESSMENT APPEALS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROCEDURES

5.1. An Assessment Appeals Committee shall consider and determine requests for a (i) review of a decision of a Programme Team. An Assessment Appeals Committee shall not have powers to deal with appeals arising from disciplinary matters or from allegations of cheating or plagiarism.

5.2. Unless he/she agrees to a shorter period, the appellant must be given written (i) notice, at least five College working days prior to the hearing, that the hearing will take place, and of his/her rights under this procedure.

5.3. Normally at least five College working days before the hearing, members of Assessment Appeals Committee Terms of Reference and Procedures Assessment Appeals Committee shall be provided with the following documents, together with any additional documents thought relevant by the Chairman of the Assessment Appeals Committee:-
   (a) A copy of the programme’s assessment procedure
   (b) A copy of the appellant’s letter of application for a hearing, together with supporting documentary evidence
   (c) A copy of the current Assessment Appeals Procedure

5.4. A copy of the Assessment Appeals Procedure shall be sent to the appellant with the notice of a hearing.

5.5. The student and any other person(s) cited in the appeal, each accompanied if so desired by a friend, has the right to appear before and be heard by the Assessment Appeals Committee.

5.6. While the appeal remains unresolved, the student shall have the right to proceed to the next part or stage of the programme, provided the programme regulations permit it.

5.7. The relevant Programme Teams shall have the right to be represented at the hearing of an Assessment Appeals Committee.

5.8. The procedure to be followed at a hearing shall be determined by the Chairman in consultation with other members of the Assessment Appeals Committee at the commencement of the hearing. According to the circumstances, the parties to the appeal may be seen separately (in whatever order is deemed appropriate) or together.

5.9. An Assessment Appeals Committee shall have the power to require the attendance of any member of staff and shall be given access to any records and documents which it regards as relevant.

5.10. In cases of withdrawal from the programme of study, the Assessment Appeals Committee shall have the authority to revoke or confirm the decision to withdraw the student from a programme. Such a revocation shall entitle the student either:-
   a. To proceed on the programme for the remainder of the session, or
   b. To repeat the failed part of the programme at the earliest opportunity whichever the Assessment Appeals Committee judges to be in the best interests of the student.

5.11. In cases of appeals against an assessment decision, if the Assessment Appeals Committee decides in favour of the appellant, the Programme Team responsible for the original decision must meet at the earliest opportunity to reconsider the student’s results i.e. reassess the student’s work and re-grade the work or repeat the assessment process for the student. The Programme Team, in undertaking such reconsideration, should take account of the report of the Assessment Appeals Committee and the recommendations contained therein.

5.12. Where the Assessment Appeals Committee upholds an appeal against an assessment decision, the student will be permitted re-assessment on.

5.13. The first practicable occasion.

5.14. If after reconsideration, in cases of appeals against an assessment decision, the Programme Team confirms its original decision, the Assessment Appeals Committee may be re-convened at the request of the student or the Chairman of the Assessment Appeals Committee to consider further the position of the appellant. The final decision shall rest with the Assessment Appeals Committee; there will be no further appeal.

5.15. The decision of the Assessment Appeals Committee will be communicated to the student and the Programme Director by the Secretary; in writing, within five College working days of the Appeal.

5.16. The Secretary shall prepare a report of the hearing which shall be made available to the members of the Assessment Appeals Committee.

5.17. Records of the decisions of the Committee shall be kept for a minimum of two years following the date of the appeal.