

5.2.1.5 Grade Appeals Procedure

Following QQI, ICD adopts the QAA definition of ‘appeal.’ According to the UK’s QAA (2013 p. 4) an academic appeal is “a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with making decisions on student progression, assessment and awards.”

An appeals procedure exists for students who consider the lecturer’s grade to be inappropriate. Students have a right to be assisted by their class representative in the appeals procedure should they so wish.

The appeals procedure at ICD takes the following stages:

Stage 1 – Feedback: The student should ensure they have received feedback on their grade from the examiner (e.g. the module lecturer). The student should contact the examiner within two (2) weeks of receiving their grade(s) for feedback. If the student is not satisfied with the feedback, they can move to stage 2.

Stage 2 – Recheck: “Re-check means the administrative operation of checking (again) the recording and combination of component scores for a module and/or stage” (QQI 2013b section 4.10.3). If a student wishes to have their mark rechecked, they should in the first instance contact the examiner (e.g. module lecturer) within one (1) week of receiving feedback. The outcome of a recheck may lead to the student’s grade increasing, decreasing, or remaining the same. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of stage 2, they may choose to move to stage 3.

Stage 3 – Review: A student who is not satisfied with the outcome of stage two has the option to request a review. Each time a student requests a review, they will incur a fee of €50 (payment process managed and recorded by the Registrar). If the review results in an increase in the student’s grade/mark, the review fee will be refunded. “Review means the re-consideration of the assessment decision, either by the original assessor or by other competent persons. Learners are required to state the grounds for the requested review” (QQI 2013b section 4.10.3). The student should indicate to the relevant lecturer and the Registrar that they are not satisfied with the grade and request that the lecturer reconsider. The student must contact the lecturer and Registrar within one (1) week of the completion of stage 2 to request a review. The lecturer is obliged, on request, to re-examine the work and reconsider the grade. The lecturer does have the power to change the grade having reassessed the work. The outcome of a review may lead to the student’s grade increasing,

decreasing, or remaining the same. If the issue is not resolved at this stage the student has the right to formally appeal the grade (stage 4).

Stage 4 – Formal Appeal: The student should inform the Registrar that they wish an appeal panel to consider the issue. The student must contact the Registrar within one (1) week of receiving the outcome of the review (stage 3). An appeal panel will be composed of the Programme Director, the relevant module lecturer and one additional member of the academic staff. A meeting of the appeal panel should be scheduled to take place within two weeks of the Registrar being informed. The student has a right to have their class representative present at this meeting with observer status. Whatever the decision of the appeals panel, all grades are still subject to the approval of an end of year examination board meeting. As part of a formal appeal, the appeal panel may (but is not required to) seek an assessment of the student's work by another suitably qualified member of staff (e.g. lecturer with expertise in the field) and/or the External Examiner. The appeal panel will report the outcome of the formal appeal to the Registrar and the Academic Council. The Academic Council, through its Chairperson and in conjunction with the Registrar, are responsible for ensuring appropriate action based on the outcome of the formal appeal. The relevant External Examiner should be notified and/or consulted with if any change in classification is decided as a result of the appeal (as per QQI (2013b section 4.10.3) guidelines on assessments and standards).

If a student has already formally appealed (stage 4 above) an assessment grade, they are disallowed from appealing the same grade a second time. If a student has an issue that is different to a specific disagreement over a grade, they should consult ICD's complaints procedures (section 7.2.1 of ICD's Quality Assurance Policy Framework).

REFERENCES

QAA (2013) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality, Chapter B9: Academic Appeals and Student Complaints*. Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK. Available from: [https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b9_academic-appeals-and-student-complaints.pdf?sfvrsn=c002f781_8](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b9-academic-appeals-and-student-complaints.pdf?sfvrsn=c002f781_8)

QQI (2013b) *Assessment and Standards, Revised 2013*. Quality and Qualifications Ireland, Dublin. Available from: https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Assessment_and_Standards%20Revised%202013.pdf