

RVC Student Appeals Procedure - Student Guidance FAQs

Introduction

This guide provides an overview of the academic appeals procedure to help you understand the key steps and important information. It is intended as a quick reference to support you through the appeals process and you are encouraged to review the full Student Appeals Procedure before proceeding with your appeal submission.

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Glossary

Academic appeal

An appeal is a request for a review of a decision made by an academic body that makes a decision on a student's progression, assessment or award.

Academic judgement

Academic judgment, as defined by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator Higher Education (OIAHE), *is a judgment that is made about a matter where the opinion of an academic expert is essential. So, for example, a judgement about marks awarded, degree classification, research methodology, whether the feedback is correct or adequate, and the content or outcomes of a course will normally involve academic judgement.*

Administrative error

An administrative error refers to a human error that could affect the accuracy of the marks under consideration by the Board (e.g., incorrect calculation or inputting of marks).

Completion of Procedures Letter

A Completion of Procedures Letter is a letter that educational providers issue at the end of their internal procedures.

Procedural error

A procedural error refers to the RVC failing to follow a published procedure or process.

Where can I get support during the appeals process?

It is important to seek support and advice if you have any queries or concerns in relation to your appeal. We have listed all the support and advice which can help provide additional information on deciding how to proceed.

- Tutor
- Senior Tutor
- Supervisor
- Departmental Postgraduate Research (PGR) Advisor
- [Student Union Representative](#)
- Course Director or Academic Head of the Graduate School
- Year Leader
- Pathway/Module leader
- [Advice Centre](#)
- [Study Skills Team](#)
- [Student Resolution and Compliance \(SRC\) Team](#)
- [Disability Advisor](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit](#)

Can I request reasonable adjustments to the process?

If you require adjustments to the process, you should submit this in writing to studentappeals@rvc.ac.uk. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. Students are encouraged to submit their request at the earliest opportunity so that the necessary support can be provided without delay.

Appeals Following Receipt of a Withdrawal Notification

I have received a withdrawal notification, what grounds can I appeal on?

If you have been withdrawn from your programme of study, you can submit an appeal on one (or more) of the following grounds:

- There was an error in the procedure that might have resulted in an incorrect decision.
- That your failure or ineligibility for the award was caused by extenuating circumstances which have significantly disadvantaged you by comparison to your peers.
- Significant new and relevant evidence has come to light which could not have been presented at the time of the Panel's decision.
- That there was an administrative error which has significantly impacted a student's ability to progress.

How do I submit a formal appeal?

Complete the [A002 Student Appeals Request Form](#), write a clear statement (max 1500 words), attach relevant evidence, and email to studentappeals@rvc.ac.uk.

How long do I have to submit an appeal?

You must submit your appeal within 21 days of the date on your withdrawal notification. Your notification will confirm your appeal deadline date.

If you cannot submit your appeal in line with the above timeframe, you should contact the SRC Team via email (studentappeals@rvc.ac.uk) to explain the reasons for the delay and provide supporting evidence. The SRC Team will review this information to determine whether an extension is allowable.

My case relates to a potential procedural or administrative error, what happens next?

The SRC Team will review your submission and complete an investigation in response to the concerns that you have raised.

If evidence of a procedural or administrative irregularity is identified, your case will be escalated to the Registrar for early resolution.

If the investigation confirms that there are no irregularities, you will receive a Completion of Procedures letter from the SRC Team which will outline the findings and confirm that your case is ineligible for progression. This will mark the conclusion of internal procedures.

My case relates to extenuating circumstances, what evidence is acceptable?

You should provide clear, relevant, and verifiable evidence linked to your extenuating circumstances, such as (non-exhaustive list):

- Medical certificates with dates
- Order of Service or Death Certificates
- Statements from staff or employers
- Police reports

All evidence and circumstances referenced should relate to the past academic year only. Please do **not** submit evidence of circumstances related to previous academic years.

All evidence should be translated into English.

Examples of unacceptable evidence includes (non-exhaustive list):

- Challenges to academic judgment
- Unverified or incomplete medical notes
- Hearsay or vague statements
- Screenshots or documents that are unclear or untranslated.

What happens after I submit an appeal?

1. The SRC team reviews your submission.
2. If your appeal meets the allowable grounds, you will receive correspondence confirming that your submission will be progressed to an Appeal Review Group to determine whether your appeal:
 - Can be addressed via a paper-based review
 - Requires escalation to an Appeal Panel
3. If a paper-based review is used, you will receive a formal outcome letter within 7 days of the Appeal Review Group meeting.
4. If it is decided an Appeal Panel is required, you will receive 7 days' notice of the hearing date, along with the reasons for holding a hearing instead of a paper-based review.

What if my appeal does not meet allowable grounds?

Your appeal will be returned with reasons. You can resubmit within the original 21-day deadline date if you can address these reasons. Extensions beyond this are rare and require strong evidence. If you do not resubmit inline with the procedural timescales, or your resubmission is insufficient to address the reasons, you will receive a Completion of Procedure Letter to formally confirm that your case is ineligible for progression.

What happens at a paper-based review?

The Appeal Review Group will determine an outcome to your case based on your written submission, supporting evidence and additional relevant information obtained by the SRC Team including:

- A form completed by your tutor relating to your engagement of study (**Note:** The SRC Team will administer receipt of the form and so, students are **not** required to submit a supporting statement from their tutor as part of their submission.
- Your academic transcript.
- Records from any Student Performance and Development (SPD) meetings that you have attended.
- Any records relevant to engagement with Disability support service (if directly relevant to your submission)

You will receive a duplicate appeal pack to the Appeal Review Group, so that you are aware of the information under consideration.

You will receive an outcome letter within 7 days.

What happens if the Appeal Review Group decide that an Appeal Hearing is required?

You will receive an invitation letter at least 7 days in advance of the hearing date providing all relevant information.

You will be required to attend the hearing in person. Your invitation letter will signpost you to the opportunity to request a virtual meeting if required (e.g. if you are overseas or have medical grounds that make in person attendance challenging).

During the hearing, the panel will ask questions to clarify any gaps of enquiry relating to your case. Lines of questions will usually focus on three key areas: the grounds under which you submitted your appeal, your academic performance/ engagement to date

and the measures that you have taken to enhance your likelihood of success in the event of a successful appeal.

You will receive a formal outcome letter within 7 days of attending the Appeal Hearing.

Can I bring someone with me to the appeal hearing?

Yes, you may bring one supporter for moral support, such as a friend or member of the RVC community. They cannot participate unless invited by the panel chair.

What are the possible outcomes?

The Appeal Review Group or the Appeals Panel will reach one of two outcomes:

- **Justified:** Your appeal is upheld. You'll receive a formal outcome letter within 7 days outlining any conditions for your return to study.

Alongside this correspondence, you will receive an Appeals Return to Study Regulatory Form which will outline the assessments you need to complete before progressing to the next stage.

You will be signposted to your opportunity to request a Final Formal Review on the outcome and conditions determined by the Panel. You **cannot** request a Final Formal Review on the regulatory requirements outlined within the Appeals Return to Study Regulatory Form.

- **Not Justified:** Your appeal is not upheld. You'll receive a letter explaining the Panel's decision and information about your right to request a Final Formal Review.

What are my options if I'm not happy with the outcome?

If you are dissatisfied by the outcome, you may have grounds to request a review under the [Final Formal Review Procedure](#). Your outcome letter will provide all relevant information.

Appeals Relating to Marks and Feedback

I didn't get the mark that I expected, can I submit an appeal?

No. You cannot use the Appeals Procedure to contest a mark or classification on the ground that it was lower than you were expecting.

What should I do first if I have concerns about my marks?

Discuss your concerns informally with your academic tutor or supervisor. They can clarify feedback and advise on improving your work for resit opportunities.

For example, if your published marks are significantly lower than what you had expected then you can discuss the examiners feedback and comments to seek further support and advice on how to improve your work. Information on all RVC support service can be found on the Learn Student Hub.

What if I don't agree with the assessor's feedback?

You can seek support in your understanding of the feedback, as outlined above. Please note that feedback forms part of academic judgement and therefore, you will not be eligible to contest feedback that is delivered following the correct application of RVC procedures.

What grounds can I appeal a mark or classification on?

If you would like to contest your result(s) or degree classification, any appeal must be on one or more of the following grounds:

- That there was an error in the procedure followed by the Board or Post Graduate progression or appraisal system that have resulted in an incorrect decision;
and/or
- There was an administrative error.

Feedback forms part of marking and therefore, the same limited grounds apply to submissions relating to dissatisfaction of feedback.

Can I appeal my marks on the ground of extenuating circumstances?

No. You can only submit an appeal on the ground of extenuating circumstances if you have received a withdrawal notification confirming that you have exhausted your opportunities under the Assessment and Award Regulations.

I believe that my marks have been impacted by a procedural or administrative error, how do I submit an appeal and what should I include?

Complete the [A002 Student Appeals Request Form](#), attach relevant evidence, and email to studentappeals@rvc.ac.uk.

Your submission should clearly identify the specific procedure or regulation you believe was not followed correctly. You should explain how this error impacted your results and provide any relevant supporting evidence, such as:

- A copy or reference to the relevant policy or procedure
- A timeline of events demonstrating the error
- Correspondence (emails, letters, etc.) relevant to the case
- Any other documents that support your claim

You must also provide confirmation that you have tried to address your concerns informally (e.g. by discussion with your academic tutor or supervisor).

How will my submission be addressed?

The SRC Team will review your submission to determine its eligibility for further consideration. Please note that cases based on contesting academic judgement will not be considered and will be responded to via the issue of a Completion of Procedures Letter.

If the SRC Team determine that your case is eligible, they will coordinate a local-level investigation, in collaboration with the Exams Office, to address your concerns. The investigation will examine whether the appropriate procedures were followed during your assessment and the marking of your work.

How long will the investigation take?

The SRC Team will aim to complete the investigation within 21 calendar days of your submission. However, this timescale cannot be guaranteed as complex cases may require additional time to resolve. You will receive regular updates on the progression of the investigation.

What are the possible outcomes of the investigation?

Either:

- (1) The investigation confirms that a procedural or administrative error has occurred, and the case will be escalated to the Registrar or Chair of the Examination Board for early resolution. The agreed resolution would be aligned with the outcome of a formal appeal, for example, an opportunity to resit, resubmit or retake the piece of work under question.
- (2) The investigation confirms that there is no evidence of a procedural or administrative error. The case is ineligible for progression, and a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued.

Will the outcome result in a re-mark or discretionary uplift in marks?

No. These are not attainable outcomes. You cannot progress without meeting the pass threshold outlined in the Assessment and Award Regulations.

What are my options if I'm not happy with the outcome?

If the investigation confirms that a procedural or administrative error has occurred, you will receive an outcome letter which confirms the findings and the remedy available.

If you are dissatisfied by the outcome, you may have grounds to request a review under the [Final Formal Review Procedure](#). Your outcome letter will provide all relevant information.

There is no option to access the Final Formal Review Procedure if your case is determined to be ineligible.