The following step by step guide provides you with basic information and advice on what to do if you want to appeal your results or an academic decision. It also outlines the support the Advice Centre can offer you and how you can access it.

**STEP 1 - READ THE APPEAL REGULATIONS**

In order to appeal, you need to first familiarise yourself with the University of Southampton’s Academic Appeals regulations, which are located within the University Calendar, section IV [here](#). The University reviewed the regulations in light of Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on the University. The variations to the regulations are highlighted in red on the regulations document.

**STEP 2 – IDENTIFY YOUR GROUNDS TO APPEAL**

Before you start an academic appeal, you need to find out if you have grounds. Below you will find a description of the grounds and key questions, which should help identify if you have grounds.

Remember!

You cannot question the academic judgement of the examiner of marker (for example, if you think you deserve a higher mark than the one you received). Disagreeing with mark is not in itself a ground to appeal.

There are only 3 potential grounds that you can appeal under and the following questions may help you identify if you have evidence supporting any of them. A student can only appeal if:

**Ground 4.1** That they possess new substantive information supported by evidence which was not known by the student and/or the evidence could not reasonably have been obtained by the student in time to present to the board or panel of the University which made the original decision against which the student is appealing.

Questions to consider when choosing this ground: What is your new substantive information? How does it relate to what has happened? What evidence can you provide to back it up? Is this an isolated incident, or ongoing? Why were you not able to provide this information prior to the relevant body making its decision? What outcome are you seeking?

**Ground 4.2** That there has been significant failure of due process in the making of the original decision (including but not limited to irregularity in the procedures of the University or significant computational or administrative errors of fact in results published), which the student believes affected the University’s original decision.

Questions to consider when choosing this ground: Which formal process has the School not adhered to? Can you point to where this is written down in the School or University Regulations/Handbook? How does this failure relate to what has happened? What outcome are you seeking?

**Ground 4.3** That their performance had been adversely affected by illness or by other factors (e.g. family crisis) which, in exceptional circumstances, they were unable or for valid reason unwilling to disclose to the University before it made its original decision.

Questions to consider when choosing this ground: What factors affected your performance and how do they link to the decision you are appealing? What evidence can you provide to support your case? Why could you not provide this information/alert someone (within the faculty) to this problem (by utilising the Special Considerations procedure, for example) prior to the relevant body making its decision? Was this an...
isolated incident, or is it on-going? If it is on-going, what steps can you take/support can you engage with, to ensure it has a reduced impact on your performance in the future?

STEP 3 – HOW TO START THE APPEAL PROCESS?
Deadlines for appealing are quite tight. You can normally appeal within 10 working days of the date you received the official decision, or in case of supplementary exams/re-sits decision, within 5 working days. To start the appeal process, you need to complete the Stage 1 Notice to Appeal form located under Appendix A of the Academic Appeals regulations here.

Importance of an appeal statement

The statement is a very helpful addition to the Notice to Appeal form. It provides more details, gives you a ‘voice’ and gives you opportunity to ‘convince’ the University by outlining your arguments and grounds for the appeal in a concise manner. We strongly suggest you write a statement to accompany your appeal, particularly due to the changes in the way the Stage 1 appeal process is currently going to run (see STEP 4 below on Preliminary Discussion process). To help you with that, we have created a statement writing guide, which should provide you with key points and structure that works well. You will find the guide here.

Once you completed the form, written your statement and collated supporting documents you will need to submit them to the Curriculum & Quality Assurance (CQA) team where you study:

- Arts and Humanities  fah-cqa@soton.ac.uk
- Engineering and Physical Sciences  feps-cqa@soton.ac.uk
- Environmental and Life Sciences  fels-cqa@soton.ac.uk
- Medicine  fmed-cqa@soton.ac.uk
- Social Sciences  fss-cqa@soton.ac.uk

STEP 4 – STAGE 1 APPEAL (PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION) PROCESS
Once you submitted your appeal to the CQA team your case will be allocated to an Appeal Reviewer. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, you may either receive a positive appeal outcome without a need for a meeting with the Appeal Reviewer, or you may receive an invitation for a ‘Preliminary Discussion’ to go over your appeal in more details, before the Reviewer can make their decision. This will be at the discretion of the Reviewer; however it is good to know that no Stage 1 appeal may be rejected unless a Preliminary Discussion has taken place. You will receive your outcome within 10 working days from your appeal submission. More information can be found here.

HOW CAN THE ADVICE CENTRE HELP WITH YOUR APPEAL?
As a student you have the right to seek independent advice and support regarding your appeal. We can provide you with feedback and if necessary, support you in the appeal meeting. Please bear in mind when requesting adviser support that we are extremely busy at the moment and there may be a short delay in responding to your email.

To receive help and support, please follow the steps below:

- Email the Advice Centre at advice@susu.org
- Follow the guidance you will receive from us, including:
  A. Complete the Notice to Appeal Form and draft your statement (see point above about importance of statement writing);
  B. Send your statement, Notice to Appeal form and relevant documents to advice@susu.org for feedback;
  C. You will receive response from an Adviser, including feedback on your statement and Notice to Appeal form. If necessary, and at the discretions of the Adviser, they may arrange a video call to discuss the case with you;
D. Once you have received feedback and guidance submit the Notice to Appeal form, statement and relevant documents to your faculty’s CQA team.

Adviser’s help at Preliminary Discussion
If you are invited to a Preliminary Discussion and would like your Adviser to ‘attend’ with you, you must contact the Adviser to inform them of the time and date of the meeting in advance. An Adviser would not be able to support a student at the Preliminary Discussion without knowing their case, which means having seen their Notice to Appeal form and providing them with feedback on a statement. You can read more about what the Adviser’s role is at University meetings here.

Remember: If you have a tight deadline for appealing and you may miss it because you cannot get help in time from the Advice Centre, contact the CQA team in your faculty as soon as possible and let them know that you need more time.

Further guidance
For further guidance on the Academic Appeals regulations, contact the Advice Centre.
Tel: 02380 592 085
Email: advice@susu.org

Disclaimer: While care has been taken to ensure that information contained in the Advice Centre publications is true and correct at the time of writing, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information. The Advice Centre and SUSU cannot accept responsibility for any actions taken as a result of advice given in this publication. Date: July 2021.