HIGHER EDUCATION ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

1. Overview and Purpose

1.1 The HE Academic Appeals policy ensures that Chichester College Group has fair, accessible and timely procedures for handling student appeals about assessment decisions. The outcome from these procedures will facilitate enhancement of the learning opportunities provided.

1.2 The policy is designed to comply with the Quality Code Theme Concerns, Complaints and Appeals It also complies with The Office of the Independent Adjudicator's Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals Good Practice Framework (May 2023 and December 2022).

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy applies to all students registered on higher education programmes delivered or awarded by the College.

2.2 The purpose of this Policy is to provide students with a formal process through which they may request a review of an academic decision where there is evidence that one or more valid grounds for appeal apply.

2.3 The college higher education qualifications are awarded by a number of validating university partners, University of the Arts London (UAL), University of Brighton, University of Chichester, University of Portsmouth and the awarding body for Higher National qualifications, Pearson. Students on courses validated by University of the Arts London (UAL) and University of Brighton should follow the procedures of the awarding body validating their course.

2.4 Please note that different partner Universities may have different criteria and process for academic appeals to each other and those stated in this policy and where courses are validated by partner Higher Education Institutes their procedures should be followed. Guidance, policies and procedures from awarding institutions regarding Academic Appeals are available on the link below:
Section: Academic Regulations & Policies | HE Information Pages | CCGOnline (chichester.ac.uk)

2.5 This Policy does not apply to:

- Complaints about the quality of teaching, supervision, facilities, services, or administrative support, which will be considered under the Student Complaints Policy
- Disciplinary matters, except where specifically permitted under the relevant regulations
- Fitness to Practise decisions, which are subject to separate procedures
- Appeals made by applicants who are not registered students
- Requests for reconsideration of matters already determined under this Policy, unless new and material evidence is presented that could not reasonably have been provided earlier

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 For HE Programmes, internal college processes will be followed (unless the course is validated by the University of the Arts London or the University of Brighton).

3.2 The HE appeals process is overseen by the Director of Higher Education and the HE Academic Standard Leads. The Director of Higher Education will appoint an investigating manager as part of the process who has not been involved in the case before and can review the appeal without bias.

3.2 The internal process comprises an early resolution opportunity and a formal stage, along with the opportunity for a review of the process under qualifying circumstances. Once the internal process has been completed the college will issue a Completion of Procedures Letter which will provide information to the student about raising their concern with the Office for the Independent Adjudicator. This is the case for Higher National programmes awarded by Pearson. Where the programme leads to an award from an external university, with the exception of UAL and the University of Brighton, such as Foundation Degrees and Top-Up Degrees there is a right of appeal to the relevant university, after the third and final internal stage where the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction.

3.3 The student retains the right to appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, if the College has not resolved the complaint to the student's satisfaction.

4 General Principles and Policy Statements

4.1 Grounds for appeals against assessment decisions

The grounds on which an appeal may be based are as follows:

- That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of.
- That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative errors).

4.2 The College is committed to open and fair assessment. Students should be involved in the process of assessment. The purpose of the assessment and what is required to achieve a particular grade or level of competence should be clearly explained to the students. Similarly, constructive feedback should be provided, which clearly explains why a particular mark/grade has been awarded and what the student needs to do to improve the standard of his/her work.

4.3 There may occasionally be times when the students and assessor have differing views about an assessment decision. The process described below covers such situations. This procedure should be completed before the final Examination Board for the academic year, if there are appeals against the decisions reached in the final Examination Board, they must be lodged within 5 working days of the results being issued.

4.4 The Director of Higher Education and college staff will make every effort to ensure that meetings are arranged at the student's convenience. Appropriate technologies should be used especially for learners who are unable to get into college easily. Students must inform the Director of Higher Education of any reasonable adjustments that they require throughout the appeals process. Students wishing to appeal must provide a clear explanation of the nature of the appeal and the grounds on which they are appealing.

5. Monitoring of Appeals

5.1 A summary report of all appeals will be considered by the Higher Education Board (HEB) to inform policy and procedure and to enhance student achievement. Trend analysis and recommendations for enhancement will form part of the HEB review.

6. Related Policies and Procedures

6.1 **HE Assessment Policy**

7. Document and Version Control Information (*please complete all sections*):

Version control information heading	Details
Owner	Director of Higher Education
Author	Director of Higher Education
Policy Review Area	HE Governance
Approved by	GLT
Date of approval of this version	Please insert date of meeting where policy was approved.
Review Cycle	3 years
Next review date	2029
Version number	V1.01

Procedure

- **Early Resolution**

1.1 Early resolution is designed to address straightforward concerns quickly and locally before a decision is made to make a formal appeal. Students should raise their concerns with their tutor who will arrange an informal meeting to discuss their work in line with the assessment criteria and the feedback they have received. If there are still concerns that have not been resolved, students have a right to submit a formal appeal under the grounds stated in the guidance. Support services such as wellbeing, mental health and pastoral support will be signposted to the student and can offer advice and support throughout the process.

- **Formal appeal**

2.1 If the student wishes to raise a formal appeal, they need to complete the Student Appeal Form (appendix A of this document) and send it to HE@chichester.ac.uk within 10 working days of receiving their results (or within 5 working days if appealing the decision of an Examination Board).

2.2 If a student appeals on the grounds of undisclosed mitigating circumstances, upholding this appeal would result in the student being granted the opportunity to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances outside of the standard cycle, in line with the CCG extenuating circumstances policy.

2.3 If a student appeals on the grounds of procedural irregularities, a review of the circumstances will be undertaken by a nominated reviewer appointed by the Director of Higher Education within fifteen working days of receiving the completed form. The outcome of the appeal will be communicated with the student.

2.4 If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal stage, they may be able to request a review within ten working days of the notification of the outcome of the formal stage. Guidance may

be sought from the Students' Union. A request for a review may be submitted on the following grounds:

- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage
- a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable in all the circumstances
- new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process

- The review stage will not consider the issues afresh or involve a further investigation. An appeal must have been considered at the formal stage before it can be taken to the review stage.

- The application for review must be made in writing to HE@chichester.ac.uk. If grounds for the review are met, the Director of HE will clarify the purpose and scope of the review and share the outcome decision within fifteen working days.

- Once the student has exhausted college appeal procedures a "completion of procedures" letter will be issued. This will be issued following the formal stage, if no request for review is received within ten working days, or at the end of the review stage. This letter will confirm that the academic appeal procedures are complete and that there is no further route of appeal available within Chichester College Group. It will include a clear explanation of the reason for the decision and advise the student of their right to submit a complaint to the external awarding body or to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) and the time limit for doing so and where and how to access advice and support.

- **Document and Version Control Information (please complete all sections):**

Version control information heading	**Details**
Owner	Role, Department
Author	Role, Department
Policy Review Area	HE,
Approved by	GLT/Committee/Corporation
Date of approval of this version	Please insert date of meeting where policy was approved.
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Appendix A: Appeal Form

STUDENT APPEAL AGAINST ASSESSMENT DECISIONS FORM – CONFIDENTIAL

(for an editable version of this form, please email HE@chichester.ac.uk)

Name of Student	
Programme Title	
Email address	
Telephone number	

Name of Assessor	
Name of Internal Quality Assurer (IQA)	

Unit Assessed	
Nature/Title of Assessment	
Date of Assessment	

Appeals will be considered for the following reasons:

1. That there exist circumstances affecting the performance of the candidate which the assessor or internal verifier were unaware of (for examples please see the section on extenuating circumstances at the end of this form) you will also need to explain why you did not apply for extenuating circumstances prior to the assessment deadline.

2. That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the assessment (including administrative error).

Student's reasons for appeal			
Please summarise below the reasons for your appeal			
Signature		**Date**	

Please submit your completed appeal form to HE@chichester.ac.uk

Do I have extenuating circumstances?

The circumstances you are seeking to mitigate must be unforeseeable or unpreventable and you must be able to demonstrate how these circumstances could have a significant impact upon your academic performance. For the purposes of appeal, you must show that the assessor was not aware of these problems.

Common examples include:

- Significant personal illness or injury (where a doctor certifies that you should not work or study)
- The critical illness or death of a close family member/dependent
- Significant family crises or financial problems leading to acute stress
- Absence for public service (e.g. Jury Service)

Circumstances not normally considered:

- Events that were planned in advance or could reasonably be foreseen (e.g. booked holiday) – arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader once known
- Failure, loss or theft of a computer, printer or storage medium
- Non-diagnosed illness (e.g. exam stress)
- Inadequate time management/planning
- Paid employment or volunteering commitments– arrangements should be agreed in advance with the study programme leader
- Rejection of DSA advice and guidance
- Pre-existing circumstances disclosed at interview (eg ongoing diagnosed illness).