Academic Appeals
Guidance for Students
1 Introduction

This guide is intended to explain the Academic Appeals process to all medical students. Before submitting your appeal please ensure you read these guidelines thoroughly.

Please note, you will have continued access to support from your Personal Tutor throughout the appeal process. Further information on the appeals process can be obtained from the Quality team. Final decisions on the marks, grades or qualifications that you receive are made by the MB ChB Examination Board.

An academic appeal is a procedure which allows you to request a review of the decision made by the Board of Examiners to terminate your course. If you believe you have sufficient grounds for appeal you must submit your Academic Appeal Application Form and evidence within 7 calendar days of receiving your results.

2 Grounds for Appeal

You may only appeal on the following grounds:

2.1 Procedural Irregularities

If you believe there has been a procedural irregularity in the operation of the assessment processes of the Board of Examiners, which has created a reasonable possibility that your result may have been different if it had not occurred. You must be able to provide clear evidence of the significant procedural irregularities you believe to have taken place. You cannot, however, request a review because you simply disagree with the grade that you have received for your work.

2.2 Mitigating Circumstances

New mitigating circumstances that have affected your exam performance and could not have been reported to the Mitigating Circumstances Panel at the normal time. You will be required to explain to the Appeals panel on your Appeal Form why you were not able to, or did not, disclose information about the circumstances at the time. The Board will determine if, in their view, this is a valid reason.

2.3 Academic Judgement

Appeals which simply question academic or professional judgement of Assessors or the Board of Examiners are not permitted. Requests asking for your paper to be re-marked or for a grade to be raised to take into consideration mitigating circumstances will not be accepted.

2.4 Fit to Sit’ Policy

The Medical School operates a strict ‘fit to sit’ policy whereby if you present yourself for an examination you are declaring yourself as fit to take that examination. No appeals will be accepted on these grounds. The only exceptions to this are where you become unwell during any part of an examination and you can provide evidence that you could not reasonably have foreseen that acute illness.

If you are unsure of whether you have sufficient grounds for appeal, please speak to your Personal Tutor or Claire.stocke@buckingham.ac.uk.
3 Submitting an Appeal

If you believe you have sufficient grounds for appeal, you may request a review of the Examination Board decision by completing and submitting an Academic Appeal Application form which can be found either through the UBMS Moodle, from your Personal Tutor or from the Quality team.

We recommend seeking advice from your Personal Tutor before submitting your Academic Appeal form.

Please ensure you read the form carefully and complete each section in full. When filling out your appeal application, you must detail all evidence you wish to submit alongside the Academic Appeal form, ensuring each piece of evidence is clearly titled and dated; forms that do not contain sufficient information may be rejected. Your appeal and supporting evidence must be submitted to the Quality team within 7 calendar days of the date of publication of your results. Appeals and/or supporting documentation received after this date will not normally be considered.

Appeals should be made on your own behalf and it is your responsibility to obtain the required evidence. The Appeal Panel may request additional information which will equally be your responsibility to provide by the set deadline. If you require help in compiling your appeal, your Personal Tutor will be able to provide support, however cannot write your appeal for you.

It is important that you submit evidence with your appeal. Please note that this must be new evidence, not copies of previously submitted evidence which has already been considered by the Board of Examiners or Mitigating Circumstances Panel. All evidence must be submitted in English. If the original evidence is not written in English, you are responsible for providing a certified translated copy. Medical evidence should be provided in the form of an official signed document from a registered medical practitioner and a clear medical diagnosis must be included as appropriate.

The Medical School does undertake checks to ensure that all evidence provided is genuine and true.

Wherever possible, your appeal and supporting evidence should submitted via email to Jacqueline.odowd@buckingham.ac.uk If you are unable to submit your documentation electronically, please submit your appeal to the Quality Lead.

Once your appeal and all supporting documentation has been received, you will receive an email of acknowledgement from the Quality Team.

4 Appeals Process

A report from the Medical School will submitted to the Appeals Panel alongside your appeal for consideration, this will include but is not limited to; your full academic record, a report of any interactions you have had with the ‘concerns process’ and a summary of the decision taken by the Board of Examiners.

The Appeal Panel will usually consist of 3 members:

- The Dean from another Faculty in the University or their senior representative,
- A Medically qualified member of staff from a partner organisation who is not heavily involved in the Medical School and who has not taught the student being considered
- A Lay representative who is not involved in the concerns process or the Board of Examiners

No member of the Panel will be from the Medical School, however, the Quality Lead will be available to call upon to offer clarification on the process or the codes of practice and procedures within the
medical school. The Quality team will provide administrative support to the Panel, however will have no involvement in any decisions.

Occasionally, the Panel may decide it is appropriate for the student to appear before it. You may also make a case to appear in front of the Panel personally if your case is sensitive, though the final decision rests with the Panel. If you do appear before the Panel you may be accompanied by your Personal Tutor (or another member of staff who has agreed to perform that role), and a companion (this may not be a family member) who will usually be a fellow student of the University. Legal representatives may not be present under any circumstances.

The Appeals panel communicates its decision to the UBMS Quality Office. Once a decision has been reached, you will be informed in writing by the Quality team within 2 working days together with a statement of the grounds for the decision.

5 Outcomes

Appeals panel are bound by UBMS regulations, defined in the Code of Practice for Assessment, and are therefore limited in their powers to modify and amend decisions made.

The Appeal Panel may only:

- Confirm course termination, or
- Permit the student a repeat period of study in line with the regulations

Please note that under no circumstances will the Panel be able to change the outcome of any assessment or allow a student to progress if they have not met the conditions for progression.

6 Appeal to the Office of Independent Adjudicator

If you believe that your appeal has been conducted incorrectly or that the outcome is unreasonable in relation to the evidence supplied, you have the right to raise the matter for external and independent review by the Office of Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA is an independent body set up under the Higher Education Act 2004 to review student complaints. The role of the OIA is to review individual complaints made by students against higher education institutions. A student can bring a complaint to the OIA after they have exhausted the internal procedures of the university, provided the complaint is eligible under the rules of the OIA’s complaints scheme. For information about the process, please visit [http://www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk).
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