

SECTION J — MAKING AN APPEAL, INCLUDING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP APPEAL PROCEDURES

This section explains how you can ask the University to formally review a decision it has made about you – a process we call making an appeal. The section also explains how you can take forward your concerns if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal after the University has made its final decision on the matter.

The Academic Support Office in the Academic Registry manages the appeal process for undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and can offer advice if you are thinking of making an appeal: email aso@norwichuni.ac.uk for more information. The Academic Support Office can also offer advice to staff about the appeals process.

If you decide to make an appeal, the Students' Union can support you through the process. Email su.advice@norwichuni.ac.uk for more information.

The University of the Arts London (UAL) manages the appeal process for our research degree students, as UAL awards these degrees. For more information, contact our Research Office in the first instance: research@norwichuni.ac.uk.

If you are a student on a course at a partner institution validated by Norwich University of the Arts, you will be subject to that institution's regulations on appeals. When you have exhausted the appeals process at the partner institution, if you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may be eligible to submit a further appeal to Norwich University of the Arts appeals process, subject to the University's partnership agreement, the details of which follow in this section.

- **We won't treat you differently or negatively if you make an appeal.** We look at appeals on their merits and University staff are committed to addressing any issues raised in an appeal. You may not receive the outcome you would like from an appeal, but you can be reassured that we will have considered the matter fairly and consistently with any other appeals we receive.
- If you decide to make an appeal, **we will try and deal with it efficiently and within the timescales set out below.** Please remember though that to do this, we also need you to present information to us when we need it or ask for it. So if we ask you for more details or evidence to support your appeal, make sure that you return the information to us as soon as you are able. If we think we need more time to consider an appeal – for example, because you have made the appeal during student vacation time and we need to discuss the appeal with a member of staff who is on leave – then we will keep you up-to-date with progress on your appeal.
- **We don't allow appeals made about matters of academic judgement.** In the context of appeals, we define academic judgement as the decisions made by academic staff on the quality of a piece of work, or the criteria applied to assess the work.
- Please remember too that if you're making an appeal and stating the outcome you are looking for, **you can't progress to the next year of study if you have failed any units.** Section E of these regulations explains more about what happens if you fail one or more units.

- The next section of these regulations, **section K**, explains **how you can make a complaint** to the University. We define appeals and complaints differently, and sometimes we receive an appeal that we decide would be better considered as a complaint, or vice versa. We may also receive an appeal that contains elements of a complaint. In all these cases, the member of staff considering the appeal and the Academic Support Office will decide jointly on the most appropriate process to use. The Academic Support Office will write to you to confirm any decision we take.
- The **Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)** runs an independent scheme to review student appeals, and the University is a member of this scheme. If you're unhappy with the outcome of your appeal you may be able to ask the OIA to review your case. You can find more information about taking your case to the OIA, what it can and can't look at, and what it can do to put things right, here:

<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students>

You normally need to have completed our appeal procedures before you can complain to the OIA. We'll send you a letter called a **Completion of Procedures letter** when you have reached the end of our processes and there are no more steps you can take with your appeal within the University. If we don't uphold your appeal, we'll issue you with a Completion of Procedures letter automatically. If we uphold or partially uphold your appeal, you can ask for a Completion of Procedures letter if you'd like one. You can find more information about Completion of Procedures letters, and when you can expect to receive one, here:

<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers/completion-of-procedures-letters/>

You can also find more about Completion of Procedures letters in the regulations that follow.

- In writing these regulations, we have referred to the OIA's *Good Practice Framework* for handling student appeals and complaints.
- For more information about **how we keep original copies of appeal documentation in the long-term**, please see **section N**. Any photocopies of individual appeals we make for the purposes of discussing them formally within the University are destroyed confidentially at the first opportunity.
- We **keep notes and records** of all stages of our appeal processes, and we report annually on the operation of the appeals process at the University – including summarising the outcomes of all appeals – to our **Academic Board**.

1 What is an appeal?

1.1 We define an appeal as a formal request to review a decision the University has made.

1.2 There are two types of appeal at the University:

- **A Stage 1 appeal** is an appeal you can make when you want us to review a decision the University has made about you – for example, an assessment decision on your work.
- **A Stage 2 appeal** is the second and final stage of our appeals process. You can only make a Stage 2 appeal – for example, because you have new evidence which you want us to take into consideration – after you have received our decision on your Stage 1 appeal.

2 Who can make an appeal, and what is the deadline?

2.1 All undergraduate and postgraduate taught students with an active registration at the University can use these regulations to make an appeal, as well as students who have recently qualified for an award at the University and who make an appeal within the published deadline.

If you are registered as a student with the London School of Design and Marketing (LSDM) on a course validated by Norwich University of the Arts, you can use these regulations to make an appeal against a decision made about you by an assessment or award board.

The University will only consider appeals from LSDM students against assessment board decisions, and won't consider appeals by students of LSDM for any other reason listed in these regulations.

LSDM students: Please note that paragraphs 2.2 and 4 do not apply to you under the validation partnership agreement between the University and LSDM. Contact aso@norwichuni.ac.uk if you have any questions about the Norwich University of the Arts appeals process and where it applies to students of LSDM.

2.2 You can also use these regulations to make an appeal:

- if you no longer have an active registration at the University; but
- you qualified for an academic award at the University in the current calendar year; and
- the University has taken disciplinary action against you because of academic misconduct; and
- the University has decided to take away some or all of your academic credit.

If you qualified for an academic award at the University in a previous calendar year and we have taken away some or all of your academic credit because of academic misconduct, you can't use these appeal regulations. Instead, you will need to contact the Academic Registrar about taking the matter to the University's Council. Email aro@norwichuni.ac.uk for more information.

- 2.3 The deadline for making an appeal using these regulations depends on the decision you wish to make an appeal against. These deadlines are covered in more detail below.

If you make an appeal after the relevant deadline has passed, the member of staff asked to consider the appeal will decide whether or not to consider the case. **We are very unlikely to consider an appeal submitted after the deadline unless you can demonstrate exceptional reasons as to why you didn't submit the appeal on time.**

If we decide not to consider your late appeal, the Academic Support Office write to you within two weeks (10 working days) of receiving it with an explanation of our decision, and the original decision you would like to appeal against will stand.

See below for more about who considers Stage 1 appeals.

See section A for more about how we use and calculate working days as part of University deadlines.

- 2.4 We would usually expect an appeal to be made by one student only. If several students make an appeal jointly, they will need to name one student in the group of students appealing as the point of contact for all communications about the matter.

- 2.5 You will need to use a different set of appeal procedures if:

- your tuition fees weren't paid; and
- we terminated your place on the course as a result.

These procedures are operated by the Director of Finance and Planning.

[Click here for the *Student Fees Payment Policy \(Undergraduate\)*, or for the *Student Fees Payment Policy \(Taught Postgraduate\)*](#) for more about appeal process for course termination because of non-payment of tuition fees, or search the intranet for 'Student Tuition Fees Payment Policy'.

3 General information about Stage 1 appeals against assessment decisions and course terminations for academic reasons

- 3.1 You can make a Stage 1 appeal:

- against a decision made about you by an assessment or award board; or
- because we have terminated your place on the course for academic reasons.

We don't accept appeals against provisional marks.

See section D for more about provisional marks.

3.2 If you make a Stage 1 appeal for either of the reasons listed above, you will need to specify one or more of the three grounds on which we allow these appeals. These grounds are as follows:

- Because you believe there has been a procedural irregularity which has affected you. An example of a procedural irregularity would be if we hadn't followed our own regulations when we took a decision about a unit you had failed.
- Because you believe there has been a significant material error which has affected you. An example of a significant material error would be that you submit all the work for a unit, but we mistakenly only assess some of it.
- Because you want to tell us about extenuating circumstances:
 - which you haven't told us (or if you are a student at a partner institution, your course provider) about previously; **or**
 - which you have told us (or your provider if applicable) about previously because you have already made a claim for extenuating circumstances, but for which you have new evidence which wasn't available when you made the claim; **and as a result of which**
 - you believe the University (or your provider if applicable) would have made a different decision on your assessment or course termination.

Please note that we would only look at your extenuating circumstances as part of an appeal if you can demonstrate to us that you had good reason not to make a claim for them earlier through our (or your provider's) usual processes for extenuating circumstances. If you are making an appeal on the basis of new evidence, you will also need to provide good reasons as to why you didn't or couldn't obtain the evidence previously.

You don't need to make a separate claim for extenuating circumstances if you are telling us about extenuating circumstances as part of your appeal.

If you want to make a claim for extenuating circumstances through our usual processes and not as part of an appeal, see section F.

3.3 If you decide to make an appeal because of an assessment decision we have taken or because we have terminated your place on the course for academic reasons, **the first step is to talk to your Course Leader (or equivalent) or the Year 0 Pathways Leader as appropriate.** We expect you to do this because

this person can sometimes help explain why the University has taken a particular decision about you, and this may help you decide whether or not you want to make an appeal. If the member of academic staff you need to talk to is not available, please contact the Academic Support Office (aso@norwichuni.ac.uk) (or your relevant provider's support office) for advice about another member of academic staff you could speak to about making an appeal.

- 3.4 If you decide not to make an appeal after meeting with your Course Leader (or equivalent) or another member of academic staff, the matter will not go any further.

4 General information about Stage 1 appeals concerning the University's Accommodation Licence Agreement and the Student Conduct Committee

- 4.1 You can make a Stage 1 appeal:

- against a decision we have taken about you at a formal meeting with the Academic Registrar and a member of the University's Senior Management Team because you have breached the University's Accommodation Licence Agreement; or
- against the outcome of a student misconduct investigation or a decision the Student Conduct Committee has taken about you.

- 4.2 If you make a Stage 1 appeal for one of these reasons, you will need to specify one or more of the three grounds on which we allow these appeals. These grounds are as follows:

- Because you believe there have been procedural irregularities in the way we made our decision about you. An example of a procedural irregularity would be if we hadn't followed our procedures when we took a disciplinary decision about you.
- Because you have new evidence which didn't exist or wasn't available when we took the original decision about you. Please note though that if you make an appeal on these grounds, you will need to tell us why the evidence wasn't available at the time we took our decision.
- Because you believe that the penalty we imposed doesn't reflect the circumstances of the case.

5 How to make a Stage 1 appeal

- 5.1 We set deadlines as follows for making a Stage 1 appeal:

- you have two weeks (10 working days) – starting from the date of our letter to you confirming the decision or penalty you want to appeal against – to complete and return a Stage 1 appeal form to us; and

- a further two weeks (10 working days) to send us any supporting evidence.

This gives you a total of four weeks (20 working days) to submit a Stage 1 appeal and your supporting evidence. We would only extend this 20-day period if we think there are exceptional reasons to do so.

5.2 To make a Stage 1 appeal:

- complete the online Stage 1 appeal form;
- on the form, tell us the grounds for your appeal, what outcome you are seeking and what evidence you are providing to support your case;
- submit the application and any evidence available online; and
- send us any additional evidence before the deadline.

[Click here for the link to the online Stage 1 appeal form](#), or search the website for 'Making an appeal'.

If you are a student on a course at a partner institution which is validated by Norwich University of the Arts, you should contact aso@norwichuni.ac.uk to request the Stage 1 appeal form.

The type of evidence you may want to submit will depend on why you are making an appeal: if it's because of your health, for example, please provide independent medical evidence from your doctor or other recognised practitioner. If you're not sure what evidence we need to see, ask the Academic Support Office. Only staff dealing with your appeal will see the evidence you send to us.

Please remember:

- it's your responsibility to obtain evidence to support your appeal – staff at the University won't do this for you. This also means that if there's a charge to obtain the evidence, for example for a doctor's note, you will need to pay for it; and
- don't provide personal evidence about a third party as part of your evidence unless you have their permission to give this to us. We can give you advice on this when you make an appeal.

6 How we process Stage 1 appeals

6.1 When we receive your Stage 1 appeal and any supporting evidence, the Academic Support Office will check that:

- you have completed the form correctly and supplied evidence; and
- you have indicated the grounds on which you are making the Stage 1 appeal.

The Academic Support Office will also contact you at this point if we believe that we need additional information from you to help us assess your Stage 1 appeal.

6.2 Once you have submitted a Stage 1 appeal, both you and other relevant members of University staff must wait for the formal outcome before taking any further action in relation to your studies. For example, if you are making an appeal because your place on a course has been terminated, we won't allow you to return to the course or to use physical resources on campus – even on a temporary basis – unless and until the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal allows you to.

6.3 If you submit a Stage 1 appeal but the Academic Support Office considers that there are **no grounds** for your appeal – for example, because you have made an appeal solely about academic judgement, or because you haven't provided any supporting evidence – they will write to you within four weeks (20 working days) to confirm this decision. The 20-day period for the Academic Support Office to consider your appeal normally begins when we have received your appeal form and your evidence.

If you wish, you can challenge the decision of no grounds by making a Stage 2 appeal.

See below for more about making a Stage 2 appeal.

6.4 If the Academic Support Office considers that your Stage 1 appeal meets the grounds for appeal, they will carry out an initial investigation. This process may include asking for comments from the relevant Course Leader (or equivalent), the Year 0 Pathways Leader, and/or the Director responsible for your course as appropriate. The Academic Support Office will then pass the full details of the case to one of the following members of staff to make a decision on your Stage 1 appeal:

- a Pro Vice-Chancellor; or
- the Quality Manager.

To ensure that there's no conflict of interest, the Academic Support Office will pass your Stage 1 appeal to a member of staff who has not had any previous involvement in the circumstances or content of your appeal.

6.5 Where the person considering your appeal believes that the documentation provided by the Academic Support Office is sufficient, they will make a decision on your Stage 1 appeal. This means they will not invite you to attend a meeting of the Appeals Committee in person to discuss the case. Where they can consider your Stage 1 appeal on the basis solely of the documentation, they will write to you with the outcome within four weeks (20 working days). The 20-day period for the member of staff to make a response normally begins when we have received your appeal form and your evidence.

See below for more about the possible outcomes of a Stage 1 appeal.

6.6 If it is clear that you have grounds for a Stage 1 appeal, and the member of staff responsible for making a decision on the case considers that the matter requires

a face-to-face meeting with you (either in person or online), they can request that the appeal is considered at a meeting of the Appeals Committee. We will convene this meeting as soon as it is practical. See below for more about meetings of the Appeals Committee.

7 Arrangements for a meeting of the Appeals Committee to consider a Stage 1 appeal

The *Schedule of University Academic Committees* includes the full terms of reference for the Appeals Committee. [Click here for the Schedule](#), or search the website for 'Schedule of University Academic Committees'.

7.1 The following members of staff comprise the Appeals Committee when it is needed to consider a Stage 1 appeal:

- the person considering the Stage 1 appeal (Chair); and
- two academic staff members of the University's Academic Board who have not had any previous involvement with the appeal.

A member of the Academic Support Office attends all meetings of the Appeals Committee to provide advice on regulatory and other matters. The Administrator to the Academic Registrar organises the meetings and takes the minutes.

7.2 If the Appeals Committee meets to discuss your Stage 1 appeal, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar will:

- write to you asking you to attend the meeting in person, giving you at least five working days' (one week's) notice of the time and place; and
- tell you who else will be attending the meeting.

It's up to you whether you wish to attend the meeting, but our advice is that it's always in your interests to give the Committee the opportunity to discuss your appeal with you. Please be aware too that the Appeals Committee will take place and make a decision on your Stage 1 appeal whether or not you attend.

If we decide that it would be appropriate for you to attend the meeting by video or conference call, we'll confirm this with you in advance.

7.3 Depending on the decision you are appealing against, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar may also invite the Chair or a representative of the following to the Committee:

- an assessment board;
- an awards board; or
- the Student Conduct Committee.

If the relevant Chair or representative is unable to attend, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar will ask them to make a written statement to the Appeals

Committee instead. This means the meeting can take place in their absence if necessary.

- 7.4 The University may also ask one or more staff witnesses to attend the meeting if appropriate – for example, your Course Leader (or equivalent). If the staff witness or witnesses cannot attend, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar will ask them to make a written statement to the Appeals Committee instead. This means the meeting can take place in their absence if necessary.

- 7.5 You can bring a friend or supporter to the Appeals Committee if you'd like to. The role of the supporter is to:

- see that the meeting is carried out fairly; and
- if they wish to, to address the Committee or ask questions.

You can also bring one or more witnesses to the meeting to support what you have told us in your appeal, but it's your responsibility to organise their attendance.

If you want to bring a formally trained legal representative to the Appeals Committee – either instead of, or as well as a friend or supporter – you must write to the Chair of the Appeals Committee at least two working days before the meeting. The Chair will decide whether or not to allow the legal representative to attend. The Chair can also postpone the meeting so that the University can make its own legal representations at the meeting when it is rescheduled.

A witness, friend, supporter or legal representative can't act on your behalf at the Appeals Committee if you cannot or choose not to attend. If we decide that it would be appropriate for your witness, friend, supporter or legal representative to attend the meeting by video or conference call, we'll confirm this with you in advance.

- 7.6 Once you have decided if you are going to attend the Appeals Committee, please email aro@norwichuni.ac.uk at least two working days before the meeting to confirm your decision. In the same email, please also let us know if anyone else will be attending with you and in what capacity they are attending – for example, as a supporter or as a witness.

- 7.7 After you have told us if you are attending the Appeals Committee, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar will send copies of documentation about the appeal to everyone due to attend the meeting. The Administrator will do this in advance of the meeting and as soon as it is practical, and everyone attending the meeting will receive the same information. This includes you, whether or not you choose to attend the meeting, and anyone else due to attend. Typically, this documentation includes:

- a copy of your Stage 1 appeal and any evidence you have provided to support your case;
- copies of the relevant regulations – for example, a copy of this section of the *Student Regulations and Procedures*; and

- any other relevant information. This might be information from the University's own records about you, and information from your course area.

8 What happens at a meeting of the Appeals Committee?

8.1 The Appeals Committee will consider a Stage 1 appeal as follows:

- the members of Committee meet in private to review and hold an initial discussion about the Stage 1 appeal;
- the Committee invites the student making the appeal into the meeting, together with any witnesses, friends, supporters or legal representatives as appropriate;
- the Committee discusses the appeal with the student and other individuals as appropriate, either separately or together depending on the circumstances;
- the Committee asks the student and any witnesses, friends, supporters or legal representatives present to leave the meeting;
- the Committee meets in private to agree a decision on the appeal.

8.2 Within one week (five working days) of the meeting, the Administrator to the Academic Registrar will write to you with the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal. We may be able to let you know the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal verbally – in other words, after the Appeals Committee meeting and before we confirm the outcome in writing – but we can't guarantee this.

9 The possible outcomes of a Stage 1 appeal

9.1 The person who has considered your Stage 1 appeal will always give you a full written response to the issues you have raised, but there are three principal outcomes:

- to **not uphold** the appeal; or
- to **partially uphold** the appeal; or
- to **uphold** the appeal.

These outcomes are the same whether we have considered the appeal on the basis of the documentation only or at a meeting of the Appeals Committee. What these outcomes mean is detailed below. If you choose to, you can make a Stage 2 appeal against any of these outcomes. See below for more about making a Stage 2 appeal.

9.2 We can decide to **not uphold** your Stage 1 appeal. This means that we have decided not to change the decision we originally took about you. This also means that the decision, whatever it might have been – for example, to terminate your place on the course – will remain in place.

9.3 We can decide to **uphold**, or **partially uphold** your Stage 1 appeal. This means that we have decided to change, or partly change, the decision we originally took about you. What happens next depends on the decision you have appealed against:

- we can revise the decision made by an assessment or award board, or ask them to reconsider their original decision;
- we can revise the decision made or penalty imposed by the Academic Registrar and member of Senior Management Team about a breach of the Accommodation Licence, or ask them to reconsider their original decision or penalty;
- we can revise the decision made or penalty imposed by the Student Conduct Committee, or ask them to reconsider their decision or penalty;
- if your place on a course has been terminated, we can reverse this decision and allow you back onto the course.

It may also be the case that in upholding or partially upholding your appeal, we need only ask you or a relevant member of staff to make good the situation before taking further formal action – for example, by asking you to submit work, or by asking a member of staff to assess work which hadn't been assessed before you made a Stage 1 appeal. In upholding or partially upholding a Stage 1 appeal, we can also ask you to meet certain conditions. We will confirm all the details of our decision when we write to you with the outcome.

9.4 We report the outcomes of Stage 1 appeals to other staff as necessary – for example, to your Course Leader (or equivalent), or to the Chair of an assessment board.

10 General information about Stage 2 appeals

10.1 If you have made a Stage 1 appeal and you wish to challenge the decision we have made about the appeal, you can make a Stage 2 appeal. This applies to all Stage 1 appeals, whatever the decision you were appealing against, and regardless of the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal. The Stage 2 appeal is the University's chance to review the decision it has made on your Stage 1 appeal, and the way in which it made that decision.

10.2 If you make a Stage 2 appeal, you'll need to specify one or more of the following five grounds on which we allow these appeals. These are as follows:

- Because we decided that there were no grounds for your Stage 1 appeal. If you want to make a Stage 2 appeal for this reason, you'll have to provide new evidence to us and explain why this evidence wasn't available when you made a Stage 1 appeal.
- Because you believe that we did not give your Stage 1 appeal fair consideration as a result of a procedural irregularity – for example, because you believe we didn't follow our own regulations correctly when we looked at your Stage 1 appeal. If you want to make a Stage 2 appeal

for this reason, you'll have to support your case with evidence of the procedural irregularity.

- Because there is new evidence available that wasn't available when we made our decision about your Stage 1 appeal, and which you believe would have led us to make a different decision if it had been available. If you want to make a Stage 2 appeal for this reason, you'll need to tell us why the information wasn't available for your Stage 1 appeal.
- Because you made a Stage 1 appeal against a decision of the Student Conduct Committee, and you believe that our decision on your Stage 1 appeal is not in proportion to the circumstances of the matter.
- Because we have upheld, or partially upheld, your Stage 1 appeal, but you believe the decision we made about that appeal disadvantages you in some way.

11 How to make a Stage 2 appeal

11.1 We set deadlines as follows for making a Stage 2 appeal:

- you have two weeks (10 working days) – starting from the date of our letter to you confirming the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal – to complete and return a Stage 2 appeal form to us; and
- a further two weeks (10 working days) to send us any supporting evidence.

This gives you a total of four weeks (20 working days) to submit a Stage 2 appeal and your supporting evidence. We would only extend this 20-day period if we think there are exceptional reasons to do so.

11.2 To make a Stage 2 appeal:

- complete the online Stage 2 appeal form;
- on the form, tell us the grounds for your appeal, what outcome you are seeking and what evidence you are providing to support your case;
- submit the application and any evidence online; and
- send us any additional evidence within the deadline.

[Click here for the Stage 2 appeal form](#), or search the website for 'Making an appeal'.

As with a Stage 1 appeal, the type of evidence you may want to submit will depend on why you are making an appeal: if it's because of your health, for example, please provide independent medical evidence from your doctor or other recognised practitioner. If you're not sure what evidence we need to see, ask the Academic Support Office. Only staff dealing with your appeal will see the evidence you send to us.

Please remember:

- it's your responsibility to obtain evidence to support your appeal – staff at the University won't do this for you. This also means that if there's a charge to obtain the evidence, for example for a doctor's note, you will need to pay for it; and
- don't provide personal evidence about a third party as part of your evidence unless you have their permission to give this to us. We can give you advice on this when you make an appeal.

12 How we process Stage 2 appeals

12.1 When we receive your Stage 2 appeal and any supporting evidence, the Academic Support Office will check that:

- you have completed the form correctly and supplied evidence; and
- you have indicated the grounds on which you are making the Stage 2 appeal.

The Academic Support Office will also contact you if we believe that we need additional information from you to help assess your Stage 2 appeal.

12.2 Once you have submitted a Stage 2 appeal, the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal remains in place unless or until the outcome of the Stage 2 appeal changes this, and both you and other relevant members of University staff must wait for the Stage 2 outcome before taking any further action relating to your studies. For example, if you are making an appeal because your place on a course has been terminated, we won't allow you to return to the course or to use physical resources on campus – even on a temporary basis – unless or until the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal allows you to.

12.3 Once the Academic Support Office is satisfied that the Stage 2 appeal documentation you have submitted is complete, they will pass the full details of your case to one of the following members of staff to make a decision on your Stage 2 appeal:

- the Vice-Chancellor; or
- the Deputy Vice-Chancellor; or
- a Pro Vice-Chancellor.

To ensure that there's no conflict of interest, the Academic Support Office will pass your Stage 2 appeal to a member of staff who has not had any previous involvement with your appeal at Stage 1.

12.4 If you submit a Stage 2 appeal but the person considering the matter concludes that there are **no grounds** for your appeal, they will write to you within four weeks (20 working days) to confirm this decision. This 20-day period normally begins when we have received your appeal form and your evidence.

This is the second and final stage of the University's appeal process, so if you wish to challenge this decision, you will need to take the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). See below for more about the OIA.

12.5 If the person considering your appeal decides that your Stage 2 appeal meets the grounds for appeal, there are two ways in which your appeal may be considered. These are detailed below.

12.6 Where the person considering your appeal believes that the documentation provided by the Academic Support Office is sufficient, they will make a decision on your Stage 2 appeal. This means they will not invite you to attend any meetings in person to discuss the matter further, but will write to you with the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal within four weeks (20 working days). This 20-day period normally begins when we have received your appeal form and your evidence.

See below for more about the possible outcomes of a Stage 2 appeal.

12.7 Where the person considering your appeal believes that you have grounds for a Stage 2 appeal but concludes that it would be helpful to discuss the matter with both you and with other senior staff of the University before making a decision, they can request that the appeal is considered by a sub-group of the University's Academic Board. See below for more about meetings of an Academic Board sub-group where it considers Stage 2 appeals.

13 Arrangements for a sub-group of the Academic Board to consider a Stage 2 appeal

The *Schedule of University Academic Committees* includes the full list of members and terms of reference for the University's Academic Board. Search the website for 'Schedule of University Academic Committees'.

13.1 The person considering a Stage 2 appeal is responsible for selecting members of the Academic Board to form a sub-group to consider the matter. The sub-group:

- is chaired by the member of staff considering the Stage 2 appeal; and
- comprises three members of the Academic Board in addition to the Chair.

The Chair of the sub-group will choose Academic Board members to include both academic and professional services members of staff. To avoid any conflict of interest, any member of the Academic Board who has been involved with the appeal at Stage 1 will not be part of this sub-group.

A member of the Academic Support Office attends all meetings of the Academic Board sub-group to provide advice on regulatory and other matters, and to act as convening secretary to the group, including taking the minutes.

13.2 If the Academic Board sub-group is meeting to discuss your Stage 2 appeal, the Academic Support Office will:

- write to you asking you to attend the meeting in person (or online as appropriate), giving you at least five working days' (one week's) notice of the time and place; and
- tell you who will be attending the meeting.

It's up to you whether you wish to attend the meeting, but our advice is that it's always in your interests to give the Academic Board sub-group the opportunity to discuss your appeal with you. Please be aware too that the sub-group will take place and make a decision on your Stage 2 appeal whether or not you attend.

If we decide that it would be appropriate for you to attend the meeting by video or conference call, we'll confirm this with you in writing

13.3 Depending on the decision you are appealing against, the Chair of the sub-group can ask the Academic Support Office to invite other staff as appropriate to contribute to the meeting. If a requested staff member is unable to attend, the Academic Support Office will ask them to make a written statement to the sub-group instead. This means the meeting can take place in their absence if necessary.

13.4 You can bring a friend or supporter to the meeting of the Academic Board sub-group. The role of the supporter is to:

- see that the meeting is carried out fairly; and
- if they wish to, to address the sub-group or ask questions.

You can also bring one or more witnesses to the meeting to support what you have told us in your Stage 2 appeal, but it is your responsibility to organise their attendance.

Please note that if you want to bring a formally trained legal representative to the Academic Board sub-group – either instead of, or as well as a friend or supporter – you must write to the Chair of the sub-group at least two working days before the meeting. The Chair of the sub-group will decide whether or not to allow the legal representative to attend. The Chair of the sub-group may also decide to postpone the meeting of the sub-group so that the University can make its own legal representations at the meeting when it is rescheduled.

A witness, friend, supporter or legal representative can't act on your behalf at the Academic Board sub-group if you cannot or choose not to attend. If we decide that it would be appropriate for your witness, friend, supporter or legal representative to attend the meeting by video or conference call, we'll confirm this with you in advance.

13.5 Once you have decided if you are going to attend the Academic Board sub-group, please confirm by email to aso@norwichuni.ac.uk at least two working days before the meeting. In the same email, please also let us know if anyone

else will be attending with you and in what capacity they are attending – for example, as a supporter or as a witness.

13.6 After you have told us if you are attending the meeting of the Academic Board sub-group, the Academic Support Office will send copies of documentation about the matter to everyone due to attend the meeting. The Academic Support Office will do this in advance and as soon as it is practical, and everyone attending the meeting will receive the same information. This includes you, whether or not you choose to attend the meeting, and anyone else due to attend. Typically, this documentation will include:

- a copy of your Stage 1 appeal and any supporting evidence you provided, together with our formal written response to you. This is so that the sub-group is aware of the full context of your Stage 2 appeal;
- a copy of your Stage 2 appeal and any evidence you have provided to support your case;
- copies of the relevant regulations – for example, a copy of this section of the *Student Regulations and Procedures*; and
- any other relevant information. This might be information from the University's own records about you, and information from your course area.

14 What happens at a meeting of the Academic Board sub-group?

14.1 The Academic Board sub-group will consider a Stage 2 appeal as follows:

- the members of the sub-group meet in private to review and hold an initial discussion about the Stage 2 appeal;
- the sub-group invites the student making the appeal into the meeting, together with any witnesses, friends, supporters or legal representatives as appropriate;
- the sub-group discusses the appeal with the student and other individuals as appropriate, either separately or together depending on the circumstances;
- the sub-group asks the student and any witnesses, friends, supporters or legal representatives as appropriate to leave the meeting;
- the sub-group meets in private to agree a decision on the appeal.

14.2 In asking you to attend the meeting of the sub-group, the University is seeking only to establish the facts of your appeal, and to give you an opportunity to put your side of the case. We understand that meetings of this type can be stressful for students involved, and if you attend a meeting, the sub-group will do all they can to put you at your ease and allow you to talk about the details of your appeal.

14.3 Within one week (five working days) of this meeting, the Chair of the sub-group will write to you with the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal. We may be able to let you know the outcome of the sub-group verbally – in other words, after the

meeting and before confirming the outcome in writing – but we can't guarantee this.

15 The possible outcomes of a Stage 2 appeal

15.1 The person considering your Stage 2 appeal is able to make any decision as appropriate and will give you a full written response to the issues you have raised. But as with Stage 1 appeals, there are three principal outcomes to a Stage 2 appeal:

- to **not uphold** the appeal; or
- to **partially uphold** the appeal; or
- to **uphold** the appeal.

These outcomes are the same whether we have considered the appeal on the basis of the documentation only or at a meeting of the sub-group. What these outcomes mean is detailed below. Stage 2 is the final stage in the University's appeals process.

15.2 We can decide to **not uphold** your Stage 2 appeal. This means that we have decided not to change the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal.

15.3 We can decide to **uphold**, or **partially uphold** your Stage 2 appeal. This means that we have decided to change, or partly change, the decision we took about your Stage 1 appeal. What happens next depends on the decision you have appealed against:

- we can revise the decision made by an assessment or award board, or ask them to reconsider their original decision;
- we can revise the decision made or penalty imposed by the Academic Registrar and member of Senior Management Team about a breach of the Accommodation Licence, or ask them to reconsider their original decision or penalty;
- we can revise the decision made or penalty imposed by the Student Conduct Committee, or ask them to reconsider their decision or penalty.
- if your place on a course has been terminated, we can reverse this decision and allow you back onto the course.

If the person considering your Stage 2 appeal wishes to revise a decision already taken, they may take advice from other sources as appropriate before confirming the decision, including from external examiners.

It may also be the case that in upholding or partially upholding your appeal, we need only ask you or a relevant member of staff to make good the situation before taking further formal action – for example, by asking you to submit work, or by asking a member staff to assess work which hadn't been assessed before you made a Stage 2 appeal. In upholding or partially upholding a Stage 2 appeal, we can also ask you to meet certain conditions. We will confirm all the details of our decision when we write to you with the outcome.

- 15.4 Our decision on a Stage 2 appeal is final. If you wish to challenge the decision on a Stage 2 appeal, you may be able to take the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

See below for more about taking an appeal to the OIA.

16 Taking your appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

- 16.1 When we write to you to confirm the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal, we will include information on taking your appeal to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). The OIA is the independent organisation which reviews appeals for students in higher education in the UK.
- 16.2 The OIA will normally only look at appeals which have been processed through all the stages of a university's appeals processes. In our case, this means after you have submitted – and we have responded to – both a Stage 1 and a Stage 2 appeal.
- 16.3 To take your appeal to the OIA, the Academic Support Office will need to issue you with a **Completion of Procedures letter**. The Completion of Procedures letter, sometimes called a CoP letter, contains the following information:
- a detailed summary of how the University has responded to an appeal; and
 - the deadline by which you would need to take your appeal to the OIA for consideration, if you chose to. The deadline is a year from the date of the Completion of Procedures letter.

You will need to send a copy of your Completion of Procedures letter to the OIA if you decide that you want them to review how we have responded to your appeal and the outcome we have given you.

- 16.4 The Academic Support Office will send you a Completion of Procedures letter automatically in the following cases:
- if we decided that your Stage 2 appeal had no grounds; or
 - if we decided to not uphold your Stage 2 appeal.
- 16.5 In the following case, you will have to ask the Academic Support Office to send you a Completion of Procedures letter:
- if we decided to uphold, or partially uphold your Stage 2 appeal.

Email aso@norwichuni.ac.uk if you need the Academic Support Office to issue a Completion of Procedures letter for you. If you are thinking of taking your appeal to the OIA, we recommend that you contact us promptly for your

Completion of Procedures letter once you have received the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal.

- 16.6 Where the Academic Support Office sends you a Completion of Procedures letter automatically, they will do so within two weeks (10 working days) of the date we wrote to you with the outcome of your Stage 2 appeal.

Where you have requested a Completion of Procedures letter, the Academic Support Office will send it to you within two weeks (10 working days) of receiving your request.

Go to www.oiahe.org.uk for more about the work of the OIA.

17 How we deal with frivolous or vexatious appeals

- 17.1 The University may decide not to consider an appeal if the content is frivolous or vexatious. Examples of appeals that we might consider as either frivolous or vexatious are as follows:

- appeals which are obsessive, harassing or repetitive in nature;
- appeals where you are asking for an unreasonable or unrealistic outcome; or
- appeals which we think have been made solely to cause trouble or to waste the University's time.

If we decide not to consider your appeal for any of these reasons, the Academic Support Office will write to you to confirm this and to explain the next step in the process.

18 How we deal with unacceptable behaviour in the appeals process

- 18.1 The OIA publishes a policy about types of behaviour on the part of someone who uses their services which might affect the OIA's staff and how they work. The University acts in the spirit of this policy and may decide not to consider your appeal if we believe that your actions or behaviour towards University staff, or those of someone representing or supporting you, are:

- aggressive, offensive or abusive; and/or
- if you or they are unreasonably demanding or persistent.

If we decide not to consider your appeal because of this, the Academic Support Office will write to you to confirm this.

If you are becoming unreasonably demanding or persistent in your behaviour about an appeal you have made, the Academic Support Office, in conjunction with senior managers at the University, can also decide that we will not respond

to further communications from you while considering your appeal. In this case, the Academic Support Office will write to you to confirm this.

You can read the OIA's policy on behaviour here:

<https://www.oiahe.org.uk/about-us/our-organisation/our-service/behaviour-policy/>