



IADT Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedures

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Purpose	This is the policy and procedures for dealing with Assessment Appeals at the Institute
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Who needs to know about this document	Registrar, Heads of Faculty, Heads of Department, all staff and students.
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IADT Appeals Procedures

Standing Orders, Membership, Terms of Reference and Procedures

References:

1. QQI Assessment and Standards 2013
2. IADT Marks and Standards 2015
3. IADT External Examiners Procedures 2015

The following definitions: (as outlined in HETAC Assessment and Standards 2009) have been adopted by IADT

Appeal:

“An *appeal* is a request to a higher authority for the alteration of the decision or judgement of a lower one. In the context of the assessment of students, the lower authority could be a board of examiners, and the higher authority the academic committee or one of its sub-committees. An appeal is a request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on student progression, assessment and awards”.

A review is an integral part of the appeals process.

In IADT, an Assessment Appeals Board is a subcommittee of Academic Council

Student Appeal Process

Review:

“A *review* means the re-consideration of the assessment **decision**, either by the original assessor or by other competent persons”. As with a recheck, a review may result in one of the following outcomes: grade unchanged, grade increased or grade decreased.

Students are required to state the grounds for the requested appeal. The grounds for appeal will normally be that the student suspects that the assessment was erroneous in some respect. Reviews are overseen by the relevant Academic Department in conjunction with the Registrar’s Office. The relevant external examiner will be notified by the Faculty if any change in classification of an award is decided following the assessment appeals board meeting.

Administration Recheck:

“A *recheck* means the administrative operation of checking (again) the recording and addition of the combination of all component scores for a module and/or stage”.

As with a review, a recheck may result in one of the following outcomes:

- Grade remain unchanged
- Grade is increased
- Grade is decreased

Rechecks should be managed directly by the responsible academic unit.

If following a meeting of an IADT Board of Assessors, an error is discovered in the recording or calculation of a grade and/or in the recording of an overall result, a *Correction of Calculation Error* form will be completed by the Head of Department, and signed by the Registrar. This form will be submitted to the Assessment Appeals Board for sign off. An updated transcript will then be issued to the student by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs.

Membership of Assessment Appeals Board

The Assessment Appeals Board is made up of the Registrar (Chair), a Head of Department (other than the Department in which the student is registered), and either a current Academic staff representative from Academic Council or its sub committees, or an Academic who has served on any of these committees within the past three years. Other relevant staff, such as the Examinations Officer or the Manager of Academic and Student Affairs, may be present to respond to the Board's queries.

Terms of Reference

To conduct the formal appeals process of the Institute.

Standing Orders for the Assessment Appeals Board

- The Assessment Appeals Board will convene as necessary after assessment periods scheduled in the academic calendar.
- The Board shall meet to consider an appeal, along with the response from the programme team to the students appeal.
- The Board will arrive at one of the following decisions
 - To uphold the appeal
 - To reject the appeal
- The Registrar will provide a recording secretary for the Board meeting.
- In carrying out its duties, the Board may request further factual information from the relevant Academic Department, the Examinations Office, or any other relevant offices within IADT.
- The decision of the Board meeting will be sent to the student within five working days. If the appeal is successful, the appeal fee is refunded via the student's bank account.
- The decisions of the Board are recorded in Minutes, and signed by the members of the Board.
- The Registrar's Office writes to students within five working days of the outcome of the Appeals Board, informing them of the outcome of the Assessment Appeals Board. Copies of the letters are sent to the Faculty Administrator, Head of Department, Head of Faculty and the Examinations Office.

General Information

Note: Following the decision of an exam board, and pending the outcome of any appeal process, students are advised to register for repeat exams and to attend classes in the year that they were previously registered.

Before a student submits an appeal:

After provisional results have been published, students can discuss these with their programme coordinator or other appropriate staff. The aim is to understand these results and provide guidance for students in the future. This early communication can provide useful clarification and feedback and may help to inform a student's decision on whether to proceed or not with an appeal.

However, once an appeal is submitted to the Registrar's Office, it is no longer appropriate for a student to consult with faculty staff about the appeal lodged.

Viewing of students' scripts:

Where applicable, a student may initially decide to make a request to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs to view their scripts. This relates only to programmes where written assessment sessions take place. Under the Freedom of Information Act, students are entitled to access and view their scripts. However, to ensure applications to view scripts are processed within the appeal deadline date, specific dates for viewing scripts are scheduled each year by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. Three full days are set aside, commencing one day after formal publication of results and ending the day before the appeal submission deadline.

For practice based programmes, students may decide to review their student assessment feedback sheets, which are kept on their student files in the Faculty Office.

If a student decides to make an appeal:

Charges

Appeal fees are €25 per module, up to a maximum of €100 per sitting.

Having viewed their script, a student may decide to proceed with an appeal. The appeals process will include an administration recheck of a student's grades (see previous page for definition of an administration recheck).

When drafting an appeal, students should endeavour to moderate the language of their submission to reflect the facts around their specific case, and avoid inappropriate references, generalisations, anecdotal third party hearsay or personalised comments.

Complaints against an individual should not form part of the appeal. If a student wants to make a complaint against a staff member or another student, they should refer in the first instance to the IADT Complaints Procedures and/or the IADT Mutual Respect Policy (both on IADT website).

Students may wish to contact the Student Union for support and advice on how to proceed with an appeal.

Grounds for an Appeal of an assessment

A student who wishes to lodge an appeal may do so on a limited number of grounds. The student must clearly identify the module(s) and the elements for which the appeal is being made. The application must also specify the grounds on which the appeal is sought and must contain all information that the student requires to have taken into account in the appeal.

An appeal of an assessment result shall be considered only if any of the following minimum standards of programme delivery were not met by IADT:

1. A student believes they were adversely affected by an irregularity in how the assessment was conducted; e.g. in written examinations, insufficient/inaccurate information on examination papers and continual assessments, or faulty IT equipment.
2. They believe they were adversely affected by an administrative error, resulting in an incorrect grade being recorded on the student database
3. They believe that due process was not followed, and seek verification that their work was assessed in accordance with IADT procedures, and that the process was fair and consistent.

For example;

- Were students informed of assessment requirements (modes, weightings)?
 - Was appropriate feedback provided to students on assessment?
 - Were the assessment processes reviewed by external examiners, as laid down in IADT External Examiner Procedures?
4. They believe they were adversely affected by factors which the Assessment Board was unaware of when making its decision, e.g. personal or medical reasons.

Appeals that meet the following criteria will be considered by the Registrar. Examples of valid grounds might be:

- Continuous assessment result was not included in overall grade: wrong paper was given during exam; missing pages from the exam paper; mistakes on the exam paper, examination started late; etc.
- Module was not delivered as per programme schedule or module descriptor; changes in structure of curriculum were not communicated to the student
- Assessment criteria was not provided for module
- Assessment requirements not consistent with the curriculum

The following statements are examples of what does **not** constitute grounds for an appeal:

- Student disagrees with the grading criteria and grading scheme
- Other students in class achieved a higher grade
- Student expected a higher grade for assessment
- Student is disappointed with their result
- A request to have work rechecked by a different assessor
- Student had to work to earn money and could not attend class

What the Appeal Board does not do

The Assessment Appeals Board does not attempt to replicate the assessment functions of an Assessors Board and, as a consequence, does not involve itself in re-assessing any assessment elements of a student's work. Therefore, it is requested that you do not include any assessment materials such as dissertations, essays, programs or reports, with your appeal submission, as they will not be considered.

An appeal on medical/personal/extenuating circumstances

An appeal may be made on the grounds of medical, personal or extenuating circumstances. However, these are in themselves grounds for changing a grade. You may at the discretion of the Appeals Board be allowed to resubmit at the next exam period as a first sitting.

Appeals on Medical Grounds:

In the event of illness during an assessment period, a student may lodge an appeal. An appeal on medical grounds must be supported by appropriate, signed and dated medical certification on headed paper.

Appeals on Personal Grounds:

An appeal on personal grounds, e.g., relating to personal difficulties, must be supported by documentary evidence provided by a recognised professional (e.g. psychologist, counsellor, etc.). Documentary evidence provided must be legible and stamped by the relevant professional.

Appeals on the Grounds of Extenuating Circumstances:

A student seeking an appeal on the grounds of extenuating circumstances relating to other factors such as the death of a relative or other incident, must submit written evidence; for example, a death notification or Garda report.

Submission of an appeal of an assessment:

Appeals will not be accepted unless the student has signed the appropriate form and paid the appropriate fee. Forms are available from the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, or on the IADT website.

This form should be lodged with the Office of Academic and Student Affairs within five working days of the formal (online) publication of results. This deadline will be strictly adhered to.

Third party appeals will not be accepted.

Decision of the Assessment Appeals Board:

The Assessment Appeals Board will review all documentation relating to the appeal, including a response from the Faculty, and will make a decision on their findings. The decision of the Appeals Board will be conveyed in writing by the Registrar to the student **within five days of the Assessment Appeals Board meeting.**

Appeal to the President

In exceptional circumstances, a student may challenge the findings of the Assessment Appeal Board by initiating an appeal to the President. Such an appeal should be lodged as soon as possible, but no later than ten working days after the student has received the decision of the Assessment Appeals Board; this is to ensure minimum disruption to a student's continuing studies.

- To initiate an Appeal to the President, a student must show substantial grounds for disputing the findings of the Assessment Appeals Board, e.g. evidence of faulty procedure on the part of the Assessment Appeals Board, clear conflict of interest on the part of a member (or members) of the Appeals Board or significant new evidence which was not available to or considered by the Appeals Board.
- An Appeal to the President is a very serious undertaking and should only be entered into if the student believes that the Assessment Appeals Board did not discharge its duty properly.

- An Appeal to the President should not be initiated solely on the grounds that a student does not agree with the decision of the Assessment Appeals Board.
- The President shall decide between the two following courses of action:
 - Reject the appeal;
 - Ask the Assessment Appeals Board to review its decision (citing reasons why this is necessary)
- The President will issue a response to the appeal within five working days.

This concludes the IADT Assessment Appeals Process.