

PRELIMINARY APPEALS (STAGE 1)

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

1) Regulations

You should already be aware of the information in the FPSE Student Handbook:
http://www.fpse.soton.ac.uk/student_handbook

The appeals process is outlined on: <http://www.southampton.ac.uk/studentadmin/appeals/>
and the official Calendar regulations are at: <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals.html>
with a summary flowchart on: <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals-appendixd.pdf>,
which also lists the timescales and deadlines of the appeals process.

Note the distinction between an appeal and a complaint:
<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-complaints.html>

If relevant, consider the regulations about Progression and Special Considerations:
<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/credit-bearing-progs.html>

2) Process

The first step in the appeals process is that you submit a Notice to Appeal form to the CQA Team (the CQA Office can be found on the ground floor of Building 59) or to the Student Office. This form needs to be received **within 10 working days** of the date that the decision that gave rise to the appeal was first communicated to you (**5 working days** in the case of Supplementary Examinations). The CQA Team will then arrange a Preliminary Discussion Meeting with an appropriate member of FPSE staff, where you can discuss your case in detail. After this face-to-face meeting, you should submit the Preliminary Meeting form to the CQA Team. The Faculty will then initiate an internal investigation in the relevant Academic Unit, which will re-visit the decision that gave rise to the appeal. You will be notified of the outcome in a letter (Preliminary Report) from the CQA Team. Stage 1 of the academic appeals process has now been completed. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your Stage 1 appeal, you have the right to submit a formal Academic Appeal (Stage 2). Formal appeals cannot be lodged until the preliminary Stage 1 has been completed.

At all stages in the appeals process, including your preparation of the Notice to Appeal and the Preliminary Meeting, you can get advice from the Students' Union Advice Centre (SUAC): <http://www.susu.org/help-and-support/advice-centre/>

3) Notice to Appeal form

Download the Notice to Appeal form, this is Appendix A from the Calendar regulations governing academic appeals from: <http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals-appendixa.pdf>

Fill in the form and submit the form, together with all the evidence that is listed in your Notice to Appeal, to the CQA Team. Please drop the form (with evidence) off at the CQA Office or the Student Office or email the scanned documents (with signature) to fpse-cqa@soton.ac.uk. Incomplete forms or forms that have not been signed will not be accepted. Note that you do not have to provide the full details of your case in the Notice to Appeals form because these can be discussed at the Preliminary Discussion Meeting.

Read the guidance notes on the last pages of the Notice to Appeal form and also note:

- **'board or panel'** | These include Board of Examiners, Special Considerations Board, Academic Integrity Panel, Fitness to Practise Panel, Faculty Programme Committee, Upgrade Panel or Committee, Senate. Also note that the Board of Examiners confirms final module marks, classification of degrees, referrals, resits and termination of studies.
- **list of documents / evidence** | This can be evidence for grounds for appeal, plus any matters that you want to be taken into account, e.g. a doctor's note or a letter from the Faculty. Include the date(s) on which the evidence occurred.
- **preferred outcomes** | Explicitly state your preferred outcome(s) of this appeal.

4) Preliminary Meeting

Once the CQA Team has received your Notice to Appeal form, they will give you a Preliminary Meeting form and, within 5 working days, will arrange a Preliminary Discussion Meeting with an appropriate FPSE member of staff. You may be accompanied to this meeting by an independent adviser from SUSU or another Member of the University, for example a student support representative. If for a valid reason you cannot attend a face-to-face meeting, alternative arrangements will be made.

You are encouraged to prepare a statement that outlines your case and to bring this along to the Preliminary Meeting. It is helpful if you insert this statement in the "Discussion" section of the Preliminary Meeting form. Note that the SUAC guidance documents '*Helpful Features of a Student Statement*' and '*Problems Affecting your Studies*' can be found at: <http://www.susu.org/help-and-support/advice-centre/>

Bring a printed version of the Preliminary Meeting Form to the Preliminary Meeting. At the Meeting, discuss your case, including your evidence and your preferred outcome, with the member of staff. If this discussion does not raise any additional issues, the information that you have provided in writing (print-out of form incl. statement in Discussion section) will serve as a record of the face-to-face discussion. If additional issues have been raised, or if your text needs clarification, you should amend the form, either with hand-written notes or electronically (i.e. make notes, update the electronic version after the meeting, and return for a signature).

At the end of the Preliminary Meeting, the member of staff will make a recommendation to the Faculty regarding your case and your preferred outcome(s). This will be written on the Preliminary Meeting form. If the member of staff is of the view that you cannot demonstrate the grounds for appeal or that your appeal is otherwise outside the scope of the regulations, he/she can recommend that you should not proceed with submitting your appeal. However, this will need to be confirmed by the FPSE Appeals Officers, and you will anyway retain your right to submit a Stage 2 appeal.

Sign the Preliminary Meeting Form and ensure that the member of staff and any other attendees sign it as well. Submit the form in person to the CQA Team or the Student Office or email a scanned version of the form (with signatures) to fpse-cqa@soton.ac.uk.

5) Preliminary Report

Based on the information in your Notice to Appeal form and your Preliminary Discussion form (and on any evidence that you have supplied), the Faculty will seek further clarification on its options in line with the University regulations. This will be coordinated by the Appeals Officer of ECS or P&A, who will present your case to the Chair of the relevant board or panel of which you seek a revised decision.

The CQA Team will notify you of the result in writing. This outcome letter (Preliminary Report) will be attached to your Notice to Appeal and Preliminary Meeting forms and will be placed in your student file. Once the Preliminary Report has been sent to you, Stage 1 of the appeals process is completed.

6) Formal Academic Appeal

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 of the appeals process, you have the right to lodge a formal Academic Appeal (Stage 2). For details about this procedure, see the Calendar regulations at:

<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals.html> (section B3.0)
<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals-appendixd.pdf> (appeals process flowchart)
<http://www.calendar.soton.ac.uk/sectionIV/student-appeals-appendixb.pdf> (Stage 2 form)

Note that you will have to submit your Notice to Appeal form (and any evidence), together with the Stage 2 Form and a copy of the Preliminary Report, **within 5 working days** of the date of the Preliminary Report. Because you are still appealing against the original decision that gave rise to your appeal (i.e. not to the outcome of Stage 1 of the appeals process), you can in principle use your original Notice to Appeal form.