

**LTC09D056**

**Title:** **TPPG – Amendments to Academic Appeals Procedures**  
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Some recent cases have identified a need for clarification of the Academic Appeals Procedure (and where appropriate the Academic Complaints Procedure).

The Academic Appeals Procedure has been written from the perspective that the majority of cases involve students who are appealing a mark or classification and that a successful outcome of such an appeal would require reconsideration of an academic decision by a Board of Examiners. There are, however, circumstances where the appropriate remedy would be for the Head of School to seek a concession, perhaps for a further reassessment attempt or for a repeat of year. In such circumstances referral back to the Board of Examiners would be inappropriate and would further delay putting the remedy in place. Examples of where this approach would be appropriate would be where a student presented evidence of extenuating circumstances as part of the Appeal, which persuaded the Head of School that a concession would be appropriate. Similarly at Stage Two, there are situations where the Academic Appeals Panel concludes that a concessionary remedy is the appropriate outcome of an Appeal.

The Taught Programmes Policy Group endorsed the Director of Taught Programmes proposals.

The Director of Taught Programmes recommends that the Academic Appeals Procedure be clarified to highlight this option available to a Head of School who accepts an appeal.
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The Director of Taught Programmes discussed with the Taught Programmes Policy Group a proposal to give additional powers to the Academic Registrar within the Academic Appeals Procedure. At present the role of the Academic Registrar is to screen Stage Two Academic Appeals to determine whether or not there is a prima facie case for considering the appeal further. On the basis of the information available within the Stage Two Appeal, the Academic Registrar may make recommendations to the Head of School in respect of an appropriate remedy as part of the referral back to the Head of School. Sometimes such recommendations are followed, sometime they are not. There are occasions where the Head of School does not accept the recommendation for an appropriate remedy where the Academic Registrar, the Director of Taught Programmes or the Director of Postgraduate Research Programmes has a discussion with the Head of School, more fully explaining the context and the reasons for their recommendation. Such a discussion will usually result in the Head of School accepting the proposed remedy. The Director of Taught Programmes proposed making amendments to the Procedure such that the Academic Registrar, in consultation with either the Director of Taught Programmes or the Director of Research Degree Programmes, could put in place a concessionary remedy where there was an obvious case without referral to the Head of School or a Stage Two Panel.

The Taught Programmes Policy Group, including student representatives, were much less comfortable with this proposal. They argued that it was important for Schools to understand the issues at play and to have ownership of any remedy put in place. There was a feeling that

enhanced training for Heads of Schools and those considering appeals would help address this issue. There was also concern that if a short cut remedy was put in place all the issues contained within an appeal might not be aired through a Panel Hearing in future.

The Director of Taught Programmes recommends to Executive Team, via the Learning and Teaching Committee of Senate, that all Heads of School receive mandatory Academic Appeals and Academic Complaints training, providing guidance on issues to consider.
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Such training used to form part of the Head of Schools induction programme but was dropped from it as other aspects of the induction programme expanded. Whilst the Director and the Learning, Teaching and Quality Office run briefing sessions each year through CSED not all Heads of School have attended, and a number of recent cases have highlighted that Heads of School are unfamiliar with the procedure and their roles and responsibilities within it. The Taught Programmes Policy Group supported this proposal.