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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure details the process for reviewing a students' grades at CQUniversity.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to CQUniversity higher education units, excluding those in research higher degree courses. Students studying a research higher degree course wishing to appeal against a grade awarded, can appeal directly to the University's Academic Appeals Committee.

3 PROCEDURE

Feedback on progress

- 3.1 Students will be given constructive feedback on their performance on assessment tasks by their lecturer, especially for assessment tasks which are formative rather than summative assessment. Students should refer to the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#) for further information.
- 3.2 During the term students should discuss their progress in assessments with their lecturer, and expect to be provided with a clear indication of the extent to which they have or have not satisfied the assessment criteria set for each assessment task. Such discussions aim to clarify achievement in meeting learning outcomes, not to seek modification of the assessment outcome.

Informal consultation

- 3.3 Students should seek immediate feedback on results of assessment tasks. In order to clarify any issues relating to the assessment task, or result awarded, students can seek an informal consultation for each piece of assessment.
- 3.4 In order to clarify any issues relating to the overall grade for a unit, students can seek an informal consultation after the certification of grades. It is at this stage that any oversight, omission of marking, or arithmetical discrepancies in the marking is corrected. Students should keep a record of when, with whom, and the outcome of, the informal consultation.
- 3.5 To commence an informal consultation, students should approach the Unit Lead/Coordinator, or their lecturer in person, by telephone or email.
- 3.6 Informal consultation regarding the result of an assessment task must be requested within two working days of the marks being released.
- 3.7 Informal consultation applications involving the viewing of an examination script must follow the procedure for viewing examination scripts in the Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework).
- 3.8 Informal consultation regarding the grade for a unit must be requested within two working days of the certification date for the grade at the end of unit delivery.
- 3.9 An informal consultation will be conducted within five working days of the request.

Grounds for a review of grade

- 3.10 A student with continuing concerns about the process by which the grade was reached following the informal consultation process, may lodge an application for a review of grade for a unit.
- 3.11 A review of grade may result in no change to the grade, or change to a higher or lower grade. Each review of grade is determined on its own merits.
- 3.12 A review of grade is administered by Student Central without prejudice to the student.
- 3.13 A student may submit an application for a review of grade to challenge the grade awarded, by referencing one or more of the following:
 - a) demonstrating that the marking and/or assessment is inconsistent with the assessment requirements or with the assessment criteria
 - b) demonstrating unclear feedback from an informal consultation process, or feedback which is inconsistent with earlier advice
 - c) documented difficulties as a result of a breakdown in relevant University systems, experienced in enrolment or with provision of study materials, such as online study guides and readings (note: in such circumstances, additional assessment tasks may be required)
 - d) documented difficulties in the operation of the unit resulting in inequitable treatment or misinformed advice to students regarding the completion of assessment, the assessment requirements, or the assessment criteria (note: in such circumstances, additional assessment tasks may be required), or
 - e) that extenuating circumstances, such as an undiagnosed illness that impacted their achievement, existed at the time of assessment but were not identified until later.
- 3.14 If a review of grade application is for a unit which constitutes a fieldwork, practicum, work placement or performance where there is no 'record' available against which to review the student's practical skills and achievements, the only grounds on which a review of grade may be requested are:
 - a) that extenuating circumstances, such as an undiagnosed illness that impacted their achievement, existed at the time of assessment, but were not identified until later
 - b) that the approved procedures laid down in the unit profile or fieldwork/practicum/performance handbook for the assessment of the fieldwork/practicum/performance were not followed, or

- c) the student did not receive written feedback from the examiner/s during the unit, or an opportunity and time to act on this feedback.
- 3.15 The following grounds cannot be used as a basis for applying for a review of grade:
- a) close proximity of the grade to the next level of grade
 - b) a comparison between another student's or students' performance
 - c) the student's belief that the result is not commensurate with their effort
 - d) issues relating to the permanent or potential residency status of the student
 - e) the visa status of the student
 - f) financial difficulties experienced by the student
 - g) issues relating to the student's employment prospects, or
 - h) the student's unsubstantiated belief that they deserve extra marks.
- 3.16 Assessment tasks under investigation or determined to have involved a breach of academic integrity will not be considered for a review of grade. Refer to the [Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#) for details about breaches of academic integrity.
- 3.17 A review of grade application will be denied if:
- a) the student has made no attempt to engage in the informal consultation process prior to submission of the review of grade application
 - b) the student has not completed all compulsory assessment requirements of the unit
 - c) no reasonable grounds are demonstrated in the application for the review of grade
 - d) the assessment process involves consensus moderation, involving at least three people, confirming that the mark/grades awarded to the cohort for the particular assessment task, for example, an exam or coursework item, are appropriate (except for mathematical errors), or
 - e) the work has already been assessed by at least three people knowledgeable in the field prior to the review of grade application lodgement, and the grade has been confirmed (except for mathematical errors).

Timelines for the review of grade process

- 3.18 While the University will make every effort to act in a timely manner, this process may impact on the student's eligibility to graduate in the current graduation period.
- 3.19 If a student wishes to make an application for a review of grade for a unit following the informal consultation process, they must lodge a review of grade application within 10 working days of the certification of grades.
- 3.20 Changes to this timeline may be allowed where a student can demonstrate extenuating circumstances, such as illness proven by a doctor's certificate, in which case the timelines will be determined through the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching of the relevant School (or nominee), or equivalent.
- 3.21 Students who can demonstrate extenuating circumstances may approach the Student Ombudsman if the application is rejected. The Student Ombudsman is empowered to investigate and decide on further action as required.

Review of grade process

- 3.22 While a student may have an informal consultation for each assessment task result, they can have no more than one review of grade application for each unit (conducted after certification of grades). The review of grade will only apply to those assessment tasks which have had an informal consultation.
- 3.23 To seek a review of grade, a student must make written application using the [Requesting a Review of Grade Form](#).

- 3.24 In the application the student must state when and with whom the informal consultation process, or viewing of the exam script, was completed (prior to requesting the review of grade). Students must also state the outcome of the informal consultation process if applicable. The grounds for which the student is applying for the review of grade must also be clearly described within the application. Failure to do this may result in the application being disallowed. Please note that consideration of the application is based entirely on the information supplied and only for the assessment items identified on the application. It is the student's responsibility to supply all relevant information.
- 3.25 Applications for a review of grade received by Student Central will be advised of the following:
- disallowed, and the student advised in writing of the reasons for the decision, or
 - allowed to proceed with the review of grade process.
- 3.26 Students will be advised, by email to their University email address, within five working days of the outcome of the initial consideration of the application, that is, whether the application has been judged to have sufficient grounds to proceed to a review of grade, or not.
- 3.27 Depending on the circumstances, the following processes may be conducted:
- a review of any or all of the nominated items of assessment by an independent marker, as managed by the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching, or
 - resolution by the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching in consultation with relevant employees and others, exploring and considering all issues raised.
- 3.28 Students will be advised in writing of the final outcome of their application. This advice will be provided within 15 working days of receipt of the original application by the Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching. Student Central will keep a record of the outcomes of all such determinations.
- 3.29 If the grounds for review relate to a group of students who appear to have suffered the same documented system breakdown as identified in a specific case, and it is determined that the group has been disadvantaged by the system breakdown, then every effort will be made to identify all those students and ensure that the group of student grades is reviewed. The Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching is responsible for ensuring this process is completed.

Appealing the outcome of a review of grade

- 3.30 If the application for a review of grade is denied without reasonable grounds or the student believes due process was not followed as set down in this procedure, and the student has continuing concerns, they may appeal this decision to the [Student Ombudsman](#) via the [Contact the Student Ombudsman eForm](#). Appeals must be submitted within 20 working days of notification of the outcome of the review of grade.
- 3.31 The Student Ombudsman shall determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed with an investigation of the student's appeal. Where an investigation is not undertaken, the student will be provided with written reasons of this within 10 working days of submission of the appeal application.
- 3.32 Appeal submissions to the Student Ombudsman must demonstrate that the decision breaches the unit learning outcomes, assessment requirements, or assessment criteria, or why the student believes due process was not followed as set down in this procedure.
- 3.33 Where an investigation is undertaken in accordance with the [Student Ombudsman Procedure](#), the Student Ombudsman will make a final decision, and provide that outcome in writing to the student, School, and Student Central within 20 working days of submission of the appeal application.
- 3.34 Upon reviewing an appeal, the Student Ombudsman may determine:
- there are insufficient grounds to proceed with an investigation
 - to make a recommendation, including making recommended changes to policy documents
 - to refer the case back to the School for further investigation, or
 - to refer the case to the Academic Appeals Committee.

- 3.35 Where the Student Ombudsman has referred an appeal back to the School, the School will review the case, including the recommendations from the Student Ombudsman, and provide a response in writing to the student, Student Ombudsman, and Student Central within 10 working days of receiving the outcome from the Student Ombudsman.
- 3.36 Where the Student Ombudsman has referred an appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee, the Student Ombudsman will advise the student in writing, and provide a copy of that advice to the Chair of the Academic Appeals Committee.
- 3.37 The Student Ombudsman's decision will be final within the University. If the student still wishes to contest the decision, they may lodge an external appeal to the [Queensland Ombudsman](#).

Academic Appeals Committee

- 3.38 When a review of grade appeal is referred by the Student Ombudsman to the Academic Appeals Committee, the student will not be required to submit an Academic Appeal application. The Committee will consider the information provided by the student to the Student Ombudsman and any information gathered by the Student Ombudsman to be the student's appeal application. However, the Committee may request further information from the student, if required. Appeal applications will be processed in accordance with the [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#).
- 3.39 The Academic Appeals Committee decision will be final within the University. If the student wishes to contest the Committee's decision, they may lodge an external appeal to the [Queensland Ombudsman](#).

4 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 4.1 The Director Student Central is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this procedure.
- 4.2 The Deputy Deans Learning and Teaching are responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed.

Reporting

- 4.3 No additional reporting is required.

Records management

- 4.4 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining these records in a recognised University recordkeeping information system.
- 4.5 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule on the [Queensland State Archives website](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought through the Records Management Office (email records@cqu.edu.au).

5 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

Terms and definitions

Extenuating circumstances: where a student is significantly affected by extenuating (exceptional) circumstances beyond their control due to:

- disability as defined in the [Disability Policy](#) (for advice contact the Inclusion and Accessibility Service)
- medical or health-related condition (e.g. serious or debilitating illness or injury; hospitalisation; giving or recently given birth; mental health illness or condition)

- hardship or trauma (e.g. recent victim of crime, serious accident or other critical incident; sudden loss of income, employment or accommodation; severe disruption to domestic arrangements or family relationship breakdown)
- compassionate circumstances (e.g. death of a family member or close friend; severe disruption to domestic arrangements or family relationship breakdown; unexpected carer responsibilities; life-threatening illness of a family member; severe financial difficulty)
- unavoidable commitment that by its nature cannot be rescheduled (e.g. work commitments, primary carer responsibilities, jury service, approved activities away from campus or normal residence such as study overseas or work placements; cultural or religious obligations; state, national, international or other commitments requiring the student's participation such as essential or emergency services, recognised sports or performance commitments).

Grade: a formal mark for the academic achievement obtained by a student enrolled in a unit. No grade for a unit can be awarded to a student who is not correctly enrolled in that unit. A grade is only available after the time of certification of grades for unit.

Informal consultation: a discussion with the relevant academic for which a student must apply. The discussion is to clarify any issues relating to the result for an assessment task, examination, or overall grade for the unit. An informal consultation may result in no change to the result or a higher or lower result/grade for that assessment task. This is not a re-mark; however, arithmetic errors, omissions and inconsistencies will be rectified. Retrieval of examination scripts is included in this process.

Lecturer: any one of the following – Campus Lecturer/Tutor, Lead Lecturer or Unit Lead/Coordinator.

Release of result: the date at which a student would receive or be able to access online their assessment task result as specified in the unit profile. This does not relate to formal examinations or certification of grades.

Result: interim marks which are used to show the outcome of the student's attempt at a piece of assessment. The result may be a grade based on academic achievement or an outcome determined on other grounds (e.g. unit withdrawal with or without academic penalty).

Review of grade: a formal process of reviewing a grade awarded to a student for a unit. This may only be undertaken after certification of grades and after either an informal consultation or a viewing of the relevant examination script.

6 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

[Assessment Policy and Procedures \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#)

[Contact the Student Ombudsman eForm](#)

[Grades and Results Policy](#)

[Requesting a Review of Grade Form](#)

[Student Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure](#)

[Student Ombudsman Procedure](#)

[Student Ombudsman website](#)

7 FEEDBACK

7.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

8 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Academic Board
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Administrator	Deputy Vice-President (Education, Strategy and Innovation)
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Notes	This document was formerly known as the Review of Grade Policy (5/10/2011).

9 APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF TIMELINES AND PROCESS FLOWS

Process and Action	Timeline
INFORMAL CONSULTATION	
Request informal consultation regarding any assessment task.	2 working days from the result being released.
Request informal consultation regarding an examination.	2 working days from grade certification.
Conduct of informal consultation.	Within 5 working days of receipt of request for informal consultation.
Request to view examination script (see Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework))	2 working days from grade certification.
Retrieval and viewing of examination script (Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)).	Within 5 working days of request for viewing examination script.
REVIEW OF GRADE	
Application for review of grade.	Lodge within 10 working days from grade certification.
Initial consideration and decision to allow/disallow review of grade.	Within 5 working days of receipt of application for review of grades.
Final outcome of review of grade that is allowed to proceed.	Within 15 working days of receipt of application for review of grades.
CHALLENGING OUTCOME OF REVIEW OF GRADE	
Submit written appeal to Student Ombudsman regarding outcome of review of grade.	Within 20 working days of notification of review of grade decision.
Response to student by Student Ombudsman – insufficient grounds to investigate.	Within 10 working days of receipt of appeal.
Final outcome to student by Student Ombudsman – investigation undertaken	Within 20 working days of receipt of appeal.
Response from School to student (if recommended by Student Ombudsman to be referred)	Within 10 working days of receipt of Student Ombudsman decision.
Submit appeal application to Academic Appeals Committee (see Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure).	Within 20 working days of receipt of Student Ombudsman decision.