

# REVIEW OF GRADE PROCEDURE

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## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This procedure details the processes for reviewing grades. Included are the informal consultation process, the review of grade process, an appeal to the Office of the Student Ombudsman, and a final avenue for appeal to the University's Academic Appeals Committee.
- 1.2 This procedure establishes strict timelines for review of grades, clear criteria to meet, outlines the process for complaint to the Student Ombudsman and gives students access to the Academic Appeals Committee in extreme cases. It also allows for the students' marks to be raised or lowered, or remain the same as a result of this review process.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to all CQUniversity Australia higher education units, except those in Research Higher Degree courses. If a student wishes to appeal against the grade awarded in these instances, the appeal should be directed immediately to the University's Academic Appeals Committee.

## 3 POLICY

- 3.1 There is no parent policy.

## 4 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 [Appendix A: Workflow](#) includes a summary of timelines and processes relating to the procedure below.

## Feedback on progress

- 4.2 Students shall be given constructive feedback on their performance on assessment tasks by their lecturer, especially for any assessment task which is formative rather than summative assessment. Students should ensure that they are aware of the information set out in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).
- 4.3 During the term students are encouraged to discuss their progress in all coursework assessment with their lecturer, and can 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

- 4.4 Students are encouraged to seek immediate feedback on results of assessment tasks. In order to clarify any issues relating to the assessment task or examination or the result awarded, students are entitled to seek an informal consultation for each piece of assessment.
- 4.5 In order to clarify any issues relating to the overall grade for the unit, the student is entitled to seek an informal consultation for the unit 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.
- 4.6 To commence an informal consultation, students should approach the Unit Coordinator, or their lecturer in person, by telephone or email.
- 4.7 Informal consultation regarding the result of any assessment task must be requested within two working days of the marks for the assessment task result being released.
- 4.8 Informal consultation applications involving the viewing of an examination script must follow the procedure for viewing examination scripts in the [Assessment Policy and Procedure \(Higher Education Coursework\)](#).
- 4.9 Informal consultation regarding the grade for any unit must be requested within two working days of the certification date for the grade at the end of unit delivery.
- 4.10 An informal consultation will be conducted within five working days of the contact requesting such an informal consultation be conducted.

## Grounds for a review of grade

- 4.11 Should the student have continuing concerns about the process by which the grade was reached following the informal consultation process, he/she may lodge an application for a review of grade for a unit.
- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 A review of grade is administered by Learning and Teaching Services without prejudice to the student.
- 4.14 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).
- 4.15 However if the application for a review of grade 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, then the only grounds on which a review of grade may be requested are:
- a) that extenuating circumstances, such as an undiagnosed illness that impacts on 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.
- 4.16 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 his/her 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.
- 4.17 Any assessment task under investigation or ruled for plagiarism will not be considered in a review of grade. Further details regarding plagiarism can be found in the [Academic Misconduct Procedure](#).
- 4.18 An application for a review of grade 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**

- 4.19 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.
- 4.20 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.
- 4.21 Changes to this timeline may be allowed in such circumstances as where a student can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances such as illness proven by a doctor's certificate exist, in which case the timelines will be determined through the Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching) of the relevant School, or their delegated nominee, or equivalent.

- 4.22 Students who can demonstrate special or extenuating circumstances may approach the Student Ombudsman if the application is rejected. The Student Ombudsman is empowered to further investigate and decide on further action as required.

### **Review of grade process**

- 4.23 While a student may have an informal consultation for each assessment task result, they can have no more than one review of grade 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.
- 4.24 To seek a review of grade a student needs to make written application using the [Application for a Review of Grade](#) Form (details of how to submit are provided on the form).
- 4.25 In the application the student will need to state in writing where, 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.
- 4.26 Applications for review of grade received by Learning and Teaching Services will be advised of the following:
- a) disallowed, and the student advised in writing of the reasons for the decision, or
  - b) allowed to proceed with the review of grade process.
- 4.27 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.
- 4.28 Depending on the circumstances, the following processes may be conducted:
- a) 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
  - b) resolution by the Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching) in consultation with relevant staff and others, exploring and considering all issues raised.
- 4.29 Students will be advised in writing of the final outcome of their application for a review of grade. This advice will be provided within 15 working days of receipt of the original application by the Deputy Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the relevant school. Learning and Teaching Services keep a record of the outcomes of all such determinations.
- 4.30 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.

### **Challenging the outcome of a review of grade**

- 4.31 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, he/she may take their case to the Student Ombudsman. The Student Ombudsman can make a recommendation to Learning and Teaching Services or recommend the student refer the matter to the University's Academic Appeals Committee with support from the Student Ombudsman, or confirm no merit in the case. Details about the role and how to contact the Student Ombudsman can be found on the [Student Ombudsman website](#).
- 4.32 A student can challenge the final outcome of the review of grade decision by:
- a) contacting the Student Ombudsman with a written complaint within 10 working days of the notification of the outcome of the review of grade, or

- b) lodging an appeal to the University's Academic Appeals Committee within 20 working days of the date of the decision which the student wishes to appeal (see [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)).
- 4.33 The Student Ombudsman shall determine if there are sufficient grounds to proceed with an investigation of the student's complaint. Where an investigation is undertaken, the Student Ombudsman shall subsequently report and make recommendations in accord with the Student Ombudsman Procedure. This will normally occur within 10 working days of the student lodging the complaint and be relayed by the Student Ombudsman to Learning and Teaching Services and to the student.
- 4.34 It is the responsibility of Learning and Teaching Services to consider the written recommendations of the Student Ombudsman. If there is a failure to address these recommendations to the satisfaction of the Student Ombudsman, the Student Ombudsman may refer the matter to the Academic Appeals Committee. The Office of the Student Ombudsman may make recommendations in writing and follow up any recommended changes to policies and procedures.
- 4.35 Where the determination of the Student Ombudsman's Office is that the student lodges an appeal to the University's Academic Appeals Committee, the Student Ombudsman shall advise the student in writing and provide a copy of that advice to the Chair of the Academic Appeals Committee.

## **Academic Appeals Committee**

- 4.36 A student can challenge the final outcome of the review of grade decision by lodging an appeal to be heard by the University's Academic Appeals Committee, according to [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#). Students are encouraged to access the fact sheet on preparing an appeal or to make contact with the Student Advocacy Officer. All appeals lodged will be processed in accordance with the Academic Appeals Procedure. This application should be submitted within 20 working days of notification of the outcome of the review of grade.
- 4.37 Submissions to the Academic Appeals Committee must demonstrate that the decision breaches the unit learning outcomes, the assessment requirements, or the assessment criteria, or if the student believes due process was not followed as set down in this procedure.
- 4.38 The determination of the Academic Appeals Committee of any appeal regarding a review of grade will be final within CQUniversity. If the student still wishes to contest the fairness of the decision, they should consult the [Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure](#) in terms of taking their case up with the [Queensland Ombudsman](#).

## **5 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Compliance, monitoring and review**

- 5.1 The Deputy Deans (Learning and Teaching) are responsible for ensuring this procedure is followed.

### **Reporting**

- 5.2 No additional reporting is required.

### **Records management**

- 5.3 Staff must maintain all records relevant to administering this procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.

## **6 DEFINITIONS**

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

## Terms and definitions

**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, or examination, or the 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 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.

## 7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)

[Academic Appeals Committee Terms of Reference](#)

[Application for a Review of Grade](#)

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

[Grades and Results Policy](#)

[Student Charter](#)

[Student Feedback – Compliments and Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

[Student Ombudsman Procedure](#)

## 8 FEEDBACK

8.1 University staff and students may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policy@cqu.edu.au](mailto:policy@cqu.edu.au).

## 9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
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Administrator	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
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Notes	This document replaced the Review of Grade Procedure (dated 25/03/2015).

## 10 APPENDIX A: WORKFLOW

### Summary of timelines and process flows

Process and Action	Timeline
<b>INFORMAL CONSULTATION</b>	
Request informal consultation regarding any assessment task.	<b>2 working days</b> from the <b>result</b> being released.
Request informal consultation regarding an examination.	<b>2 working days</b> from grade certification.
Conduct of informal consultation.	<b>Within 5 working days</b> of receipt of request for informal consultation.
Request to view examination script (see <a href="#">Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)</a> )	<b>2 working days</b> from grade certification.
Retrieval and viewing of examination script ( <a href="#">Assessment Policy and Procedure (Higher Education Coursework)</a> ).	<b>Within 5 working days</b> of request for viewing examination script.
<b>REVIEW OF GRADE</b>	
Application for review of grade.	Lodge within <b>10 working days</b> from grade certification.
Initial consideration and decision to allow/disallow review of grade.	Within <b>5 working days</b> of receipt of application for review of grades.
Final outcome of review of grade that is allowed to proceed.	Within <b>15 working days</b> of receipt of application for review of grades.
<b>CHALLENGING OUTCOME OF REVIEW OF GRADE</b>	
Contact Student Ombudsman and submit written complaint regarding outcome of review of grade.	Within <b>10 working days</b> of notification of review of grade decision.
Response to student complaint by Student Ombudsman.	Usually within <b>10 working days</b> of student lodging complaint.
Challenge outcome of review of grade by lodging an appeal (see <a href="#">Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure</a> ).	Within <b>20 working days</b> of notification of decision.