

BPF Academic Appeal Policy

Purpose

The bpf is committed to providing excellence in teaching and a positive learning experience to all our students, which is underpinned by a robust academic process. However, there may be occasions when a student may be disappointed with the outcome with a grade or assessment.

Often an academic appeal can be resolved quickly at a local level directly with the Director of Training or Chair of a training committee of the student's programme of study. However, when a student is not satisfied with the initial outcome or if the academic appeal is complex in nature which will require a detailed investigation, a student may submit a formal appeal.

This Academic Appeal Policy sets out our academic appeals procedure and the routes for a student to make an academic appeal.

Scope

This Academic Appeals Policy (known as 'Policy') applies to all students (who may otherwise be known as a 'trainee') who have registered and enrolled in a programme of study with the bpf. This includes students who are undertaking a formal qualification, or an infant observation, as well as members who are completing programmes of continuous professional development. The Policy also applies to those who have recently left their course. This Policy also applies to students who are undertaking a formal qualification which we are delivering in partnership with another educational provider.

An academic appeal is a challenge to or request for reconsideration of a decision by an academic body that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards. This may include a request to change marks or progress decisions, or final award classifications.

Students wishing to make a complaint should refer to the [bpf's Student Complaints Policy](#). A complaint is different from an academic appeal and is *an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about something a provider has done or not done, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the provider*.

Who can make an academic appeal.

Students who are registered on a programme of study with the bpf, or those who have recently left their programme within the past 30 days, may make an academic appeal. Academic appeals should be made within 30 days of the date results were published to students. It can be challenging to investigate or respond to an academic appeal that is made a long time after an issue has arisen.

Students should not feel that they will be disadvantaged by submitting an academic appeal and all academic appeals are taken seriously, dealt with without any recrimination and treated confidentially as far as is reasonably practicable.

We would encourage students to bring forward an academic appeal themselves. We understand that this may not always be possible and a student may wish to appoint a representative, for example the student representative for their training, or a fellow student or friend.

The bpf will not accept an academic appeal from a third party to act on behalf of a student unless we have received written permission from the student to confirm their agreement that the third party will act as their representative. It is not normally appropriate or necessary for the student to appoint a legal representative.

Group academic appeal

As part of our course delivery and assessment processes, we would normally consider any circumstances or issues that may have had an impact on the performance of multiple students. For example, a fire alarm that was activated during an assessment. If students wish to raise an issue which may have affected more than one student, they may still raise an academic appeal as a 'group'. The group should nominate a representative from the group who will liaise with the bpf on behalf of the group. The group should follow the steps set out in our academic appeals procedure, noting that where we require you to submit a formal academic appeal and/or review form, only one form should be submitted on behalf of the group. The bpf will confirm that each group member has opted-in to the group.

Academic appeal's procedure

The bpf's academic appeals procedure is set out in our [Academic Appeals Procedure: Timeline and Process workflow \(Appendix A\)](#). Students are required to complete each step before progressing onto the next part. We will make available guidance on our academic appeal's procedure to students, including what steps we may take, the type of information or evidence we may consider, and possible outcomes.

We will communicate our decisions and outcomes, providing clear reasons and rationale, at the completion of each step in the academic appeals procedure.

Timelines

When a student makes an academic appeal, we will aim to complete our investigation and resolve the appeal promptly however more complex appeals (for example, appeals that have multiple issues), may take longer. We aim to complete our academic appeals procedure within 90 calendar days of receiving a formal academic appeal. We require students to provide all information or evidence promptly and within any set deadlines. We will inform a student when it is not possible to meet our deadline.

Table 1: Overview of timeline

In this Policy, we refer to calendar days (not working days).

Stage	Timeline
Step 1: Early resolution	Within 30 days of the date results were published to students.
Step 2: Formal academic appeal Submission of Formal academic appeal form by student	Within 14 days of the outcome of the early resolution
Step 2: Formal academic appeal Academic appeal investigation by the bpf	Within 28 days of receiving the formal academic appeal form
Step 3: Review of formal academic appeal Submission of Review of formal academic appeal form by student	Within 14 days of the outcome of the formal academic appeal
Step 3: Review of formal academic appeal Review of formal academic appeal by the bpf	Within 28 days of receiving the Review of formal academic appeal form
Completion of Steps 2 and 3	Within 90 calendar days

Process

Step 1: Early resolution.

Students should seek clarification of a grade awarded for an assessment, exam or viva, or discuss their concerns, with the Director of Training or Chair of the training committee for their programme of study. The Director of Training or Chair of the training committee may explain how marks or outcomes have been calculated, or about the marking and moderation process. An academic appeal should be raised as soon as possible. If the student is unsure who to contact with their academic appeal, they can contact the Corporate Governance Team for advice by sending an email to complaints@bpf-psychotherapy.org.uk.

Where an early resolution is not possible or appropriate, for example when the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the early resolution, the student can take their academic appeal formally to the Corporate Governance Team (Step 2).

Step 2: Formal academic appeal

The formal process is activated when:

- the student has good reason for not wanting to engage with early resolution
- early resolution was attempted, but the student remains dissatisfied with the outcome
- the issues raised by the student are complex and require a detailed investigation
- the Corporate Governance Team decide that the student's academic appeal should be considered at the formal stage without first trying early resolution

Students should submit a [Formal academic appeals form](#) as soon as possible and within 14 days of the outcome of the early resolution. If early resolution was not attempted, the formal academic appeal should be submitted as soon as possible and no longer than 30 days after the date confirmed results were published to students. The student should set out clearly and concisely the nature of their concerns, what steps that they have already taken, the reason why they are not satisfied with the outcome of their academic appeal and where possible, provide evidence to support the issues raised.

An academic appeal relates to the outcome of an assessment or exam, or a student's progression and may be based on:

- a procedural irregularity in the assessment process, which means that there was a problem with the way an assessment happened or a way it was marked and moderated. Example: the student was concerned that the bpf's marking process had not been followed correctly.
- bias or reasonable perception of bias in the assessment, meaning the student's work was not impartially assessed on its merits. Example: if the trainee had previously made a complaint about one of the assessors.
- personal circumstances affecting the student's performance where, for good reason, the Director of Training and/or the Chair of the relevant training committee was not made aware of a significant factor relating to the assessment of a student when it made the original decision. Example: the student should have good reason for not asking for additional consideration at an earlier time in the assessment.
- a challenge to the outcome of a student's request for additional consideration of personal circumstances which have affected their performance
- problems with the delivery of teaching and learning opportunities where a complaint has been upheld that the issue impacted an individual student's performance.

A student cannot appeal academic judgement, for example, when a decision is made by Director of Training or members of the relevant training committee on the quality of the work itself or the criteria being applied to mark the work.

The Corporate Governance Team will review the information and depending on the nature of the academic appeal, they may:

- refer the student to a different bpf policy or process, such as the [bpf's Student Complaint's Policy](#)
- reject the academic appeal. Example: because the student has not met the bpf's deadline for submitting the Formal academic appeal form or evidence ([see Table 1: Overview of Timeline](#)). If the academic appeal is rejected, the Corporate Governance Team will provide the student with a Completion of Procedure Letter.
- proceed the academic appeal for formal consideration. The Corporate Governance Team will identify a member of staff who has not been previously involved to investigate the academic appeal to act as the Academic Appeals Investigator. At any point in the formal process, the student may be invited to talk or meet with the Investigator to clarify any aspect of their submission.

- Refer the student to conciliation or mediation, which is a voluntary process where we will invite an impartial member of staff or independent third party to help resolve disputes confidentially.

As part of the formal process, we may convene an Academic Appeals panel. We will ensure that panel members are free of a reasonable perception of bias and provide the student with information about who will attend the panel, which may include anyone who has been invited to provide information or evidence. The student may wish to bring a representative to the panel meeting.

At the completion of the formal process, we will write to the student setting out the outcome of the investigation.

Step 3: Review of formal academic appeal

If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the formal stage, they can ask for a review of a formal academic appeal by submitting the Review of academic appeal form. The academic appeal must have been considered at the formal stage before it can be taken to the review stage.

The review stage will consider:

- a review of the procedures followed at the formal stage
- a consideration of whether the outcome was reasonable
- new evidence that could make a difference to the outcome and which the student could not reasonably have provided earlier in the process.

The review stage will not normally consider new issues afresh or involve a further investigation.

A member of the bpf's Senior Management Team, who has not previously been involved at any previous stage of the academic appeal, will consider the request for a review of the formal academic appeal.

When your course is delivered in partnership with another educational institution

If a student is undertaking a course or programme of study which is delivered by the bpf in partnership with another educational institute, such as Birkbeck (University of London), University College London or the Anna Freud Centre, the student should make an academic appeal to the educational provider who awards the accredited degree qualification ([see Table 2: Accredited degree qualifications awarded by an external educational provider](#)). The student may contact the bpf for information and support about making academic appeal to one of our educational partners.

Table 2: accredited degree qualifications awarded by an external educational partner

Qualification	Awarding Partner
Doctorate in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy	University College London
MSc Psychodynamics of Human Development	Birkbeck, University of London

The student may wish to appoint a representative at the educational partner, such as a member of the partner's Students' Union.

We may share information that is proportionate to the academic appeal with the relevant educational partner for the purposes of investigating or responding to the academic appeal.

Office for the Independent Adjudicator

The Office for the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) is the independent body set up to review student's academic appeals. If a student has raised an academic appeal to the bpf and they are unhappy with the outcome of their academic appeal and they are, or were, on one of our higher education courses, they can ask the OIA to review their academic appeal. It's important that the bpf and the accrediting educational partner have completed all of their internal processes, and that the student has been issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter, before the student can take their academic appeal to the OIA. The request to the OIA must be submitted within 12 months of outcome of the complaint.

The OIA Scheme applies to the following higher education courses which are delivered by the bpf:

1. Doctor of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy
 - MSc in Psychodynamics of Human Development

More information about making a complaint to the OIA Scheme can be found on the OIA's website <https://www.oliahe.org.uk/students>.

Governance

The Corporate Governance Team will provide an annual assurance report about the application of our Academic Appeals Policy to bpf's Audit and Risk Committee and Board of Trustees. Information on any academic appeals will be anonymised and no personal information about a student or others associated with an academic appeal will be disclosed in the report.

Internal resources

Students may wish to refer to our [student policies and regulations](#).

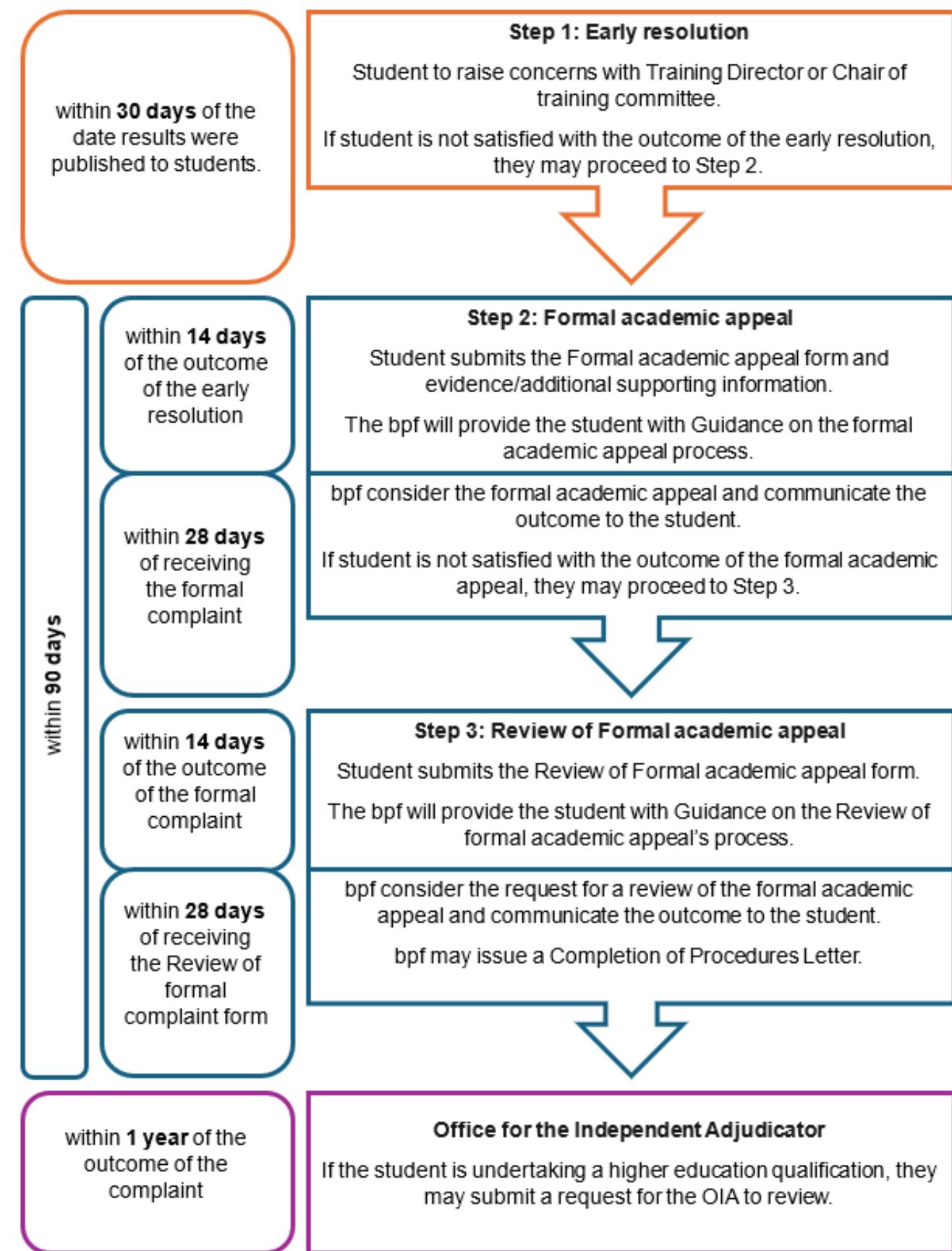
External resources

- OIA Good Practice Framework: Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals
<https://www.oliahe.org.uk/resources-and-publications/good-practice-framework/handling-complaints-and-academic-appeals/>
- University College London
<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/>

- Birkbeck, University of London

<https://www.bbk.ac.uk/>

Appendix A. Academic Appeals Procedure: Timeline and Process workflow



Accessible version of Academic Appeals Procedure: Timeline and Process workflow

1. Process step 1: Early resolution

- Student must raise the concern within **30 days** of the date results were published to students.
- Student to raise concerns with the Training Director or Chair of Training Committee.
- If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the early resolution, they may proceed to Step 2.

2. Process step 2: Formal academic appeal

- Student must submit Formal academic appeal Form within **14 days** of the outcome of the early resolution. *If early resolution was not attempted, the formal academic appeal should be submitted as soon as possible and no longer than 30 days after the date confirmed results were published to students.*
- Student submits the Formal academic appeal form and evidence and/or supporting information.
- The bpf will provide the student with guidance on the formal academic appeal process.
- bpf consider the formal academic appeal and communicate the outcome to the student.
- If student is not satisfied with the outcome of the formal academic appeal, they may proceed to Step 3.
- The bpf will provide an outcome of the Formal academic appeal within **28 days** of receiving the formal appeal.

3. Process step 3: Review of Formal academic appeal

- Student must submit Review of Formal academic appeal Form within **14 days** of the outcome of the Formal academic appeal.
- Student submits the Review of Formal academic appeal form.
- The bpf will provide the student with Guidance on the Review of formal academic appeal process.
- bpf consider the request for a review of the formal academic appeal and communicate the outcome to the student.
- bpf may issue a Completion of Procedures Letter.
- The bpf will provide an outcome of the Review of Formal academic appeal within **28 days** of receiving the Review of Formal academic appeal form.

4. Step 2 and Step 3 should be completed within 90 days of the outcome of the early resolution.

5. Office of the Independent Adjudicator

- If the student is undertaking a higher education qualification, they may submit a request for the OIA to review.
- The student must submit their request within **1 year** of the outcome of the academic appeal.

Version	Date	Description of Amendments	Author
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V1	01 August 2025	Publication of policy	Head of Safeguarding and Professional Standards Development
V1	18 September 2025	Administrative change: updated hyperlinks	Head of Safeguarding and Professional Standards Development
V1	08 January 2026	Administrative change: internal resources	Head of Safeguarding and Professional Standards Development