



STUDY GROUP ISCs UK & EUROPE

In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy – for ISCs offering Study Group approved programmes of study

1. COMPLAINTS

Introduction

The ISC seeks at all times to provide the highest possible level of service. However, there may be occasions when a student feels that the level of service has not been good enough. The emphasis of the procedure is on addressing the complaint and arriving at an acceptable outcome as quickly as possible. Complaints will be taken seriously, and will be investigated thoroughly. Where necessary, swift and effective action will be taken to resolve the complaint and every effort will be made to prevent a recurrence. Where, however, a complaint is made with mischievous or malicious intent this will be viewed seriously and may result in disciplinary action. The ISC will fulfil its obligations to the individual(s) against whom a complaint is made and investigations will be undertaken impartially.

Students who raise complaints should note that:

- they will not suffer any disadvantage as a result of making the complaint;
- everyone who responds to, investigates or adjudicates upon complaints is required to do so impartially and will not be permitted to act in any matter in which they have a material interest or in which any potential conflict of interest may arise;
- privacy and confidentiality will be respected as far as possible at all stages of the process;
- complaints will be considered on their own merits and on their particular facts and circumstances so that natural justice may be done.

Students are expected to put their name to any complaint they make. If a student does not wish for their name to be disclosed, they may request that the investigator(s) anonymise their complaint. The investigator(s) will only agree to do so if there are good and sufficient reasons for doing so. Complaints which are made anonymously are difficult, and sometimes inappropriate or impossible, to investigate. However, they may be considered at the discretion of the ISC.

The ISC and/or Academic Office will keep a record of complaints and will use the outcomes to inform future service provision.

Complaints can be Informal or Formal

Preamble

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about the provider's (Study Group's) action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the provider.

An Academic Appeal, as opposed to a complaint, is made where a student feels that an academic process has not been followed or where there is a grievance on academic grounds. Appeals against academic judgement will not be heard.

Students should refer to the Academic Appeals section below for details of what constitutes grounds for appeal.

If a student is unclear which procedure to follow, they should seek guidance from a member of staff at the ISC.

Stage 1: Informal Complaint

The normal expectation is that students try to resolve a minor complaint or concern about the provision of a service (whether academic or non-academic) informally with the person or persons providing the service. The issue should be raised as early as possible in order that a prompt resolution may be achieved. In some instances, it may be more appropriate to pursue the complaint or concern informally with the Head of Centre.

If a student feels happier discussing any concerns they may have, in confidence, before deciding whether or not to pursue a complaint, their personal tutor (or other member of ISC staff) will be there to help. The emphasis of discussion will be on arriving at a satisfactory resolution of the complaint as quickly as possible, rather than on making a judgment about who is right or wrong.

If complaints have not been resolved to the student's satisfaction through informal discussion, or if the student believes that the complaint is of a more serious nature, then they have the right to make a formal written complaint to the Head of Centre.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

Where it has not been possible to resolve matters satisfactorily at source, or the complainant feels unable to make direct contact with the person responsible, the matter should be taken to the Head of Centre, indicating what reasonable steps the complainant would like to see taken to resolve the matter. The complainant should put the complaint in writing and should use the Stage 2 Student Complaint form provided in the appendices of this Handbook, for this purpose.

A complainant should be given an indication by the Head of Centre of the timescale likely to be required to investigate, reach a resolution on the complaint and report back to the complainant. The investigation should be completed as swiftly as possible and the complainant should be notified in the event of any delay in the process.

Meetings may be arranged between the complainant and the Head of Centre or other appropriate authority within the Centre to discuss the matter. The Head of Centre should ensure that relevant members of staff are involved at all stages of the process and are informed of the outcome of investigation of the complaint. This may involve, for example, members of staff against whom a complaint is made.

As part of the process of attempting to establish the facts of the complaint, the Head of Centre may decide to hold a separate meeting with the person(s) against whom the complaint is made (and who may be accompanied by a colleague or Union officer), and may also interview any material witnesses. A written record of the meeting should be made by the Head of Centre.

Recommendations from the report may be forwarded by the Head of Centre to the Cluster/Network Director. Complainants will be advised in writing of the actions, which are taken.

Stage 3: Independent Cluster/Network Director Review

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation of their formal complaint they may make a complaint to the independent Cluster/Network Director who will review the steps taken and decision made by the Head of Centre.

The student should complete a Stage 3 Student Complaint form (provided in the appendices of this Handbook) and submit it to the Academic Office, who will undertake administrative arrangements with respect to the Stage 3 complaint. The Academic Office will appoint an independent Cluster/Network Director from the Study Group network. The Cluster/Network Director will not be directly connected to the ISC in question to ensure impartiality.

The independent Cluster/Network Director will provide the complainant with written confirmation of the outcome of their review within 4 weeks of receipt of the escalated complaint. This communication should be considered as confirmation of the completion of the complaints procedure and should provide the complainant with information regarding their right to raise a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator should they remain unsatisfied.

The Academic Office will maintain a record of Stage 3 complaints for audit purposes.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is an independent body set up to review students' complaints against Universities (and other qualifying Education providers) within England and Wales.

Once a student's complaint has been considered through the above complaints process (both stages 1,2 and 3) or appeals process (see below), they have the right to lodge a complaint with the OIA should they remain unsatisfied with the final decision.

The OIA will only consider complaints from students who are (or were, for former students) on a Higher Education course and who have completed the provider's internal complaints or appeals process.

The OIA will only consider student complaints received within 12 months of the completion of the provider's internal complaints or appeals processes.

The OIA will NOT consider complaints about academic judgement, frivolous or vexatious complaints or complaints that have been dealt with before by the OIA. There are other restrictions to the types of complaints the OIA will consider and full details can be found on the OIA's website (see below).

For full details of the OIA's processes and procedures (including their complaint form), please refer to the OIA's website: www.oiahe.org.uk

2. APPEALS

Student Academic Appeals Procedure

Preamble

An Academic Appeal is made where a student feels that an academic process has not been followed or where there is a grievance on academic grounds. Appeals against academic judgement will not be heard.

Complaints, as opposed to Academic Appeals, are expressions of dissatisfaction about the provider's (Study Group's) actions or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by or on behalf of the provider.

Students should refer to the Complaints section above for further details.

If a student is unclear which procedure to follow, they should seek guidance from a member of staff at the ISC.

Who can appeal?

All students have the right to appeal, however it is not possible to appeal against grades awarded on grounds of academic judgement. Appeals will only be considered on grounds of procedural irregularity or mitigating circumstances.

A student may not appeal before formal notification of the results is given.

If a student intends to appeal against a progression decision, he or she will not normally be allowed to progress before the appeal is heard.

Students should initiate the appeal on their own behalf. Exceptionally, where there are special circumstances, an appeal may be made on a student's behalf by their nominee.

What are the grounds of appeal?

All appeals against a decision of an assessment board must be made on at least one of the following grounds:

- procedural irregularities in the assessment process (including alleged administrative error which could have led the assessment board to reach a different conclusion to that which they might have reached had the error not been made);
- inadequate assessment, prejudice or bias on the part of the examiners; and /or medical, personal or other circumstances which affected a student's performance of which the examiners were unaware at the time of the assessment.

Appeals against the exercise of academic judgment will not be heard. If a student does not understand why they have received a lower mark than expected, they should contact the person responsible for the class and ask for feedback on their performance.

The guiding principles for the consideration of an appeal are: timely decision making; openness and transparency of decision-making, and proper recording of the reasons for the decision; the impartiality of the decision makers; the possibility of review and the availability of representation, and the opportunity for both sides to have their views taken into account.

Failure to operate to the timescales defined in these procedures does not of itself constitute grounds for an appeal decision to be invalid.

Implications for progression

Where an appeal is pending, the appellant will normally be allowed to continue to attend classes subject to the agreement of the assessment board (or its nominee) in order not to prejudice their studies if the Appeals Committee upholds the appeal. However, should the Appeals Committee not uphold the appeal, the student may subsequently be asked to leave the classes.

Where an appeal relating to the final modules is pending, the appellant will not normally be permitted to progress.

Stage 1: Academic Appeals to ISC Appeals Committee

Timing and format of appeals

All appeals, together with supporting documentary evidence, should normally be lodged in writing with the Head of Centre (HoC) within 10 working days of the issuance of the Record of Results.

Appeals should be addressed in the first instance to the HoC and delivered to the ISC Administration Office.

Appeals should be set out on the Stage 1 Student Appeals Form available from the ISC administration office (/Student Handbook Appendices). All supporting documentation must be securely attached. As well as setting out in full the grounds on which the appeal is founded, the appellant should state the outcome(s) sought (e.g. a further attempt at failed examinations).

Where an appeal is based on circumstances that the appellant might reasonably have been expected to have brought to the attention of the ISC before the meeting of the MAB or PAB, such as an ongoing medical or personal circumstance, the appellant should explain why these were not brought to the notice of the ISC at an earlier date.

An appeal submitted by the appropriate deadline will normally be heard within 30 working days of its receipt by the ISC Administration Office unless there are abnormal circumstances surrounding the case.

Procedure for the Hearing of Academic Appeals

The ISC will send out an acknowledgement within 5 working days of receipt of an appeal during the term and 10 working days out with terms. Any unavoidable delays in addressing the appeal (e.g. the absence of the individual(s) required to provide a response) will be notified at as early a date as possible.

On receipt of the documentation, the HoC (or nominee), will check whether the student has provided sufficient information for the Appeals Committee to a decision and whether the grounds for appeal (as indicated above) have been met. If not, the appellant will be asked to submit further information or will be informed in writing that the appeal will not be heard because there are no grounds, and will be advised of their right to appeal to the Academic Registrar.

The HoC (or nominee) is only permitted to determine whether or not the appeal meets the grounds specified above. The HoC (or nominee) is not permitted to make a judgement with respect to the appeal itself. Only the Appeals Committee is permitted to make judgements as to whether an appeal is upheld or not upheld (see below).

If there are grounds for appeal, the ISC will send a copy of the appeal documentation to the relevant tutor or their nominee(s) to comment on the appeal. These individuals may consult colleagues or investigate the appeal as appropriate. In particular, they will wish

to consult any colleague named in the appeal.

Where an appeal alleges inadequate assessment, bias or prejudice on the part of staff acting as an examiner, the ISC Administration Office will invite the HoC to comment. The HoC may consult colleagues or investigate the appeal as appropriate. In particular, he or she will wish to consult any colleague named in the appeal.

An Appeals Committee at ISC level will be set up taking care to ensure impartiality in membership with regard to the individual appeals under consideration. Anyone who has previously been involved in a particular case (in whatever capacity) cannot be involved in the decision-making process regarding the outcome of an appeal.

The Appeals Committee should take care to consider and respond to all the grounds for appeal presented by the student and, if appropriate, explain why certain grounds were not considered on the basis of relevance.

Where it is deemed necessary, the Appeals Committee may also invite the appellant to attend a meeting in order to discuss the appeal.

At least 5 working days before the meeting is due the appellant will be notified in writing of the date, time, venue and other arrangements for the meeting.

The appellant has the right to be accompanied and/or to be represented at the meeting by a person of their choice (subject to the agreement of that individual). The appellant must notify the Appeals Committee of the name of any individual who will be accompanying them or representing them at the meeting.

The appellant will be given adequate opportunity to explain the ground(s) of appeal.

The meeting will be conducted as follows:

- The appellant (or representative) is invited to speak to the salient aspects of the appeal;
- If the appellant wishes to introduce new grounds at the meeting, the Committee will consider whether such new grounds can be admitted;
- The Committee may put questions to the appellant (or representative of the appellant).

The appellant will be informed in writing of the decision of the Appeals Committee within 30 working days of the initial submission to the ISC Administration Office. The Appellant will be provided with an explanation of the Appeals Committee's decision(s) and, if their appeal was not upheld, will be advised of their right to appeal to the Academic Registrar and the means by which to do so.

The ISC Administration Office will retain a record of all formal appeals. When an appeal is upheld and points to procedural irregularities in the assessment process, appropriate recommendations to address these may be made to the relevant ISC Staff.

Stage 2: Academic Registrar Appeal Review

Grounds of appeal to the Academic Registrar

A student has the right of appeal to the Academic Registrar following an unsuccessful or only partially successful appeal to the ISC Appeals Committee. All such, appeals must be made on at least one of the following grounds:

- new information which was not available, for good reason, at earlier stages;
- bias or prejudice on the part of those who dealt with the appeal at the Appeals Committee;
- breach, by the ISC Appeals Committee of the procedure set out in the Complaints & Appeals Policy or in this handbook.

Timing and format of appeals to the Academic Registrar

An appeal to the Academic Registrar may be lodged only after notification has been given of an unsuccessful appeal to the ISC Appeals Committee.

All appeals to the Academic Registrar, together with any supporting documentary evidence, must be lodged in writing within a period of 2 weeks from the date on the letter informing the appellant of the outcome of the ISC Appeals Committee (Stage 1). Appeals received after this two-week period will not be accepted without the prior agreement of the Academic Registrar, and in any event only where good reason is given for such an extension.

Appeals to the Academic Registrar should be set out in writing on the Stage 2 Student Appeal Form and should be addressed to the Academic Registrar. As well as setting out in full the grounds on which the appeal is founded, the appellant should also state the outcome(s) sought (e.g. a further attempt at failed examinations).

The appeal to the Academic Registrar must be supported by copies of the student appeal form which was considered by the ISC Appeals Committee (Stage 1), the response received from the ISC Appeals Committee and all available and appropriate evidence (e.g. medical certificates). Copies of these may, if necessary, be obtained from the ISC Administration Office.

An acknowledgement of receipt by the Academic Registrar will be sent out within 10 working days. Any unavoidable delays in addressing the appeal (e.g. the absence of the individual(s) required to provide a response) will be notified at as early a date as possible.

Procedure for Academic Registrar Appeals Review

On receipt of the documentation, the Academic Registrar will judge whether there are grounds for appeal (as indicated above). If not, the appellant will be informed in writing that the appeal will not be heard because there are no grounds.

The Academic Registrar may request additional information / clarification from the ISC Appeals Committee in order to assist in their review.

The appellant will receive formal written notification of the Registrar's findings and recommendations within 30 working days of the date of the appeal being received. This communication should provide the appellant with an explanation of the Registrar's decision and should be considered as confirmation of the completion of the appeals procedure.

The communication should also provide the appellant with information regarding their right to raise a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator should they feel that their appeal has not been appropriately handled.

When an appeal is upheld and indicates that there are procedural issues that need to be addressed, appropriate recommendations will be made to the ISC Appeals Committee.

A record of all Stage 2 Academic Registrar appeals will be retained confidentially by the Academic Office.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) is an independent body set up to review students' complaints against Universities (and other qualifying Education providers) within England and Wales.

Once a student's appeal has been considered through the above appeals process (both stages 1 and 2) or complaints process (see top of document), they have the right to lodge a complaint with the OIA should they remain unsatisfied with the final decision.

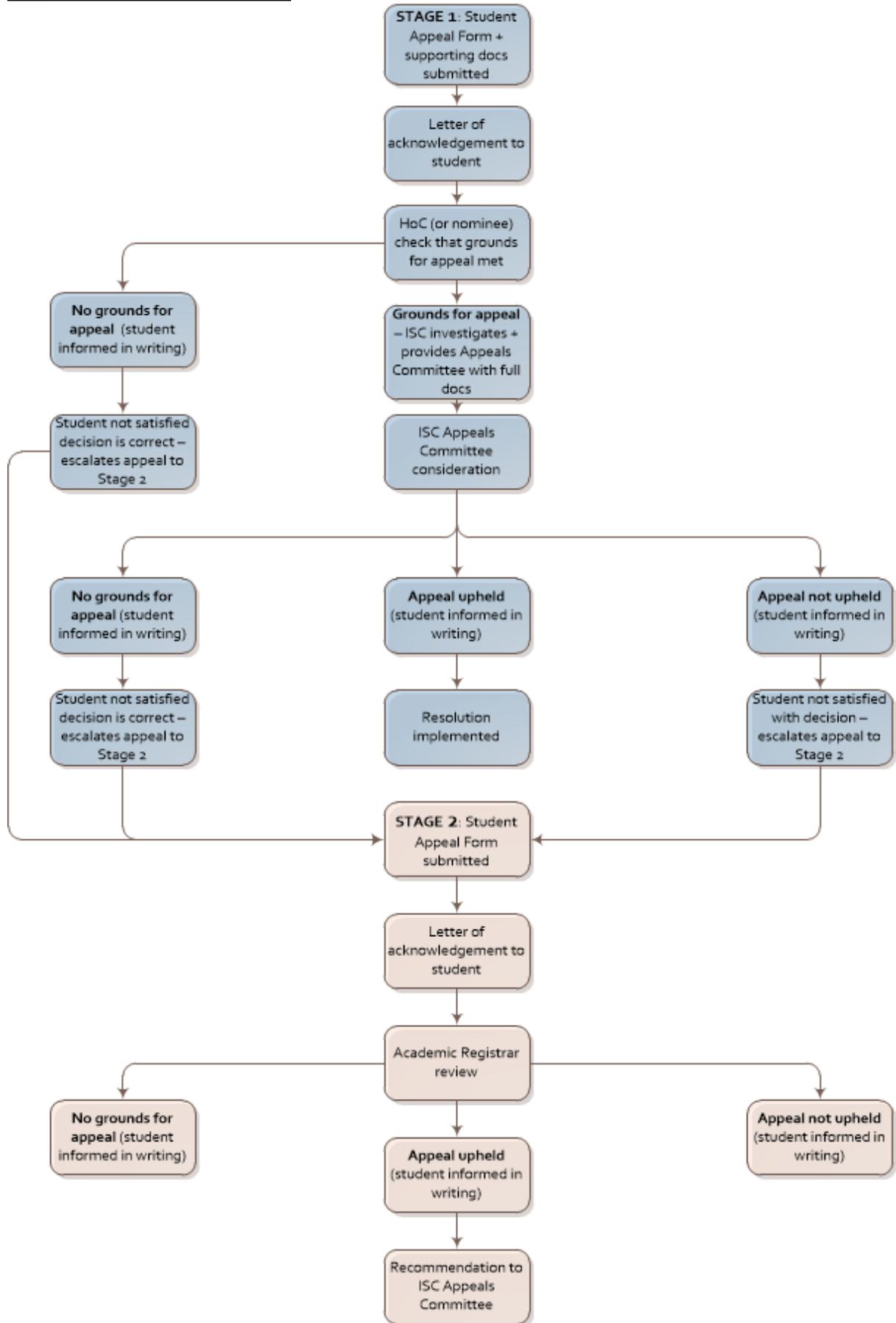
The OIA will only consider complaints from students who are (or were, for former students) on a Higher Education course and who have completed the provider's internal complaints or appeals process.

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The OIA will NOT consider complaints about academic judgement, frivolous or vexatious complaints or complaints that have been dealt with before by the OIA. There are other restrictions to the types of complaints the OIA will consider and full details can be found on the OIA's website (see below).

For full details of the OIA's processes and procedures (including their complaint form), please refer to the OIA's website: www.oiahe.org.uk

Appeals Process Flowchart



APPENDICES

A - Stage 2 Student Complaint Form

B - Stage 3 Student Complaint Form

C - Stage 1 Student Appeal Form

D - Stage 2 Student Appeal Form

E - Recommended Wording for Appeals Letters

STAGE 2 STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM

This form should only be used if you have read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy (within the Student Handbook). You are strongly advised to consult your Personal Tutor (or other member of ISC staff) prior to submitting this form.

If you wish to make a formal complaint but feel unable to act on your own behalf you may appoint a representative to act on your behalf. However, you must sign the form yourself. Once you have decided to have a representative we will only correspond with that person. If you change your mind about having a representative you will need to notify us in writing.

Completed forms, together with supporting evidence, should be submitted to the ISC Administration Office.

Full Name:	
Correspondence Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Student Number:	Date form submitted:
Programme:	

Please tick the box below if you wish to appoint a representative:

	I confirm that I wish the person named below to act on my behalf.
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PART 1: Details of Representative appointed to act on your behalf (if applicable)

First Name	
Last Name	
E mail Address	
Contact Phone Number	

Continued...

PART 2: Details of your complaint

When completing this section please include details of why you wish to make a formal complaint and any actions you have already taken regarding the complaint. If you have attempted to resolve the issue informally, please provide details of any members of staff you have spoken to (ie. Head of Centre / Administration Office / Head of English). Alternatively, if you feel the complaint cannot be resolved by the early resolution part of the process, please explain why.

Continued...

...continued...

PART 3: Desired outcome

Please explain what outcome you are looking for:

Please confirm whether or not you would be willing to consider mediation or conciliation. (Please circle below):

YES / NO

Part 5: Declaration

I have read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy and I declare that the information on this form is correct.

Student signature:.....

Date:.....

STAGE 3 STUDENT COMPLAINT FORM

This form should only be used if you have read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy (within the Student Handbook). You are strongly advised to consult your Personal Tutor (or other member of ISC staff) prior to submitting this form.

This form should be used by students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome of their Stage 2 formal complaint and who wish to escalate the matter to the Independent Cluster/Network Director for further consideration.

Should you wish to complete the form by hand, it must be written in a black pen on white paper.

The following should be submitted to the Academic Office at ukisregistry@studygroup.com:

- **Completed Stage 2 Student Complaint Form (this form)**
- **Completed Stage 1 Student Complaint Form**
- **All supporting evidence submitted previously (at Stage 1) and any new supporting evidence**
- **A copy of the communication you received from the Head of Centre at the culmination of Stage 1**

Full Name:	
Correspondence Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Student Number:	Date form submitted:
Programme:	

Please tick the box below if you wish to appoint a representative:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I confirm that I wish the person named below to act on my behalf.
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Continued...

...continued...

APPENDIX B

PART 1: Details of Representative appointed to act on your behalf (if applicable)

First Name	
Last Name	
E mail Address	
Contact Phone Number	

PART 2: Reasons for escalation of complaint

Please give the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the Centre's response and wish to escalate your complaint:

Continued...

...continued...

APPENDIX B

PART 3: Desired outcome

Please explain what outcome you are looking for:

Please confirm whether or not you would be willing to consider mediation or conciliation. (Please circle below):

YES / NO

Part 5: Declaration

I have read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy and I declare that the information on this form is correct.

Student signature:.....

Date:.....



STAGE 1 STUDENT APPEAL FORM

Please read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy (within the Student Handbook) in full before completing this form. You are also strongly advised to consult your Personal Tutor prior to submission of this form.

This form should be used by students who wish to make an appeal to the ISC Appeals Committee. Should you wish to complete the form by hand, it must be written with a black pen on white paper.

Completed forms, together with all supporting evidence, should be submitted to the ISC Administration Office within 10 working days of the issuance of your Record of Results.

Appeals received after the deadline may not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

Name:	
Correspondence Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Student Number:	Date form submitted:
Programme:	
Decision appealed against:	

Continued...

STAGE 2 STUDENT APPEAL FORM

Please read the In (and post) Residence Complaints & Appeals Policy (within the Student Handbook) in full before completing this form. You are also strongly advised to consult your Personal Tutor prior to submission of this form.

This form should be used by students who wish to appeal the outcome of their Stage 1 appeal. Should you wish to complete the form by hand, it must be written with a black pen on white paper.

Stage 2 appeals will only be considered upon the conclusion of the Stage 1 appeal.

The following should be submitted to the Academic Registrar at ukisregistry@studygroup.com within 2 weeks of the date on your Stage 1 appeal completion letter:

- **Completed Stage 2 Student Appeal Form (this form)**
- **All supporting evidence submitted previously (at Stage 1) and any new supporting evidence**
- **A copy of the letter you received at the completion of Stage 1**

Appeals received after the deadline may not be considered except in exceptional circumstances.

Name:	
Correspondence Address:	
Email:	Phone:
Student Number:	Date form submitted:
Programme:	
Decision appealed against:	

Continued...

Grounds for Appeal

Please tick as appropriate. Note: only tick the grounds you have reason and evidence for. Ticking all grounds will not improve your case.

- New information which was not available, for good reason, at earlier stages;
- Bias or prejudice on the part of those who dealt with the appeal at the Appeals Committee;
- Breach by the Appeals Committee of the procedure set out in the Complaints and Appeals Policy

Please explain in more detail the reason/s why you feel you have grounds for Stage 2 appeal:

Please explain what outcome you are looking for:

Student signature:.....

Date:.....

Recommended wording for Appeals letters

Stage 1 Acknowledgement

I am writing to confirm receipt of your Stage 1 Student Appeal Form submitted on the [date].

If you have not already done so, please read our 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy', which can be found in the Student Handbook.

You can expect to be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 30 working days (from the submission date above).

Stage 1 No Grounds

I am writing with regards to your Stage 1 appeal submitted on the [date].

Whilst I appreciate your concern, I'm afraid it will not be possible to consider your appeal, as it does not meet the required grounds set out in our 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy', which are as follows:

- *Procedural irregularities in the assessment process (including alleged administrative error which could have led the assessment board to reach a different conclusion to that which they might have reached had the error not been made)*
- *Inadequate assessment, prejudice or bias on the part of the examiners; and/or medical, personal or other circumstances which affected a student's performance of which the examiners were unaware at the time of the assessment*

[Additional text if required]

*You have the right to escalate the matter to the Academic Registrar (Stage 2 Appeal) for consideration. You must do so **within 2 weeks** from the date of this letter. Stage 2 appeals received after this deadline may not be considered.*

Please note: Appeals to the Academic Registrar must be made on at least one of the following grounds:

- *New information which was not available, for good reason, at earlier stages*
- *Bias or prejudice on the part of those who dealt with the appeal at the Appeals Committee*
- *Breach by the Appeals Committee of the procedure set out in the In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy*

To escalate the matter to the Academic Registrar please submit the following to ukiscregistry@studygroup.com for the attention of the Academic Registrar:

- 1) A completed Stage 2 Student Appeal Form (available from the ISC Administration Office)
- 2) A copy of your Stage 1 Student Appeal Form
- 3) Copies of all supporting documentation
- 4) A copy of this letter

Full details regarding Stage 2 appeals can be found in the 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy' section of the Student Handbook.

Stage 1 Not Upheld

I am writing with regards to your Stage 1 appeal submitted on the [date].

The ISC Appeals Committee has carefully considered your appeal and has made the following determination:

Decision: Appeal Not Upheld

[Additional explanatory text explaining the grounds for appeal, the Centre response, details of any further investigation and why the appeal has not been upheld etc.]

You have the right to escalate the matter to the Academic Registrar (Stage 2 Appeal) for consideration. You must do so **within 2 weeks** from the date of this letter. Stage 2 appeals received after this deadline may not be considered.

Please note: Appeals to the Academic Registrar must be made on at least one of the following grounds:

- *New information which was not available, for good reason, at earlier stages*
- *Bias or prejudice on the part of those who dealt with the appeal at the Appeals Committee*
- *Breach by the Appeals Committee of the procedure set out in the In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy*

To escalate the matter to the Academic Registrar please submit the following to ukiscregistry@studygroup.com for the attention of the Academic Registrar:

- 1) A completed Stage 2 Student Appeal Form (available from the ISC Administration Office)
- 2) A copy of your Stage 1 Student Appeal Form
- 3) Copies of all supporting documentation
- 4) A copy of this letter

Full details regarding Stage 2 appeals can be found in the 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy' section of the Student Handbook.

Stage 1 Upheld

I am writing with regards to your Stage 1 appeal submitted on the [date].

The ISC Appeals Committee has carefully considered your appeal and has made the following determination:

Decision: Appeal Upheld

Outcome: [Action to be taken to rectify situation]

[Additional explanatory text explaining the grounds for appeal, the Centre response, details of any further investigation and an apology]

Thank you for bringing this matter to the attention of the Appeals Committee. Although we have not on this occasion met the standards we expect of ourselves, we are pleased to be able to rectify the situation and trust that this meets with your satisfaction.

Stage 2 Acknowledgement

I am writing to confirm receipt of your Stage 2 Student Appeal Form submitted on the [date].

If you have not already done so, please read our 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy', which can be found in the Student Handbook.

You can expect to be informed of the outcome of your appeal within 30 working days (from the submission date above).

Stage 2 No Grounds

I am writing with regards to your Stage 2 appeal submitted on the [date].

I have reviewed your appeal and can confirm that it does not meet the required grounds set out in the 'In (and post) Residence Complaints and Appeals Policy'. As such, I am unable to consider the matter further.

[Additional text if required]

This letter should be considered as confirmation of the completion of the appeals procedure.

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) should you feel that your appeal has not been appropriately handled.

The OIA is an independent body set up to review students' complaints against education providers.

Any complaint you submit to the OIA must be received by them within 12 months of the date of this letter.

For full details of the OIA's processes and procedures (including their complaint form and types of complaints they consider), please refer to the OIA's website: www.oiahe.org.uk

Stage 2 Not Upheld

I am writing with regards to your Stage 2 appeal submitted on the [date].

I have carefully reviewed your appeal and have made the following determination:

Decision: Appeal Not Upheld

[Additional explanatory text explaining the grounds for appeal, details of any further investigation and why the appeal has not been upheld etc.]

This letter should be considered as confirmation of the completion of the appeals procedure.

You have the right to lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) should you feel that your appeal has not been appropriately handled.

The OIA is an independent body set up to review students' complaints against education providers.

Any complaint you submit to the OIA must be received by them within 12 months of the date of this letter.

For full details of the OIA's processes and procedures (including their complaint form and types of complaints they consider), please refer to the OIA's website: www.oiahe.org.uk

Stage 2 Upheld

I am writing with regards to your Stage 2 appeal submitted on the [date].

I have carefully reviewed your appeal and have made the following determination:

Decision: Appeal Upheld

Outcome: [Action to be taken to rectify situation]

[Additional explanatory text explaining the grounds for appeal, details of any further investigation and an apology]

The above decision will be communicated to the ISC Appeals Committee, who will take the necessary steps to enact the outcome detailed.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. Although we have not on this occasion met the standards we expect of ourselves, we are pleased to be able to rectify the situation and trust that this meets with your satisfaction.

Document Version Control

Document Source		Academic Office	
Authorised to Approve		AQAEC	
Version	Date approved	Update by	Details
1	Jan 2016	N/A	N/A
2	03/12/2018	Polly Bramhall	<p><u>Both Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'In (and post) Residence' and 'Policy' added to title for clarity • Variance in use of second person and third person corrected. (Third person throughout) • More explicit timeframes for the consideration of complaints and appeals (as per OIA guidance) • Added information relating to which written communications the student should consider the 'completion of the complaint / appeal' (as per OIA guidance) • Added requirement for written communications to students to include reference to the OIA (as per OIA guidance) • Added OIA information at the end of both processes, including website address (as per OIA guidance) <p><u>Complaints Policy Only</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References to 'Regional Director' amended to 'Cluster/Network Director' • Minor amendments to wording • Preamble added • Additional wording to clarify which form a student should complete, at which stage and to whom it should be submitted • Stage 3 Complaints to be submitted to the Academic Office, who will nominate an independent Cluster/Network Director to review the complaint (as opposed to the Cluster/Network Director related to the ISC in question). • The Academic Office will administer the Stage 3 review and will keep records for audit purposes <p><u>Appeals Policy Only</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previously the Stage 2 reviewer (was Regional Director) was permitted to invite the appellant to a meeting to discuss their appeal and the ISC Appeals Committee was not. This is counter to OIA guidance with respect to provider considerations of appeals.

			<p>Stage 1 ISC Appeals Committee now permitted to invite student to discuss the appeal and the Stage 2 reviewer is not.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 2 reviewer now the Academic Registrar (or nominee). • Amended terminology surrounding Stage 2 of the appeals process to 'Appeal Review' (in accordance with OIA guidance) • Addition of Appeals Process Flowchart for clarity, as process is somewhat complex • Preamble amended to align with new Complaints preamble <p>Addition of appendices A-E</p>
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