

## Research Degree Appeals – Section Two

You can use the Section Two Appeals process if you want to appeal against a decision made by the Examiners **following submission of your thesis**. You can appeal against the following decisions:

- a) That you are deemed not to have attained the standard required for the degree and that no further opportunity be allowed for examination. This includes circumstances where a determination of academic malpractice has been made following submission of your thesis, or if you have failed to attend your scheduled viva for no good reason;
- b) That you be awarded a different award to the one you are attempting to achieve (e.g. MPhil instead of PhD);
- c) That you be required to resubmit your thesis either for the intended or a lesser award. This includes instances where a determination of academic malpractice has been made following submission of your thesis;
- d) To accept a finding from an investigation that academic malpractice has occurred following submission of your thesis.

You can only appeal on the following grounds:

- a) That there were procedural errors in the conduct of the viva examination (including alleged administrative error) of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the Examiners would have reached the same conclusion if they had not occurred;
- b) That there were exceptional circumstances affecting your performance which, for good reason, the Examiners were not aware of when they made their decision;
- c) That there is evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment on the part of one or more of the examiners;
- d) That there was a procedural error in determining a decision of academic malpractice;
- e) That the examiners have not taken due account of extenuating challenging circumstances that arose during the conduct of the viva;
- f) That there was a material irregularity in the Examiners failing you for non-attendance at a scheduled viva.

You cannot appeal on any grounds which:

- a) Dispute the academic judgement of the Examiners;
- b) Claim extenuating circumstances without good reason for not having taken action via the Annual Progress Monitoring process or the extenuating circumstances procedure;
- c) Make a complaint about supervision or supervisory arrangements.

A Guild Adviser can help you to establish whether or not you have grounds for appeal.

## How to appeal

You must submit your appeal to the Academic Compliance Team ([appeals@liv.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@liv.ac.uk)) within **14 calendar days** of receiving the formal notification of the result of the examination or the decision of the Examiners regarding any charge of academic malpractice.

As a part of your appeal, you will need to submit a statement explaining your case. Your statement should include the following:

- The grounds on which you are appealing
- A detailed explanation of your grounds
- Any evidence you can provide in support of your appeal

You are expected to provide all relevant documentation and evidence when you submit your appeal. A Guild Adviser can help you in preparing your appeal by reviewing your statement and evidence.

## Stage One - Initial Consideration of your appeal

Your appeal will be reviewed within **30 calendar days** in order to establish whether the information submitted constitutes grounds for appeal. You will be informed, in writing within **5 calendar days**, either that:

- a) A case for hearing the appeal has not been made (in which case the reasons should be stated); or
- b) A case for hearing the appeal has been established and a Research Degree Appeal Board will consider the appeal on **some, but not all cited grounds**; or
- c) A case for hearing the appeal has been established and a Research Degree Appeal Board will consider the appeal on **all cited grounds**.

## Stage Two - Further Review

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your appeal at the Initial Review stage you have the right to request a review of the decision once you have received your Outcome Letter.

You can request a review on the following grounds;

- a) There was a procedural error in determining the outcome at Stage One;
- b) That the outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances;
- c) That there is new material evidence which you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

You have **10 calendar days** of the date on your Outcome Letter to request a review and you should include the following in your request;

- The nature of the appeal
- All correspondence received by or provided by the student under Stage One of this Procedure, including the University's written response to the appeal (the Outcome Letter)
- Any further documentation or evidence you wish to be considered

You should send your request to [appeals@liv.ac.uk](mailto:appeals@liv.ac.uk). You will receive an email acknowledging the receipt of your appeal within **5 calendar days** and an outcome within **10 calendar days**.

## Research Degree Appeals Board

If a case for hearing your appeal has been established, a Research Degree Appeal Board will be convened to consider the case. An adviser can support you in preparing for the hearing and may be able to accompany you on the day.