

Education for Health Informal Queries and Appeals Policy

1. Policy Statement

Please note: This policy applies to students undertaking a module or programme validated by The Open University (OU).

Students undertaking a module or programme validated by The University of Hertfordshire (UH) should follow the guidance on the UH website (www.herts.ac.uk).

This policy is intended to explain the informal queries and appeals process.

Before making an informal query or appeal, you are encouraged to contact the student support service at Education for Health (email: studentsupport@educationforhealth.org or Tel: 01926 838969) to make sure that you fully understand the process.

The informal queries and appeals process is a procedure which allows you, in certain circumstances, to ask for a review of a decision relating to your assessment outcome, academic progress or award.

This policy includes further information about the process and how to complete the Appeal Form, if required.

Please note: If you have a complaint about teaching or supervision, or circumstances which relate to the delivery of your module or programme, these should be raised as a complaint with Education for Health at the earliest opportunity. If necessary, a complaint should be submitted in line with our Complaints Policy, which can be found on our Policies and Procedures webpage:

<https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>

2. Associated Documentation

Section 12.1: Appeal Form

Located on the Education for Health Policies and Procedures page:

<https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>

3. Roles and Responsibilities

As an organisation, we:

- are fully supportive of our students and will want to assist if we can,
- will treat any discussions about students' circumstances with sensitivity and confidentiality,

- only use the information provided to support students in their studies.

We expect students to:

- let us know as soon as possible if they wish to make an informal query or appeal,
- read this document carefully before submitting an informal query or appeal,
- provide the evidence required to support an informal query or appeal.

4. The Policy

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4.1 Grounds for raising an informal query or appeal

The grounds for informal query or appeal are summarised below:

Significant exceptional circumstances:	there are circumstances which materially affected your performance, for which supporting evidence exists, which were not known to us at the time your results were determined and which it was not reasonably practicable for you to make known beforehand;
Procedural irregularities:	there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of examination or assessment procedures of such a nature as to create a reasonable possibility that the result may have been different if it had not occurred.

It is important to note that our Exceptional Circumstances policy (see Section 9.7 at <https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>) requires students to notify us of any matters which may be relevant to their academic performance, for example, personal or medical circumstances, **at the time they occur** and to supply supporting documentary evidence, such as medical certificates. Unless there were very good reasons why you were unable to notify us or supply evidence at the time, it is likely that an appeal will be disallowed.

You **cannot** raise an informal query or appeal if your results are not as good as you had hoped for or are worse than you or a third party believe you deserve. Informal queries or appeals which simply challenge the academic judgement of internal or External Examiners or Programme Examination Board are not considered.

You are able to ask for feedback as to why the mark you have been awarded is not what you were expecting. Please contact Student Support and we will put you in touch with the Education Lead for your module.

4.2 Should I raise an informal query or submit an appeal?

Once you have received your results you may, if you believe you have grounds as outlined in section 4.1, raise an informal query.

If you are dissatisfied with the response to your informal query, you are able to submit a formal appeal.

4.3 How to submit an informal query or appeal

Informal Query

If, after receiving your results, you decide that you have eligible grounds for an informal query, you should email the Student Support Team at studentsupport@educationforhealth.org and include 'Informal Query' within the email subject.

The Student Support Team will then direct your informal query to the most appropriate member of staff to respond to your query.

You should ensure that your informal query is raised within **28 days** of your results being issued.

Failure to do so will normally result in your query being rejected.

You must raise an informal query on your own behalf. Education for Health will not contact a third party on your behalf.

Appeal

If you have received a response to your informal query and you decide that you have eligible grounds for appeal, you should complete and submit an Appeal Form.

Please ensure that you provide relevant supporting documentary evidence and that you complete the form as required rather than submitting a statement or letter. Appeals without a form will **not** be accepted.

You should ensure that your appeal is raised as soon as possible and no later than **3 months** after a response to your informal query is issued.

You must raise an appeal on your own behalf and it is your responsibility to obtain the required evidence. Education for Health will not contact a third party on your behalf.

4.4 Supporting evidence that must be submitted (Appeals only)

It is important that you submit evidence to support your appeal.

Where medical evidence is submitted, this must be from a qualified medical practitioner.

You must ensure that any evidence is submitted in English. If it was not written in English, you must supply a certified translation.

Please note that any application supported by false evidence will be considered invalid and will lead us to take action under our disciplinary procedures.

4.5 What happens after I submit my informal query or appeal?

The attached flowcharts outline the processes that will take place on receipt of your informal query or appeal.

Informal Queries

All informal queries or appeals will be acknowledged within 5 days of receipt.

Once your query has been received, the issues you raised will be investigated and you will receive a response in writing within 28 days of your informal query being received.

Appeals

All appeals will be acknowledged within 5 days of receipt.

Once your form and evidence have been received, the issues you raised will be investigated.

Appeals are considered by the Academic Review Panel.

Further information about the Panel, including how it is constituted and its terms of reference, is available as Section 4.8 at <https://www.educationforhealth.org/education/student-support/regulations-policies/>.

The Academic Review Panel will meet within 14 days of your appeal being received. You will be informed of the decision of the Academic Review Panel within 28 days of your appeal being received.

If your appeal is rejected, you will be informed of the reasons for this within your outcome letter.

4.6 What happens if I disagree with the decision?

If you raised an **informal query** and are dissatisfied with the decision, you have the right to submit a formal appeal.

If you raised an **appeal** and are dissatisfied with the decision of the Academic Review Panel, you have the right to appeal to The Open University.

You can only appeal if you have evidence that the process has not been followed correctly, or if you have exceptional circumstances which you were unable to present to us before your results were determined.

You cannot appeal simply because you are unhappy with the outcome of your informal query or appeal.

Appeal to The Open University

If you believe that Education for Health's appeal process has been conducted incorrectly, then you have the right to raise the matter for external and independent review by The Open University.

If you make a submission to The Open University, you will need to send a copy of your outcome letter from Education for Health.

You must submit a formal appeal in writing and your letter must include the following information:

- your contact address and telephone number
- the name of the institution at which you are studying
- the name of the programme or module on which you are studying
- the specific decision you are appealing against

- documentary evidence that you have exhausted your Education for Health’s own internal procedures, including:
 - copies of written correspondence between yourself and Education for Health concerning the decision you are appealing against,
 - a copy of the letter from Education for Health notifying you of the final outcome of our internal appeals procedure,
- a clear statement explaining why you are appealing
- documentary evidence to support the grounds on which you are appealing.

If you fail to provide all of the above, your appeal will be delayed and may eventually be dismissed.

Important: please read carefully –

The Open University will make every attempt to respect your privacy and confidentiality when dealing with your appeal. However, unless you specifically state otherwise, the University will assume that you have given permission to disclose as necessary any of the information you provide. If you wish any matter to remain private or confidential, you must state so clearly in your letter. If you do not wish the University to disclose information, it may not be possible to consider your appeal appropriately.

When can I submit an appeal to The Open University?

It is important that The Open University receives your appeal as soon as possible, and within **3 months** of the outcome of Education for Health’s internal procedures.

Where should I submit the appeal?

Appeals must be sent to:

The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships
 1st Floor, Wilson B Block
 The Open University
 Walton Hall
 Milton Keynes
 MK7 6AA
 United Kingdom

Where to get further help and guidance

If you have exhausted the Education for Health appeals process and wish to take your appeal to The Open University, you can contact Open University Validation Partnerships (OUVP) for advice and guidance on the procedures.

Please contact the Director of OUVP in one of the following ways:

Contact OUVP by email: OUVP-Director@open.ac.uk

Contact OUVV by phone: 01908 332840

Address:

The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships
1st Floor, Wilson B Block
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA
United Kingdom

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education

If you have completed all the preceding procedures and you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, you may be able to apply for a review of the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).

The OIA was set up under the Higher Education Act 2004 to provide ‘an independent student complaints scheme’. All HEIs in England and Wales are required to comply with the scheme, which is free to students.

The OIA will require a copy of your Completion of Procedures letter from The Open University before they will agree to investigate your case. More information about the scheme is available at the OIA website: <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

Please note that you would need to apply to the OIA **within 12 months** of the date of your Completion of Procedures letter.

Below are two flowcharts that outline the informal queries and appeals process.

6. Policy History

Last updated: June 2019

7. Review Date

June 2020

Informal Query and Appeal Process

