

Concessions, Academic Appeals and Reviews

Student Guide

Final decisions on the marks, grades or qualifications that you receive are made by the Examination or Degree Board relating to your course (the Board). In a limited number of circumstances, you may challenge the Board's decisions. This guide is designed to give you a brief overview of the University's concessions, Stage One Appeals and Stage Two Review procedures and some tips on filling out the forms. As this is only a guide, it is important that you read the Assessment Regulations, the Overarching Policy for Academic Appeals and Student Complaints and the Academic Appeals and Review Policy before making your application. You will also find useful information in your Student Handbook.

I'm not happy with my results

You cannot challenge the Board's academic judgment. This means that you can't ask for your paper to be re-marked or for a grade to be raised to take into consideration mitigating circumstances. However, in a small number of cases, you can submit a concession application. You can request advice from your Course Leader or Head of Students on what grounds you can use to submit a concession, and what evidence will be required.

What is the purpose of a concession application?

Concessions are used where:

- you were absent from an exam or submitted assessment hand-in date;
- you handed in a submitted assessment late;
- there was a procedural defect in the exam;
- you became ill during the exam and had to leave without finishing the paper; or
- in extremely limited circumstances, where you were unable to make a rational decision to undertake the exam or hand in the submitted assessment.

Please see the Tips section for further details.

If successful, you may resit the paper with your previous attempt discounted. Therefore, if the previous exam or submitted assessment was your first attempt, the resit would then be counted as a first attempt in its place. In relation to a submitted assessment which is handed in late, if successful, you will have your submitted assessment marked, provided that it was handed in within seven calendar days of the deadline.

How do I make a concession application?

Concession forms are available from ELITE. Click on 'Student Support' located under 'Organisations' on the left hand menu. Then click 'Regulatory Matters' for a full list of concession forms by course.

You must fill out the form following the detailed instructions provided with it. Then, return the form with supporting documents by email to the centre specific address indicated on the form. This must be done within seven calendar days of the date of the exam or hand-in date. Your concession will be decided by the Board.

Can I submit one concession for a block of exams or submitted assessments?

It's possible to use one form to claim a concession for a block, in which case the seven calendar days are measured from the date of the last exam or hand-in date.

I'm not happy with the outcome of my concession; what can I do?

If you're unhappy with your concession outcome, then you may appeal to the Board. To do this, you can request a Stage One Appeal form from your Centre's Assessment Office. Please email assessments-yourcentre@law.ac.uk, for example assessments-bloomsbury@law.ac.uk. Complete the form and return it with supporting documents as above. You must do this within seven calendar days of the publication of your exam or submitted assessment results. If you are unable to obtain all your supporting documents within that period, then you can submit the appeal form first and then submit the evidence later, provided it's within 21 calendar days of the publication of results.

You can also request a Stage One Appeal if you feel the Board has misapplied the Regulations in determining your assessment result. This does not require prior submission of a concession application.

I don't agree with the outcome of the Stage One Appeal; what can I do?

If you're not satisfied with the appeal outcome, then you can ask for a Stage Two Review. The review form is sent to you with the appeal outcome and must be completed and returned, with supporting documents, by email to academic.registry@law.ac.uk or by post to Academic Registry, The University of Law, 14 Store Street, Bloomsbury, London, WC1E 7DE. You must do this within 14 calendar days of receiving the appeal outcome letter.

Stage Two Reviews are decided by an Review Panel made up of three senior staff members. Upon receipt of your application, Academic Registry will inform you when the next Review Panel meeting is and you will be sent the outcome within seven calendar days of that meeting.

If your Stage Two Review is unsuccessful, you will also receive a Completion of Procedures Letter with the outcome. If your review is successful, then the Review Panel will make a recommendation to the Board to reconsider your case. Remember that the Panel can only make a recommendation; they do not make the final decision. You will then be told of the outcome of the Board's reconsideration and sent a Completion of Procedures Letter.

The University aims to provide a final outcome within 90 calendar days of receipt of the Stage One Appeal application. However, this may be delayed if you need more time to obtain and provide the required evidence at any stage.

I'm still not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage Two Review; what can I do?

After the Stage Two Review process, you have exhausted all appeal and review routes within the University. However, if you are unhappy with the outcome of the Stage Two Review process, then you may request a further review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). Further details will be provided with the Stage Two Review outcome and can also be found at www.oiahe.org.uk. You must provide the OIA with your Completion of Procedures Letter and submit an application to them within twelve months of the date of that letter.

I'm outside the time limits

If you're outside the time limits at any stage in the process, you must provide an adequate explanation that there were exceptional circumstances which justified your delay in submission.

I have a question not covered here

For further details on concessions or Stage One Appeals, please contact your Centre's Assessment Office at assessments-yourcentre@law.ac.uk, for example assessments-bloomsbury@law.ac.uk.

For details about Stage Two Reviews, please contact the Academic Registry at academic.registry@law.ac.uk.

You can also request advice from your Course Leader or Head of Students on what grounds you can use to submit a concession/appeal, and what evidence will be required.

Tips for filling out the forms

Grounds

It can be difficult to identify the grounds for each stage of the process. However, it's very important to indicate which ground you're using, as otherwise it can lead to confusion and the possibility of your application being rejected.

Concession	Stage One Appeal	Stage Two Review
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. absence or late submission <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Bereavement b) Domestic problems c) Pregnancy d) Own illness e) Illness of close friend/relative f) Other 2. procedural defect 3. inability to make a rational decision 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Board has misapplied the Assessment Regulations 2. there are new circumstances or circumstances not previously made known to the Board and there is a good reason why these were not made known before the original decision was made 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Board did not follow its own rules and procedures under the Assessment Regulations 2. despite having followed the correct procedures, the decision reached was one that no reasonable body, properly directed and taking into account all relevant factors, could have arrived at 3. there are new circumstances or circumstances not previously made known to the Board and there is a good reason why these were not made known before the original decision was made

What is a procedural defect?

This category should be used where you wish to challenge the conduct of the exam. For example, if there was broken air conditioning leading to excessive temperatures or if the fire alarm sounded during your exam.

What counts as an inability to make a rational decision?

Generally, under the Assessment Regulations, if you sit an exam or hand in a submitted assessment, you deem yourself fit to sit and cannot retrospectively claim illness. However, the University recognises that in truly exceptional circumstances you may not have been capable of making a rational decision about whether you should attend your exam or hand in your submitted assessment. It's in those rare circumstances that this ground may be used. Some examples may include suffering from a medical condition that affects your cognitive function, such as depression or malaria, suffering from a condition resulting in considerable pain, or suffering from extreme stress and anxiety brought on by adverse familial circumstances.

Proximity

Please remember that whichever concession ground you use, the event and evidence must be proximate to the exams – the Board cannot consider an isolated incident that happened several months previously.

Evidence

Evidence is essential. Even if you have a really compelling case on paper, it will be rejected unless you provide sufficient evidence. You'll then have to ask for a Stage One Appeal and provide more evidence, along with a good reason for not providing it before. This will cause you unnecessary stress and delay the outcome of the case, so it's a good idea to provide everything you can in the first instance. The Board is under no obligation to chase you for additional evidence.

Please remember that evidence has to be relevant to the ground you're claiming. For example, if you have a doctor's note relating to an illness that occurred months before the exam, you will need a new note in relation to the exam period, even if it is the same condition.

The concession form has a useful table of the type of evidence needed for each ground. If you're obtaining evidence from a doctor, please use the medical form attached to the concession form or the note on obtaining medical evidence for an appeal, which is attached to both the Stage One Appeal and Stage Two Review forms. This will help to make sure that your doctor writes all the things that we need to know.

Where you are claiming under the ground that you were unable to make a rational decision, you must obtain a doctor's letter stating that you were not capable of making a rational decision. It is not enough, for example, simply to provide evidence of ill health or bereavement.

If you did not see a doctor at the time of the exam, you can still visit one after the fact and explain the situation to them – they may still be able to provide adequate evidence for the period of the exams, based on what you can tell them.

Remember to also fill out the concession evidence cover sheet attached to the concession form.

Content

When filling out any of the forms, it's important to include detail. You could consider mentioning when the problem arose; whether it's ongoing; if it's not ongoing, when it ended and why; why it's affected you; and how it's affected you. You also need to be clear about which exam or submitted assessment your application concerns. The more specific you can be, the more likely your application is to be resolved quickly.

However, it's important to keep in mind the grounds for your application. Detail is good, but irrelevant details will simply cause confusion. If you feel your application requires context, put the background details in a separately labelled paragraph.

Remember, when completing the Stage One Appeal or Stage Two Review forms, there are specific grounds for each. You must explain why you believe one of these grounds exists. You cannot simply reiterate the original application.

Structure

You need to demonstrate why your application should succeed, so try and make it as clear as possible. It can be difficult to understand what happened and when, especially where problems are ongoing or complex. Approach things in a logical order; use sub-headings and

bullet points if appropriate. You might consider a timeline of events to help demonstrate the proximity to the exams or hand-in date.

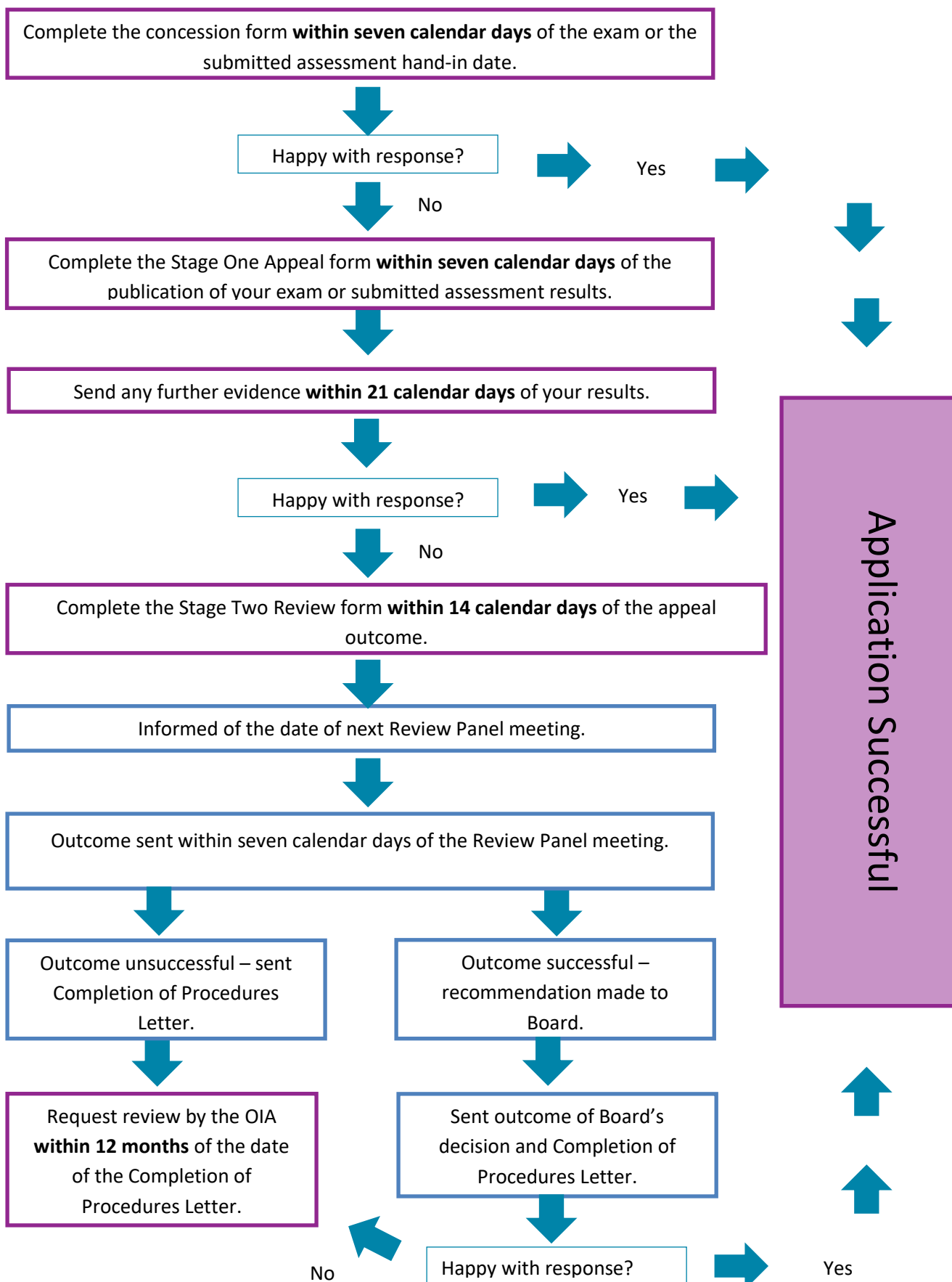
Don't feel constrained by the size of the box; you can continue on a separate sheet. It's better to have a longer but clearly laid out application than one crammed onto the form. If you do decide to use an additional sheet, make sure that this is indicated on the form.

Style

We know that taking exams and receiving results can be stressful at the best of times, without the added upset of making an application. However, it helps to try and remain detached when completing the forms. We do want to know how you feel, but overly emotional language may cause confusion.

Outcome

The Stage Two Review form asks for the outcome that you request. Please remember that you cannot ask for re-marking or for your marks to be raised. The Board can only grant an additional attempt at the exam or for a late submitted assessment to be marked, provided it was submitted within seven calendar days of the hand-in date.



Version History

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
1.0			September 2016
1.1	Senior Quality Officer	Change to the document coding convention	March 2020
V1.1	Registry Assistant	Extension approved for 2 years	October 2021