

STUDENT APPEAL POLICY

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Policy Information & Responsibilities

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Executive Responsible:	Academic Director (Regional)
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Administrator Responsible:	Academic Manager
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March 01, 2018 – Replaced Academic Grievance Policy
April 01, 2020 – Updated policy format



Shadya Mahfouz – Academic Director

STUDENT APPEAL POLICY

Purpose

To provide students with a timely, respectful, equitable and competent review of an academic decision they perceive to be unfair.

Definitions

Academic Administrator: For the purposes of this policy, an Academic Administrator is the Academic Director (i.e., the person who has the immediate responsibility for the program from which the Academic Appeal has arisen).

Academic Appeal: The process by which a student may challenge an academic decision they received (an “Appeal”).

Academic Appeal Committee: The group of designated individuals (students ambassadors, faculty members and administrators) who listen to, analyze and decide the outcome of an Appeal (the “Committee”).

Academic Decision: Any decision made that affects a student’s academic record and/or academic standing at the College (e.g. grading, academic dishonesty, promotion and academic standing, etc.).

Business Day: Monday to Friday, excluding statutory holidays and any other day that the College has publicly announced that it is not open for business.

Executive Team: Senior Executives of Hanson including the CEO and Vice Presidents

Application/Scope

All Hanson College 'Hanson' students

Policy Statements

1.0 Academic Issues that may be appealed

Students may initiate an Academic Appeal in relation to the following types of Academic Decisions:

- a) A final grade in a course
- b) A grade within a course, whether something that was denied reassessment or something that could not be reassessed (e.g., oral presentation, performance, practical exam, placement, etc.).
- c) An academic integrity allegation (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, etc.).
- d) A program-exit decision.
- e) A decision made in a course that has a negative impact on a student’s academic standing or progress.

2.0 Ground for Academic Appeal¹

The grounds for Academic Appeal involve one or more of the following:

a) Compassion

Health or extenuating circumstances have occurred that are beyond the control of the student.

b) Policy Violation

An academic decision that has been made without due regard to proper policy.

c) New Evidence

Situations where relevant evidence emerges that was not available at the time of the original decision during a student assessment, informal appeal, etc.

d) Bias

Decisions that the student believes were biased.

e) Severity of Sanction

Situations where the student believes the severity of the sanction imposed was not reasonable.

3.0 Timeline

Students are to initiate the Appeal process within 10 Business Days of receiving an Academic Decision.

Timelines may be extended at the discretion of the College in cases of illness, injury, or personal extenuating circumstances. In all such cases, the student seeking the extension will provide supporting documentation for the cause and duration of the delay.

4.0 Process

The College maintains a two-stage Academic Appeal procedure. Students must complete the Stage 1 Appeal before proceeding to Stage 2. Stage 1 is an informal process, attempting to resolve the issue with the faculty and academic administrator. The student moves on to Stage 2 where there is no resolution at Stage 1.

Refer to the Academic Appeal Procedure (Appendix A) for more information.

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- Students with academic issues involving allegations of discrimination or harassment should consult the *Hanson Code of Conduct*.
- Students with concerns about the quality of the educational experience, who are not looking to challenge an academic decision, but who are seeking a formal review and response to their concerns, should refer to *Hanson's Student Complaints Policy*.

5.0 Student Rights

- a) Students who file an appeal under this Policy have the right to a fair, transparent, and equitable process.
- b) At any stage in the Academic Appeal process, students may bring a support person (e.g. a student association advisor) to meetings relating to their Appeal. The expectation is that the student will prepare and present their own case and that the role of the support person is to observe the proceedings, and to advise and support the student.
- c) Students awaiting Academic Appeal hearings may enroll in the next semester of their program and register in all regular courses.

Exception – Where an Appeal involves academic performance in a clinical or placement, the student may not register in the subsequent placement course while awaiting the results of their Appeal.

- d) In the case where a student enrolls in the next semester of their program and the Committee denies the Appeal, they will be required to withdraw from the course or program if they are no longer qualified to attend.

6.0 Stage 1: Informal Process

- a) A student must first attempt to resolve the issue under academic appeal by meeting informally with the faculty member or the Academic Administrator, where possible.
- b) The faculty member or the Academic Administrator will meet with the student and explore possible resolutions on a case-by-case basis, considering all the circumstances.
- c) If no informal resolution is possible, the appeal will proceed to the Stage 2 appeal process.

7.0 Stage 2: Academic Appeal Committee

- a) An Academic Appeal Committee is created and will be responsible for administering the Stage 2 appeal process. This committee consists of the following members:
 - Registrar, or delegate, (who serves as Chair of the Committee, non-voting)
 - 2 faculty members drawn from a list approved by the Academic Director
 - 1 academic administrator drawn from a list approved by the Academic Director
 - 1 student Ambassador
 - 1 non-academic administrator drawn from a list approved by the Academic Director
- b) The Committee has the responsibility to examine all documents submitted by the student as well as those submitted by the faculty member and/or academic administrator. The Committee may examine the student's

academic record as well as examine other written evidence. It may interview the student, faculty member, and other individuals with potentially relevant information.

c) Committee members cannot participate if they have been previously involved in a decision-making process related to the matter under Appeal or if they have any conflict of interest, as determined by the Chair.

d) In cases where a student is appealing a grade, and seeking that work be re-assessed, the Committee will determine whether the student's work should be re-assessed. If the committee finds in favor of the student, the Academic Administrator will be responsible for coordinating reassessment of the work under appeal by a suitable content expert that is not the course instructor for the course under appeal. The grade determined by that reviewer will be the grade assigned for the coursework in question.

e) The decision reached by the Committee is final and cannot be further appealed.

8.0 Standard of Proof

The standard of proof to be met is that it is more likely than not that the original decision was incorrect. The burden of proof rests with the student who requested the Appeal.

Responsibilities and Accountability

Students

- Being proactive – i.e., notifying and consulting with the faculty member or academic director as soon as situations arise that are likely to affect their academic performance.
- Knowing their rights and responsibilities under this policy.
- Initiating, following and cooperating with the Academic Appeal Procedure

Faculty Members

- Explaining their academic decisions to students and, in cases of disagreement, for informing students of their right to appeal.
- Participating in the appeal process, which may include providing further information and documentation, in-person and in writing, to their Academic Administrator and the Academic Appeal Committee.
- Undertaking their obligations under this policy in a fair, transparent and consistent manner.

Academic Administrators

- Hearing Stage 1 Appeal, reviewing the situation with the student and faculty member, and deciding on whether a solution is possible or whether they need to refer to the Academic Appeal Committee.
- Documenting the details of Stage 1 Appeal and communicating the results to the student and the faculty member.
- In cases where the Committee approves a re-assessment of grades, ensuring that a qualified individual, who is not the faculty member whose evaluation is under appeal, re-evaluates the students work

Academic Director

- Ensuring integrity of overall appeal process
- Ensuring documentation and reporting of all Appeals
- Coordinating and facilitating Stage 2 appeal process
- Overseeing administration of this policy
- Maintaining a record of the Appeal

Related Policies/Directives/Regulations

- Student Complaint Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Academic Standing and Promotion Policy