

Appeals Policy

1. Scope and purpose

This policy applies to all Walbrook Higher Education students and apprentices, and addresses circumstances where you may wish to appeal a decision made by a formal board or panel considering your individual academic circumstances. It includes:

- an academic appeal, where you request a review of a decision made by the Assessment Board about your progress, assessment or award;
- an academic misconduct appeal, where you request a review of a decision made by an Academic Integrity Panel about the findings or penalty;
- an extenuating circumstances appeal, where you request a review of a decision made about your Extenuating Circumstances application;
- an appeal regarding an application to study or an application for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), which will only be considered if it relates to new and relevant information becoming available;
- an appeal against a decision to suspend or withdraw your registration through the Student Engagement with Learning or Support to Study policies; and
- a reasonable adjustment appeal with respect to an individual assessment component or module within a programme, not to the programme itself.

Where an apprentice's end-point assessment (EPA) is delivered by an independent End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO), any appeal against the outcome of that end-point assessment is made under the EPAO's own appeals procedure, and does not fall within this policy. This policy applies to Walbrook's own assessment, progression and award decisions, including any part of an apprenticeship standard for which Walbrook's own assessment forms all or part of the EPA.

This policy does not cover complaints about the quality of Walbrook's service, which are covered by the Complaints Policy, or concerns arising from an apprenticeship, placement or internship workplace, which are covered by the Workplace Issues Complaints Policy.

2. Principles

This policy is based on the following principles:

- each appeal will be managed fairly, consistently and transparently;
- there will be clear criteria against which an appeal can be made;
- timescales for submitting and processing an appeal will be made clear, and Walbrook will update you about any delay and the reason for it;
- Walbrook will take a flexible and logical approach to crossovers between an appeal and a complaint;
- Walbrook will ensure that any agreed reasonable adjustments are accommodated in the appeals process; and
- frivolous or vexatious appeals will not be accepted, and Walbrook will act under the Student Misconduct and Disciplinary Policy if these occur.

You will have recourse to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if you are dissatisfied with the way Walbrook has managed your appeal, and, if you are an apprentice, to the Department for Education (DfE), as set out under External referral below.

These principles apply to higher education provision delivered solely by Walbrook or through collaborative provision.

3. Appeal criteria

The criteria for an academic appeal are:

- there was an administrative error or other irregularity in the conduct of an assessment or the processing of marks, grades or classification of an award that has not already been addressed by Walbrook;
- you were affected by extenuating circumstances which, for good reason, could not have been brought to the attention of the Assessment Board at the time of its original decision; or
- bias, or a reasonable perception of bias, in the assessment — that is, if you believe your work has not been impartially assessed on its merits, for example because you had previously made a complaint about one of the markers.

The criteria for all other appeals are:

- the policy or procedure was not followed correctly or fairly by Walbrook; or
- new and relevant information or evidence is now available which, for good reason, could not have been brought to the attention of the relevant panel at the time of its original decision.

An appeal cannot be made where marks are provisional and have not yet been considered by an Assessment Board, where an award classification falls just below the boundary of the next highest classification or a module has been failed by one or two marks (the General and Academic Regulations explain the basis on which marks and awards are made, and the Student Support team can advise further), or where you are generally unhappy with a decision made by a board or panel.

In general, the appeal process does not cover issues based on academic judgement. You cannot appeal simply because you disagree with an academic decision or opinion; the appeal process cannot change or overrule normal academic decisions.

4. Student support

This policy is designed to be as clear as possible in explaining how the appeals process works. Further support and guidance is available from Student Support, and advice is available from the Registry for staff managing the process.

5. Crossover of an appeal and a complaint

Issues raised in an appeal may cross over with matters that would more usually be considered as a complaint. Walbrook takes a flexible and individual approach to these situations to identify the most efficient and appropriate way to manage a case, in line with relevant policies. This may mean that all issues are dealt with as one case, or that they are separated and considered under separate policies. Walbrook will take a similarly flexible

approach if you submit an appeal while a separate case, for example a complaint, is already underway, and will always inform you of the approach it plans to take to case management where there is a crossover of issues or more than one case underway.

6. Group appeals

You may submit a group appeal where you and several peers are affected by the same issue. Walbrook will either correspond with each group member separately or may require the group to nominate a representative. Before joining a group appeal, you should ensure that you are seeking the same outcome as the rest of the group; if you are seeking, or may be seeking, a different outcome, you should submit an individual appeal.

7. Submitting an appeal

You must submit an appeal by completing the Appeals form, with your supporting evidence, within 14 calendar days of the decision being communicated to you. Walbrook will acknowledge receipt within five calendar days. Appeals submitted after this deadline will normally only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, which must be explained.

Walbrook expects you to provide genuine and authentic evidence in support of your appeal, and will apply the Student Misconduct and Disciplinary Policy if you provide information that is not genuine.

Walbrook would normally expect you to submit an appeal directly, and will only accept an appeal made on your behalf, for example by a family member, in exceptional circumstances such as significant poor health, and with your written permission. In those circumstances, Walbrook will copy all correspondence to you unless you ask otherwise, expect you to engage in the process (including meeting with Walbrook as needed), and consider whether an extension to the processing timescale is needed, normally only where there is evidence that you are receiving support for your circumstances.

You are not expected to engage a legal representative, and legal representation at an academic appeal hearing would only be appropriate in very exceptional circumstances, since it has the potential to change the nature of the procedure or delay the process. Where you request to use a legal representative, Walbrook will carefully consider whether this is reasonable in the circumstances of the case; the involvement of a legal representative may affect timescales, and Walbrook will keep you informed of any revised timescale.

8. Process for considering an appeal

An appeal will be reviewed by the Designated Appeals Officer to check that it meets the criteria in this policy and that relevant supporting evidence has been provided; if not, Walbrook will follow this up with you, which may delay the process. Walbrook will normally notify you within 14 calendar days of receiving your submission whether the appeal is rejected, because it does not meet the criteria, or will move to the next stage.

Where an appeal moves to the next stage, it will be considered in one of the following ways:

- where there is evidence of an administrative error or other irregularity in confirming your mark, this will be corrected, with the change approved by the Chair of the

Assessment Board and the External Examiner notified; Walbrook will always check whether the error affected more than one student and take necessary action;

- where you present new extenuating circumstances or new information not previously available, the panel that made the original decision will be asked to consider it and determine whether it changes the outcome; or
- the Complaints and Appeals Panel (CAP) will consider complex cases that cannot be addressed in the ways set out above.

Walbrook will normally update you within 14 calendar days of the previous notification about the action taken, or advise that your case will be considered by CAP.

9. Complaints and Appeals Panel

The Designated Appeals Officer will investigate your case and gather relevant information alongside your submission. This information will be documented and made available to all Panel members, and sent to you in advance of your case being heard.

The Complaints and Appeals Panel is composed of:

- the Provost (Chair) or their nominee;
- a nominee of the Regulatory Compliance Working Group;
- two nominees of the Academic Board; and
- the Designated Complaints and Appeals Officer.

Panel members will have relevant experience and/or training provided by Walbrook, so that they are clear about their remit and the basis on which decisions can be made.

You will be notified of the proposed hearing date and invited to attend. You may be accompanied by a supporter, who may or may not be a member of Walbrook staff; you must confirm the supporter's name no later than seven calendar days before the hearing. Any request for additional help or reasonable adjustments for the meeting must also be made at least seven calendar days beforehand.

The Panel will decide that your appeal is upheld or partially upheld, sharing the reasons why; that your appeal is rejected, sharing the reasons why; or, very exceptionally, that further information is required, in which case you will be told what is needed, why, and the revised timescale for a decision. You will receive the Panel's decision by email, with reasons, within 14 calendar days of the meeting. Where an appeal is upheld, you will be informed of the action Walbrook will take, including in relation to assessment where relevant; the Panel cannot adjust your original marks unless a mistake was made in the original calculation.

10. Review of an appeal decision

You have the right to request a review of a decision that has not upheld your appeal, within 14 calendar days of the written outcome. A review request must meet one or both of the following criteria: there is new evidence that, for good reason, could not have been provided when your appeal was originally considered; there is a significant procedural error in how your appeal was considered; or the action taken or solution provided was unreasonable in light of the findings. No other reasons will be accepted, including general disappointment with the decision.

Where an initial appeal has been made to the Extenuating Circumstances Panel or the Academic Integrity Panel, the final review will be held by the Complaints and Appeals Panel. Where the Complaints and Appeals Panel has heard the first appeal, the final review will be held by the Academic Board Review Panel.

A review request will be acknowledged within 14 calendar days and be considered by the relevant panel, chaired by an individual with no prior direct involvement in the appeal. The review panel will either uphold the original decision, if the request does not meet the criteria above, or refer the appeal back to the point in the process at which the alleged error occurred or the new evidence needs to be considered; exceptionally, for example where bias is identified, the reviewer may also recommend that a different individual or panel is appointed.

This review process will be completed within 25 calendar days, and you will be notified of the outcome, together with information about the OIA. This marks the end of Walbrook's direct management of your appeal.

11. External referral

If you are dissatisfied with a decision Walbrook has made on the outcome of your appeal or review request, you may contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), the body responsible for considering students' cases once Walbrook's internal procedures have been exhausted. The OIA has specific criteria against which a case can be made; more information is published at www.oiahe.org.uk.

As the regulator for apprenticeships, apprentices may also, or instead, escalate to the Department for Education (DfE), via the Apprenticeship Service Support helpline or by emailing helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk. Where an apprentice is unsure whether to escalate to the OIA or the DfE, they should contact the Head of Apprenticeships.

12. Reporting and review

The number and nature of appeals will be recorded and reported annually to the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee. This report will consider immediate actions taken to improve the student and apprentice experience, and whether further action is required.

13. Document Governance

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	August 2026, as part of a package of three related documents (this policy, the Complaints Policy, and the new Workplace Issues Complaints Policy) plus an executive summary. Scope extended to apprentices, with a new end-point assessment/EPAO carve-out and an ESFA external referral route; cross-referred to the Workplace Issues Complaints Policy for workplace-related concerns.
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