

# Academic Complaints, Exam Grades & Appeals

## Academic Complaints

Unitec has an Academic Complaints process that you can follow if you feel you have been unfairly treated with regard to an academic decision on:

1. The final grade awarded for any Course
2. The outcome of an Affected Performance Consideration (APC) decision
3. The award of a Qualification
4. A decision about enrolment in or admission to a Programme or Course
5. Progression in a Programme
6. Exclusion from any coursework or assessment
7. Insufficient demonstration of clinical competence leading to failure of a course

This step is prior to any appeal process and is not recorded in your transcript. You will be notified of the outcome in writing. The notification must inform you of your right of appeal if you are not happy with the outcome. Any appeal must be made within fifteen working days of you receiving notification of the outcome.

### **Try to resolve your Academic Complaint informally first**

You **must** try to resolve your concerns informally, in the first instance. We recommend that within 7 working days of receiving your decision or result you raise your concerns with any of the following people:

- Lecturer
- Programme Co-ordinator
- Academic Programme Manager
- Head of School

### **Advice and Guidance regarding the process**

You **must** discuss your concerns with one of the Support Services before proceeding with a formal complaint. The services below can assist you in understanding what options are available to you, help you to resolve your concerns informally and/or guide you through a more formal process.

- **Student Support Advisor** - Email: [studentsupport@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:studentsupport@unitec.ac.nz)
- **Student Advocate** - Email: [studentadvocate@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:studentadvocate@unitec.ac.nz)
- **International Student Support** - Email: [internationalsupport@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:internationalsupport@unitec.ac.nz)

### **Support:**

If you need further support, you can contact any of these services:

- **Maori Student Support** [Visit our Student Support for Maori page](#)
- **Pacific Student Support** - [visit the Pacific Centre page.](#)  
Email: [pacific@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:pacific@unitec.ac.nz)
- **Student Council** – Visit our Student Council page

Unitec expects staff and students to work together to resolve problems directly if possible, but recognises that this may not always be achievable. Unitec will listen to and work to resolve your concerns promptly, in a fair and professional manner, and in accordance with the principles of natural justice.

### **Grounds for an Academic Complaint**

An Academic Complaint must meet one of the following 2 grounds:

- i. There is new relevant information which has a bearing on the matter, and which was previously unavailable;  
or
- ii. there was a procedural flaw in the summative assessment of the Course or in the procedures adopted by the relevant Academic Authority or relevant Programme Academic Quality Committee

**Note:** Procedural flaw is defined as:

- An error, or some other issue with Unitec's conduct of an assessment, that has affected the student's result

OR

- A departure from a prescribed rule or regulation

### **How to lodge an Academic Complaint**

There are three steps to take to lodge an Academic Complaint

1. Download and fill out Academic Complaint form, clearly explaining the grounds for the review and supplying any additional evidence to support your case ([link here](#))
2. Visit one of Unitec's Student Support services for guidance to identify the grounds before lodging the Academic Complaint.
3. Email the form to [resolutions@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:resolutions@unitec.ac.nz)

# Exam Grades

If you're unhappy with an exam grade you can take the following steps:

1. **Request to have your exam script returned:** To have your exam script returned, complete a [Request for Exam Script form](#) and return your completed form to your Academic Programme Manager. Once you have your exam script, you can then request to go through it with your lecturer. There is no charge to request an exam script.
2. **Request to have your exam marks recounted:** You can apply to have your exam script recounted at a cost of \$25 (incl. GST). A lecturer will check the marking has been correctly calculated. If you would like to apply for a recount on a recent exam script, please complete the [Request for Recount form](#) and return it, with payment, to any Student Central.

Note: This is not a re-marking of your exam script; it is a recount of the marks. You must apply for a recount **within 15 days** of receiving your result notification.

3. **Book an appointment with a Student Advocate:** After going through your exam script, if you still feel your results are unfair, you can discuss how to appeal the final grade or apply for a restricted pass grade with a Student Advocate.

## Appeals

You can request a formal review if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of either:

1. **an Academic Complaint**
2. **a Student Disciplinary Investigation decision**
3. **a Student Complaints Resolution decision**
4. **a Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee decision**

We endeavour to ensure your appeal is resolved fairly and promptly. We will inform you at each step of this process.

Appeals will only be valid where a Notice of Appeal form is received by email to [resolutions@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:resolutions@unitec.ac.nz) **within fifteen working days** of the date of the decision/communication of a decision to the student.

**Please note an appeal cannot be requested on assessment results until final grades for the course have been released.**

## Grounds for an Appeal

To make an appeal you must establish one of the following grounds of appeal:

Subject matter	Grounds
Appeal against an Academic Complaint decision	a) There is new relevant information which has a bearing on the matter and which was previously unavailable (and could not reasonably have been made available at the time the disputed decision was made)  OR b) There was a procedural flaw <sup>1</sup> in the management of the process relating to the decision the student seeks to appeal
Appeal against a Student Complaints Resolution decision	
Appeal against a Postgraduate Research and Scholarships Committee decision	
Appeal against a Student Disciplinary Investigation decision	a) That the procedure used for investigating or resolving the Prohibited Conduct was unfair or biased OR b) That the decision of the Investigator could not reasonably be sustained on the evidence OR c) That significant new evidence which was not previously available has become available since the investigation which could have a material effect on the decision made or the penalty imposed; OR d) That the disciplinary action/s taken were out of proportion to the nature of the Prohibited Conduct and the full circumstances of the case.

## How to make a formal Appeal

There are three steps to take to lodge a Formal Appeal:

- 1 Visit one of Unitec's Student Support services for guidance to identify the grounds before lodging the Appeal. This is to ensure you are following the correct process and that your Appeal can be resolved as quickly as possible.
- 2 Download and fill out the Notice of Appeal form, clearly explaining the grounds for your appeal.  
[\(https://www.unitec.ac.nz/sites/default/files/public/documents/notice-of-appeal.pdf\)](https://www.unitec.ac.nz/sites/default/files/public/documents/notice-of-appeal.pdf)
- 3 Email the form to [resolutions@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:resolutions@unitec.ac.nz)

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<sup>1</sup> Procedural flaw: An error or some other issue such as the departure from a prescribed rule or regulation

## **How the formal Appeal process works:**

Here is what happens after your Appeal is submitted.

1. You will be sent an email from the Appeals Administrator, so that you know your Appeal has been received. This will inform you whether or not your appeal has been accepted
2. There will be a Hearing of the Academic Resolutions Committee with at least 3 Unitec Senior Academic staff within 15 days of the Notice of Appeal being received. You have the right to attend the Hearing, accompanied by whanau or a support person, an advocate, an interpreter and a Māori representative. You will be asked to present your case at the Hearing. You will be asked to leave the room while the case is being discussed

You will receive the decision in writing, via email within 5 working days of the Hearing

To view all our Policies, [visit our Unitec Policies page](#).

## **Additional information for International Students**

In addition to the above, International Students can also seek the support of **iStudent Appeals**. There is an independent Grievance resolutions scheme established by the New Zealand Government to deal with grievances between International Students and their education providers. [For more information visit their website](#).

As an International student you should be aware of these policies; [Education \(Pastoral Care of International Students\) Code of Practice 2016](#), and [International Student Contract Grievance Resolution Scheme Rules 2016](#).