

Preparing an Appeal to the Senate Standing Committee on Examination Results (SSCER)

Information for Undergraduate and Postgraduate students (Home & International students). This leaflet should be read in conjunction with the University's procedures for considering appeals of results and the University's useful guide to appeals:

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/exams/SSCER_procedures.pdf

If you would like individual advice or guidance on the SSCER appeal process, please contact a RUSU Academic Adviser at advice@rusu.co.uk

Grounds for Appeal

When writing an appeal statement, you should focus on the grounds for your appeal. You must satisfy one or more of these grounds for your appeal to be considered. Only information which relates to these grounds will be relevant within your appeal.

For this reason, when you think of something you would like to add to your appeal statement, ask yourself 'does this relate to one of the appeal grounds?' if the answer is 'no' then it may be information that serves only to distract attention away from the foundation of your appeal. If you have a lot of relevant information to present don't be afraid to do this, but make sure you don't stray off-topic.

You can only appeal to SSCER based on one or more of the following grounds:

1. If you think there has been a **procedural irregularity**
2. If you think there has been **bias**
3. If you think there has been a **material defect** in the delivery of teaching and learning, which has had a significant impact on your result

From 2017/18 academic year the following two extenuating circumstances grounds shall only be considered by SSCER if they are being appealed **in conjunction with one of the above three grounds.**

4. If you have an insurmountable reason (e.g. hospitalisation, incarceration, significant changes in mental and/or physical health supported by appropriate medical evidence, etc.) for not having submitted an Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) before the relevant deadline.
5. If you want to appeal against an ECF outcome you have received from your Senior Tutor or the University Standing Committee on Special Cases (USCSC).

If you are **only** appealing on grounds 4 or 5, you will need to submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) or an ECF Appeal instead, for which the University's Policy on and procedures relating to extenuating circumstances (from Autumn Term 2017) applies:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/extencircumstances.pdf>

If you would like individual advice or guidance on the ECF or ECF Appeal process, please contact a RUSU Academic Adviser at advice@rusu.co.uk

Examples of Grounds for Appeal & Supporting Evidence Updated July 2018

Grounds for Appeal	Evidence	Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a procedural error; • There has been bias; • There has been a material defect in the delivery of teaching and learning which has had a significant impact on my result. 	<p>You will need to provide evidence to support your case, this might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of emails sent to and from your department regarding the matter; • Letters sent to and from the department regarding the matter; • Your student handbook; • Course or module information; • Supporting statement from a academic tutor or supervisor. <p><i>If you are unsure about what evidence to supply, ask a RUSU Adviser.</i></p>	<p>An example of a procedural error would be if you department informs you that you will receive 10 hours of teaching for a module but you only receive 4 hours and you believe this has affected your result. You would need to provide the relevant evidence.</p> <p>Another example would be that you were given a marking criteria to help you complete your assignment, but then the department used a different marking criteria when examining the work. You believe this has affected your grade. You would need to provide the relevant evidence.</p>
Grounds for Appeal	Evidence	Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you had extenuating circumstances and there was an insurmountable reason why you did not submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) before the relevant deadline. • You are appealing the outcome of your Extenuating Circumstances Form (ECF) submitted to the Programme Examiners meeting or the Faculty Special cases sub-committee. 	<p>You will need to provide evidence to support your case, this might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical certificates; • Prescriptions; • Medical reports; • Supporting letters from your academic tutor, supervisor or other professional; • Supporting statement from University counselling; • Evidence from external counselling; • Death certificate; • Divorce evidence. <p><i>If you are unsure about what evidence to supply, ask a RUSU Adviser.</i></p>	<p>An example of an extenuating circumstances case might be that you were in hospital at the time of your exams and the Extenuating Circumstances Form deadline. You would need to provide the relevant evidence for your case.</p> <p>Another example would be that you did submit an Extenuating Circumstances Form and the relevant evidence, however, you are unsatisfied with the outcome of your Extenuating Circumstances Form. Again, you would need to provide relevant evidence.</p>

Your Deadline to Appeal

If you wish to appeal a result which is published outside of these dates, please contact studentappeals@reading.ac.uk or uormstudentappeals@reading.edu.my. If you are submitting your form after the relevant deadline, the merits of your appeal will only be considered if you provide a good reason for the late submission of your appeal, supported by appropriate evidence. If you would like guidance on this, please speak to a RUSU Adviser.

Result Type	Date Result Published	Appeal Deadline
UG and PG Finals - classifications and marks (excluding BA CDL)	Friday, 29 June 2018	1pm, 3 July 2018
Part 1 (excluding Institute of Education)	Tuesday, 3 July 2018	5pm, 5 July 2018
Part 2 - some Part 2Z, Part 3 MPharm, MEng and MChem (excluding Institute of Education)	Wednesday, 4 July 2018	5pm, 6 July 2018
Part 1 and 2 BE(Ed), BA CDL Finals and PGCE	Tuesday, 17 July 2018	9am, 20 July 2018
UoRM January cohort (1st attempt results)	Monday, 20 August 2018	9am, 23 August 2018
Resits (non-finalists)	Thursday, 13 September 2018	9am, 18 September 2018
UoRM January cohort (resit results)	Monday, 24 September 2018	9am, 27 September 2018
Finals and Masters	Thursday, 8 November 2018	9am 13 November 2018

Your Appeal Statement

Organising the detail

You may have a considerable amount of information to present in your case. It is not a problem if the appeal statement is long, but it is important that you write **clearly**, explaining all your points and referring back to the **evidence** you are providing to support your case.

If there are several aspects of your appeal, consider separating the information into themes. For example, if you are suffering from an illness and from financial hardship over the same period of time, it may be better to treat these as two separate issues. This allows your statement to be clear and easily understood.

Creating a timeline

It is usually helpful to create a timeline, summarising key events, e.g. meetings, academic deadlines, emails, telephone conversations, important life events that may have impacted your studies, etc. The timeline will help you express what happened, when it happened and how it affected you.

Referring to attachments / evidence

If you are attaching supporting material/evidence with your appeal, it is useful to refer directly to these in your statement. You could include your evidence as appendices at the end of your appeal of result form, labelling each piece of evidence (e.g. Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.) according to the order that you refer to them in your appeal statement. If you include a large number of attachments, it may also be helpful to provide a short description of what each attachment is in at the top of each appendix.

Getting your statement checked

When you have completed your draft appeal statement ask someone to read/check it. Having someone check over it will allow a fresh opinion on the format, content and clarity of the statement and the relevance of the supporting evidence. The RUSU Academic Advisers are happy to check the statement for you, just make sure you book an appointment or email the advice service.

The Appeal Stages

Clear guidance on the appeal stages can be found here:

http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/exams/SSCER_procedures.pdf

We would strongly recommend you read through the process. An academic adviser can discuss this with you and go over any questions you might have about the process and each stage.

How can an adviser offer support and guidance?

A RUSU Academic adviser can offer help and support throughout the process, offering guidance and support at each stage of your appeal. A RUSU Academic Adviser can also attend an appeal hearing with you as a 'friend'.

Who can act as a 'friend' in the appeal hearing(s)?

A 'Friend' for this purpose is defined as: (A) an adviser from Reading University Students' Union Advice Service team; (B) a current member of staff of the University of Reading; (C) a currently registered student of the University of Reading; or (D) a University of Reading Students' Union Student Officer. A person who does not fall within these categories shall not be able to act as a 'friend' unless otherwise agreed by the Chair of the appeals committee.

Going to the OIA

If you have gone through all the applicable appeal stages within the University and are dissatisfied with the outcome, you could take your case forward to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), an independent body that oversees the work of Higher Education institutions in England and Wales, and ensures that they follow their own procedures correctly. Free to students, the OIA deals with individual complaints and appeals against Higher Education Providers which have not been resolved internally: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>. If you decide to take a case forward to the OIA, a RUSU Adviser can offer advice and guidance on the process.

If you would like further advice or to speak with somebody in person then a Students' Union Adviser may be able to help. The specialist advisers offer a confidential service, independent from the University so they can discuss your case with you in private.

Contact us by email at advice@rusu.co.uk, or visit us in the RUSU building. You can book an appointment or attend a drop-in session. During term-time drop in runs on:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday (11:00am - 1:30pm);
- Wednesday (2:00pm - 4:30pm)

Please check our website for details of drop in out of term time.