



Digital Marketing School

Digital Marketing School

Academic Appeals and Complaints Policy – V1

April 2025

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1- Introduction

Digital Marketing School (DMS) is committed to the provision of high-quality educational experience for students, supported by academic, administrative, technical services, and facilities. However, there may be occasions where students are dissatisfied with an aspect of their experience. The Appeal and Complaints policy is designed to provide a fair and transparent process for students to address their concerns about their academic experience.

2- Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for addressing any concerns about any aspects of academic and non-academic experience raised by students at DMS.

3- Scope

This policy applies to all students registered at DMS, including those who have finished their studies as long as the appeal or complaint is raised within four weeks of the final element of the event that led to dissatisfaction.

4- Definitions

Appeal - Academic Appeal is request for reconsideration of a decision made by an academic body on student assessment, progress, and awards

Complaint - Raising concern about the level of service (including quality and standards), or treatment that a student may have received from DMS has fallen short of what might be reasonably expected.

Academic judgment - is refer to as the decisions made by academics regarding student assessments results, and progression, based on their expertise and the specific context of the academic field.

5- Principles

- Fairness- All Appeals and Complaints will be dealt with impartially.
- Transparency- Clear procedures and timelines will be communicated.
- Confidentiality- All information will be kept confidential and shared only with relevant parties.
- Timeliness- Appeals and Complaints will be addressed in a timely manner.
- Non-Retaliation- Students will not be disadvantaged for submitting legitimate Appeals or Complaints.

6- Confidentiality

Details of student's Complaints and Appeals will be treated confidentially and students should be assured that raising a Complaint or making an Appeal will not have a negative impact on the progress or standing with DMS. This does not include the cases where the disclosure is necessary for decision, or where disclosure is required by law.



7- Grounds for Appeal

Appeals are normally considered on the grounds of:

- Unreasonable decision of Mitigation claim including any decision that claim or supporting evidence was submitted too late to be considered
- Procedural irregularities
- Administrative error
- Evidence of prejudice or bias

Students may not challenge the academic judgement, and disagreement with marks awarded is not grounds for appeal.

8- Academic Appeal Procedures

If a student believes that he/she has valid grounds to Appeal, there are three stages that they should follow:

- 1- Informal Stage** - Students should in the first instance raise their concern to relevant Module Leader, as soon as it arises. The Module Leader would make every effort to resolve the matter informally, however, in the absence of a satisfactory resolution, or, complexity of issues raised, in the interests of the student, the Module Leader may suggest a formal academic appeal.
- 2- Formal Stage** – When the informal stage has not reached a resolution, students are required to complete the formal appeal form together with relevant information in support of their Appeal and submit an Academic Appeal within four weeks of occurrence of the issue leading to the Appeal, so that the Appeal can be considered formally.

2.1- Submitting an Academic Appeal

- 2.1.1- All Appeals are considered by an independent panel who meet according to the schedule published on the academic calendar at the beginning of each academic year.
- 2.1.2- Students should submit their Appeal via email to the DMS Head of Quality and Enhancement using the template for Academic Appeal, and by the required deadline
- 2.1.3- Students should ensure their Academic Appeal is accompanied by supporting evidence to avoid any delays for decision.
- 2.1.4- On receipt of the Academic Appeal, it is assessed for evidence and on time submission.
- 2.1.5 - Appeals that are submitted on time and accompanied by supporting evidence will be considered by the Appeal panel.

The appeal panel will consider the appeal, and may make one of the following decisions:

- **Appeal upheld** – The Appeal is upheld in whole,



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- **Appeal partially upheld** – The Appeal Panel will decide which aspects have not been upheld, and proposed action to be taken.
- **Appeal not upheld** - The existing decision will stand.
- **Decision deferred** – Additional information is required for decision, and the decision will be deferred until the next Appeal Panel and following the receipt of required information.

In all cases, the decision of Appeal Panel would be communicated with the students via an Appeal Outcome Letter and reported to the Chair of the Assessment Board for ratification.

- 3- Review:** if the student remains dissatisfied with the response to their formal Academic Appeal, they can request a review.

A student may request a review of the decision of Appeal Panel on the ground of Procedural Irregularity, New Supporting Evidence, and Consideration of whether Appeal Outcome was reasonable or appropriate in the circumstances.

The request should be made via email to the Head of Quality and Enhancement who will appoint a Review Officer and advise the student accordingly.

The student may request that the Review Officer meet with the programme/cohort representative when reviewing the decision of Appeal Panel. The Review Officer will then judge how the Appeal Panel decision should be amended. A report to this effect would be sent to the Head of Quality and Enhancement who will then inform the student of the outcome.

Following completion of the review stage (above), if the students is dissatisfied with the outcome, the student can submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) For further information please visit <http://www.oiahe.org.uk>.

9 - Complaints

9.1- Grounds for complaints

A complaint may relate to the following (but is not restricted to):

- The quality and standard of any service provided by DMS
- Service unavailability,
- Failure to follow appropriate administrative process

- The quality of learning experience,
- Dissatisfaction with policies or processes or with its impact on the student
- Disagreement with a non-academic decision
- Unfair treatment

9.2- Complaints Procedures

There are three stages to students complaints:



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- 1- **Informal Resolution** – Students should first bring their complaint to the attention of appropriate staff member who would aim to resolve the matter informally.
- 2- **Formal Resolution** - If the matter can not be resolved informally, or if the student is not satisfied with the outcome, they are required to formally Complain by completing the student Complaint form and submit it to the Head of Student Service. It is expected that students submit their Complain within two weeks of the event leading to the Complaint. The Head of Student Service will then nominate an Investigating Officer to contract with the Complaint. When required or appropriate, the Head of Student Services would refer the matter to the affected Department.
 - 2.1- The Investigating Officer will arrange a meeting with the students, who may choose to be accompanied by an advisor (normally from student Union), or a friend.
 - 2.2- If required, the investigating Officer will also meet with other individuals relevant to the complaint.
 - 2.3- On completion of investigation, the Investigating Officer will produce a report and forward it for the attention of the Head of Quality and Enhancement who would then forward it to the student within four weeks.
 - 2.4- The Investigating Officer may recommend the one of the following decisions:

Upheld the Complaint – Student will be informed and advised of the action taken to resolve the complaint

Partially Upheld the Complaint– Student will receive an explanation about the decision and what action to be taken to address part of the complaint.

Not Upheld the Complaint – Original decision stands and Student would receive explanation of the decision.
- 3- **Review by the Appeal Panel**- If the students is not satisfied with the outcome of stage two Complaint, they can appeal, using the Academic Appeal Procedures (section 7 above)

10 - Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually and when required to ensure effectiveness , fairness, and compliance with educational standards.

11- Version Control

Version No	Date	Reason for change	Next Review
V1	12/05/2025	Creation and approval by Academic Board	July 2026