

Procedure no: Exam 027/200/006

Procedure title: Examination Feedback, Review and Appeal

Written by	Approved by		
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1. Purpose

Following each examination session, the Institute provides an opportunity for the candidate to discuss their results with the internal examiners (results feedback process). This should provide sufficient clarity that the candidate understands why they received the specific score(s) and that they were treated in compliance with the Institute's regulations. Inherent in this is a 'recheck' that all parts of an examination have been marked and that no error occurred in the recording, collating or combining of marks that determined the result.

The purpose of this procedure is to facilitate a candidate who believes that they were not treated in compliance with the Institute's regulations to seek a review of their examination materials in whole or in part and an appeal mechanism where they are not satisfied with the outcome of the review.

It is the policy of the Institute to:

- (a) recognise the rights of any candidate to seek a review of examination results and to appeal the outcome of this process if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the review.
- (b) provide arrangements in relation to examination script viewing, examination mark reviewing, and appeals concerning examination matters which ensure that they are dealt with transparently and in a timely way and which may involve, as necessary, wholly independent persons of appropriate knowledge and experience in the process.
- (c) consider all requests in relation to examination matters in accordance with the principles of natural and constitutional justice.

2. Scope

This document relates to all examinations conducted by or on behalf of the Institute of Technology Sligo, and is relevant to all registered candidates and staff.

3. A Glossary of terms used in the procedure is provided below.

3.1. *Appeal*

Request for a review of a decision of an academic body charged with decisions on candidate progression, assessment and awards.

3.2. *Candidate*

Registered student of IT Sligo who has entered for an examination at Institute of Technology Sligo leading to an IT Sligo or QQI award

3.3. *Examination*

Any summatively assessed work that contributes to the determination of, or forms part of, an IT Sligo or QQI award

3.4. *Feedback*

Formative communication from lecturer to learner in relation to assessed work

3.5. *Grade*

(a) numeric grade (module or stage)

(b) award classification

3.6. *Mark/grade/performance indicator*

Numerical score, or other performance indicator accorded to any work, module, element or part of a module by an examiner(s) that in their opinion is indicative of learner achievement in that work, subject, element or part of that module

3.7. *Outcome*

decision in relation to a review or appeal

3.8. *Recheck*

Administrative operation of checking the recording and/or combination of component marks for a module/stage

3.9. *Result*

decision taken by IT Sligo in relation to a candidate's progression or eligibility for award

3.10. *Review*

re-consideration in detail of all or part of the existing examination material where feasible by the internal examiner(s) and, if appropriate, by external examiner(s) and reconsideration of a full set of results. A review will automatically include a recheck of calculations.

4. Reference documents

Examination regulations

- *IT Sligo Marks & Standards Current Version*
- Procedure EXAM014/110 [To effect a change in official examination result broadsheet]
- Office of the Ombudsman, Ombudsman Act 1980; Ombudsman (Amendment) Act 2012 [www.ombudsman.gov.ie/en/]

5. Documentation and correspondence

- 5.1. All correspondence received in connection with a review or an appeal will be date-stamped to facilitate the monitoring of response times.
- 5.2. All communication with a student by the Institute will be via secure email to the IT Sligo Student email address, except where specified otherwise.
- 5.3. All communication with members of Review/Appeal Board will be via secure email, except where specified otherwise.
- 5.4. A file will be generated for each application to include a checklist of all communication and documentation (see Appendix 4 for correspondence templates; Appendix 6 for checklist). This file will be maintained in the office of the Registrar or nominee.

6. Results feedback process

- 6.1. Following the issuing of exam results for the semester/stage/year, a student who has a query relating to their results or who is unclear as to the make-up of the final mark should meet with the internal examiner(s) to discuss these during the Results Feedback Days as per the Academic Calendar. This discussion will include a 'recheck' that all parts of an examination have been marked and specifically that no error has occurred in the recording, collating or combining of marks.
- 6.2. If any inaccuracy has occurred, then this can be resolved with the internal examiner(s) at this stage. If it is confirmed that there is an inaccuracy, a Broadsheet Amendment will be made (Procedure EXAM014/110).
- 6.3. If the candidate believes the result was determined in a manner not in compliance with the Institute's regulations, they may proceed to apply for a review of their result.

7. Grounds for review

- 7.1. The examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented.

8. Application for examination review

- 8.1. Only a completed request made on form EXAM027/200/F01 (Appendix 2) received by the Examinations Office not later than 5pm on the third working day after the examination results have been released on the Institute website will be considered. The candidate will be required to confirm that they have, where possible, viewed their script(s) and discussed their results with the internal examiner(s) during the Results Feedback Days as per the Academic Calendar.
- 8.2. A request for a review must state the grounds upon which the review is sought.

- 8.3. Where the request for a review involves (a) failed module(s), the candidate is to be advised to apply to re-sit the module(s) on the appropriate examinations repeat application form, pending the outcome of the review.
 - 8.4. The fee for a review shall be €50 per module or, if the review applies to the overall grade for a stage/year, €50 in total. If the Review Board accepts that the review is eligible, the fee will be refunded.
 - 8.5. The Internal Examiner(s) and Head of Department are notified by the Examinations Office of the review request(s).
 - 8.6. The Institute will endeavour to complete all reviews that have been accepted by the Board within fifteen working days of the decision on acceptance.
9. Review Board membership
- 9.1. A Review Board will be established by the Registrar or nominee to process applications that have been accepted at an examination session.
 - 9.2. The membership of the Review Board will be as follows:
 - 9.2.1. Chair: Registrar or nominee
 - 9.2.2. Three academic members, one of whom should be a member of the Academic Council.
 - 9.2.3. Student Union President or Student Union Officer (nominated by Student Union President).
 - 9.2.4. No person connected with any case for review may be a member of the Review Board.
 - 9.2.5. A quorum shall be 4 and must include a majority of academic members.
 - 9.3. All decisions of the Review Board will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have a casting vote.
 - 9.4. The Examinations Secretary, or their nominee, will act as Recording Secretary to the Review Board (see Appendix 4 for minutes template).
10. Review Board process
- 10.1. The Registrar or nominee will assess all applications for review and decide whether they are acceptable under the grounds for review. Where the Registrar or nominee confirms that the request is acceptable, they will set out what information will be required to conduct the Review, and from whom.
 - 10.2. Where the Registrar or nominee determines that the request for a review is acceptable, they will notify the candidate in writing (template, Appendix 3) of the decision. The decision will be sent to the student email address.
 - 10.3. Where the Registrar or nominee determines that the request for a review is not acceptable, they will set out the reasons why they have reached this decision. The Registrar or nominee will notify the candidate in writing (template, Appendix 3) of the decision and of the candidate's right to appeal. The decision will be sent to the student email address and also to the postal address.
 - 10.4. After assessment of cases for review, the Registrar or nominee will transfer all relevant files to the Recording Secretary of the Review Board.

- 10.5. The Recording Secretary will contact the Internal Examiner and External Examiner, copying the appropriate Head of Department and Head of School, requesting such information specified in 10.1 as being required for the review.
- 10.6. The Recording Secretary will collate the requested information and present it to the Review Board. The Review Board will consider the evidence presented to it and decide the outcome of the review.
- 10.7. In carrying out a review, the Review Board will consult with such persons as it deems appropriate. This will normally include the candidate; Internal Examiner(s); the External Examiner(s); and/or other persons. The Review Board may require that a re-marking of a script/assessment be undertaken by the Internal and External Examiners and/or by one or more other appropriate examiners.
- 10.8. Where the Review Board requires a review by Internal Examiner and any External or additional Examiner, both requests will be sent at the same time. A copy of this procedure will be attached to any such request.
- 10.9. The Internal & External Examiner reports will be brought to the Review Board
- 10.10. Where different recommendations are returned from the Internal Examiner(s) and External Examiner(s), and/or any additional examiners, the Review Board will make the final decision.
- 10.11. The Recording Secretary will prepare a meeting minute setting out the key details of each case and the decision of the Board on a case by case basis.
- 10.12. The student will be informed by the Registrar or nominee, by email to their student email address, of the outcome of the review (see Appendix 3). A letter will also be sent to the postal address.
- 10.13. The Registrar or nominee will notify the Internal Examiner(s) and the student's Head of School and Head of Department of the outcome of the review.
- 10.14. A candidate dissatisfied with the outcome of a review may appeal the decision of the Review Board in accordance with the 'Right to Appeal' section below.

11. Outcomes of review

The permissible outcomes of a review are:

- 11.1. The original mark/grade stands
- 11.2. The original mark may be increased
- 11.3. The original mark may be decreased.

12. Review indicative schedule

Indicative timing	Action
Exam results are issued as per Academic Calendar	Student views results on the Institute website and meets with the Internal Examiner(s) to obtain feedback. Student discusses with the Internal Examiner(s) or HoD the appropriateness of applying for a review.
By 5pm on 3rd working day after issue of results	Student makes an application for a review on Form EXAM027/200/F01 including the appropriate fee and supporting documentation.
Within 2 working days of the deadline for receipt of review applications	The Registrar or nominee decides on the eligibility of the applications and establishes the Review Board as required.
Within 15 working days of the decision on acceptance	The Review Board will have considered the evidence presented to it and decided the outcome of the review. The Registrar or nominee informs the student, the relevant examiners and the student's HoD/HoS of the outcome of the Review, by email to student and staff email addresses..
Next meeting of the Academic Council	The Registrar or nominee submits a summary report of all reviews/appeals for the Examination session.

13. Right to appeal

- 13.1. A student who is dissatisfied (according to grounds outlined below) with the outcome of a review may proceed to the appeal process.
- 13.2. A request for an appeal must be submitted to the President not later than 5pm on the tenth working day after the posting date of notification of the outcome of the review process.
- 13.3. The appellant must complete application form EXAM027/200/F02 (Appendix 3), setting out the facts and contentions on which they wish to base their appeal.

14. Grounds for appeal

An appeal may be made on the grounds of:

- 14.1. the Registrar or nominee erred in refusing to accept a review request
- 14.2. new relevant evidence/information has subsequently become available that might have had a bearing on the original decision by the Review Board
- 14.3. there was a failure on the part of the Review Board to examine a relevant and substantial issue
- 14.4. there was a failure on the part of the Review Board to obtain relevant and necessary information

15. Appeal Board membership

15.1. All applications for appeal will be reviewed by an Appeal Board.

15.2. The membership of the Appeal Board will be as follows:

15.2.1. Chair: A person experienced in higher education procedures with particular reference to examinations, who is external to the Institute

15.2.2. An External Examiner, normally the external examiner for the module or another examiner in a cognate area

15.2.3. A member of the Institute's Executive Committee

15.2.4. A member of academic staff

15.2.5. President of the Student Union or Student Union Officer nominated by the President of the Student Union.

15.2.6. No person connected with any case for appeal may be a member of the Appeal Board.

15.3. A quorum shall be four.

15.4. All decisions of the Appeal Board will be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair will have a casting vote.

15.5. The Examinations Secretary, or their nominee, will act as Recording Secretary to the Appeal Board (see Appendix 4 for minutes template).

16. Appeal Board process

16.1. The Appeal Board shall consider the report of the relevant Review Board and all information furnished to it by the student.

16.2. The Appeal Board may invite the student to address it on the circumstances of the appeal. The student may be accompanied by a person of his/her choice at their own expense.

16.3. The Appeal Board will set out and obtain what additional information, if any, it requires to conduct the appeal. The Institute reserves the right to engage the services of any appropriate advisors that it deems necessary.

16.4. The Appeal Board will, having considered the evidence, decide the outcome of the appeal.

16.5. The Recording Secretary will prepare a minute of the meeting to be signed off as an accurate record by the Chair.

16.6. The student will be informed by the President or nominee, in writing to their student email address, of the outcome of the appeal (see Appendix 3). A letter will also be sent to the postal address.

16.7. The President or nominee will notify the Internal Examiner and the student's Head of School and Head of Department of the outcome of the appeal.

16.8. All decisions of the Appeal Board are final within the Institute.

17. Outcomes of appeal

The permissible outcomes of an appeal are:

17.1. Referral of review back to Review Board for consideration, in case where a refusal by the Registrar or nominee to consider a review (s. 14.1) is reversed or where new relevant information has become available.

17.2. The decision of the Review Board may be upheld.

17.3. The decision of the Review Board may be altered.

18. Appeal indicative schedule

Indicative timing	Action
Day 1	Appellant submits appeal on Form EXAM027/200/F02 not later than 5pm on the tenth working day after the posting date of notification of the outcome of the review process.
Day 10	Appeals Board is established
Day 13	Appeals Board meets to consider the evidence and determine the outcome of the appeal
Day 15	The President informs the appellant, the relevant examiners and the student's HoD/HoS of the outcome of the Appeal.
Next meeting of the Academic Council	The Registrar or nominee submits a summary report of all reviews/appeals for the Examination session

19. Right to review by the Ombudsman

If an appellant feels that he/she is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they may contact the Ombudsman. By law, the Ombudsman can investigate complaints about any of the administrative actions or procedures of the Institute as well as delays or inaction in the candidate's dealings with the Institute. The Ombudsman provides impartial, independent and free dispute resolution services.

20. Recording of changes to marks/grades

- 20.1. Changes to amend the exam result after a Review/Appeal Board will be made by staff in the Examinations Office, on approval by the Registrar or nominee.
- 20.2. If a review/appeal leads to an overall grade entering a borderline (*Marks and Standards*) then the overall grade will be referred to the next Examination Board for decision.
- 20.3. The outcome of the review/appeal will be brought to the next meeting of the Academic Council, for note.

21. Audit

The Registrar or nominee will audit the review and appeal process following each examination session and report to the Academic Council on the statistics, analysis and on the compliance with the procedures. This will include confirmation that the relevant files are properly closed out and contain all of the necessary documents (as listed in Appendix 6).

22. Review

This procedure will be reviewed by the Registrar by 31st October 2017, and biennially thereafter, and a report made to the Academic Processes Committee of the Academic Council, with any recommendations for amendment.

23. Revision History

Revision no.	Description of change	Issue date
Rev 1	New procedure (approved by the Selections, Admissions, Examinations and Standards Committee and endorsed by Academic Council on 11.10.13)	20.06.13
Rev 2	Procedure updated following first implementation	01.05.14
Rev 3	Approved by Academic Processes Committee (21.05.14) and Academic Council (23.05.14)	23.05.14
Rev 4	Procedure updated following implementation of Rev 2; Approved by Academic Processes Committee (28.01.15) and Academic Council (13.02.15)	
Rev 5	Procedure updated following implementation of Rev 3; Approved by Academic Process Committee (12.11.2015) and Academic Council (27.11.2015)	
Rev 6	Procedure updated. Recommended for Approval by Academic Processes Committee (2/5/17) and Academic Council (5/5/17)	5/5/2017

Appendix 1 Guidance note on the grounds for review

Appendix 2 Form EXAM 027/200/F01

Appendix 3 Correspondence Templates

Appendix 4 Records of the Review Board

Appendix 5 Form EXAM 027/200/F02

Appendix 6 Checklist

Appendix 7 Standard Operating procedure in relation to the receipt of an examination appeal

Appendix 1: Guidance note on the Grounds for a Review

It is important that the person applying for a review explains the reason why they believe that a review is required (it is not enough to simply say “I thought I should have done better”). The following guidance will help the applicant to select the appropriate grounds for a review:

(i) the examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented.

This refers to situations where the rules in the *Marks and Standards* have not been correctly followed. An example of this would occur in the case of student whose deferral application has not been considered by an Examination Board.

Appendix 2: Form EXAM027/200F01 - Request for a Review of exam result(s).

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

Student ID number: _____

Address: _____

Mobile number: _____ Email: _____

Programme Name: _____

Year: _____

The candidate is advised to (a) discuss his/her examination results with the internal examiner(s) lecturer during Results Feedback Days as per the Academic Calendar.

The grounds for a review are:

The examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented – please give clear examples of where this has occurred. A page reference must be included or application will not be accepted.

Please specify the grounds under which you are requesting the review, as per Section 5.2 of this procedure, and state the reason/s why you believe that you have a case under this ground.

State module (s) for review	Lecturer (s)

Provide specific information that illustrates how the examination regulations of the Institute have not been properly implemented.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return form to: The Examination Secretary. IT Sligo, Ash Lane, Sligo, within 3 working days of the date of official notification of exam results on the Student Hub at www.itsligo.ie

For office use only

Fee received: _____ €50 per module: _____

Request approved: _____ Request rejected: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Recommendation of Review Board

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 3: Correspondence with candidate (this will be sent to the student email address as well as by registered post)

- a) Template letter to the candidate confirming status of the Review Application (from the Registrar) where the application was not accepted.

Dear 'Candidate'

Thank you for your application for a Review of your 'year' examination results. Your application was considered by the Registrar on 'date'. The decision of the Registrar is to not grant your request.

The basis of the decision of the Registrar is

Under procedure Exam 027/200/006 you have the right to make an appeal to the President about the decision of the Review Board. Any such Appeal must be received by the Office of the President within 5 working days of the above date, using the Appeal application form in Procedure Exam 027/200/006

(in the case where the application was granted)

You will be issued with a letter confirming the decision of the Review Board. The Board will endeavour to complete the review within 15 working days of the date when the decision on eligibility of the application was made. Please note that, during periods of academic holidays the completion of a review may take more than 15 days. Pending the outcome of this Review, please ensure that you apply to re-sit any failed module(s) on the appropriate examinations repeat/deferral application form.

In the meantime, you are advised to apply to resit any failed modules.

Yours Sincerely,

Registrar

- b) Template letter to the candidate advising them of the decision of the Review Board

Dear 'Candidate'

Further to correspondence of dd/mm/yyyy, the Review Board has conducted a Review of your 'year' examination results. The decision of the Review Board is to change/not change your results.

The basis of the decision of the Review Board is

(in the case where no change is recommended)

Under procedure Exam 027/200/006 you have the right to Appeal the decision of the Review Board to the President. Any such Appeal must be received by the Office of the President within 5 days of the date of issuance of this letter, using the Appeal application form in Procedure Exam 027/200/006.

(in the case where a change is recommended)

The following change will be made to your examination results:

Module	Results issued on dd/mm/yyyy	New result following decision of Review Board



Yours Sincerely,

Registrar

- c) Template letter to the candidate advising them of the decision of the Appeal (from the President)

Dear '*Candidate*'

Thank you for your application of an Appeal of the outcome of the Review of your '*year*' examination results. Your application was considered by the Appeals Board on '*date*'. The recommendation of the Appeal Board is to change/not change your results.

The basis of the decision of the Appeal Board is

(in the case where a change is recommended)

The following change will be made to your examination results:

Module	Results issued on XX/YY/ZZ	New result following decision of Review Board

Yours Sincerely,

President



Appendix 4: Records of the Review Board

The following records will be minuted by the Review Board for each Review Application:

- (i) Members of the Review Board (including Registrar's nominee if appropriate), identifying the Chairperson and those who are in attendance.
- (ii) Date of meeting/s
- (iii) The Agenda for the meeting, including a list of candidates being considered and 9for subsequent meetings of the Board) the minutes of the previous meeting and an updated list of candidates with notes on the outcomes to-date of the review for each candidate granted a review.
- (iv) Candidate Name
- (v) Date of application
- (vi) The recommendation in regard to the granting/not granting the Review
- (vii) The grounds for the recommendation under (iii) above
- (viii) Specification of the actions that are to be undertaken in the case of an application for a Review that is granted (e.g. contacting the intern, extern etc.)
- (ix) The final decision of the Review Board (following a subsequent meeting) of the outcome of the review and related rationale.

In addition to the above, the candidate Review file will contain copies of email correspondence with the intern and extern examiners requesting the review with time limits on the response and all related feedback and documentation.

Appendix 5: Form EXAM027/200/F02 - Request for an Appeal of Result(s) Review

Student Name: _____ DOB: _____

Student ID number: _____

Address: _____

Mobile number: _____ Email: _____

Programme Name: _____

Year: _____

The Candidate must set out the facts and contentions on which he/she wishes to base their appeal.

State module (s) for Appeal	Lecturer

I am dissatisfied with the review outcome of my results in the module(s) set out above because:

Use additional pages of necessary.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return form to: The President, IT Sligo, Ash Lane, Sligo not later than the date specified in the letter notifying the candidate of the decision of the Review.

For office use only	
Request approved: _____	Request rejected: _____
Signed: _____	Date: _____
Recommendation of President:	
Signed: _____	Date: _____



Appendix 6

Check list of records of all communication and documentation correspondence related to this procedure

Item (ALL DATE STAMPED)	Date sent/received (insert below)
Request for a Review held in the Examinations Office and proof of payment	
The minutes of the Review Board where the decision to proceed/not to proceed with the review was considered.	
A copy of the student's full results	
Communication with the internal and external reviewers and related correspondence	
Minutes of all meetings of the Review Board as per Appendix 4	
Notification to the candidate of decision of the Review Board on the eligibility of the application	
Record of the fee refund following a successful application.	
Final notification to the candidate of results of the Review	
Correspondence notifying the internal examiner, Head of Department and Head of School	
In the case of an Appeals	
Request for an Appeal to be held in the Examinations Office, a copy to be held in the President's Office	
The Decision of the Appeal Board to grant/not grant an appeal	
Minutes of the Appeal Board	
Communication with the internal and external reviewers and other correspondence related to the Appeal	
Copy of notification of results of an Appeal to the student, the internal examiner, Head of Department and Head of School	

Appendix 7

Standard Operating procedure in relation to the receipt of an examination appeal

1. Letter and appeal form received in the President's office (letter is stamped on receipt)
2. President establishes an Appeal Board and appoints the Chairperson¹
3. The Appeal Board reviews the student file
4. If the review requires further investigation², this work is assigned by the Appeal Board
5. The Appeal Board reports the findings of the review, in writing to the President
6. The President accepts / rejects the findings
7. The student file is updated
8. The President replies to the student with a decision.
9. The other relevant parties receive a communication about any associated changes
10. The student record on Banner is updated accordingly

Note 1: This may be the Registrar or their nominee. However, where they have been involved in the process to-date, there would be a perceived conflict of interest.

Note 2: This could range from a request to the original marker/lecturer to review the marks awarded through to seeking an independent external reassessment or establishing a new appeal board

