



# POINT BLANK

## MUSIC SCHOOL

### POLICY 001

### ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

#### DOCUMENT CONTROL BOX

SCOPE						
Course Type	BA(Hons)	x	CertHE	x	Professional/ Auditing	
School	London	x	Online	x	International	
Version	2			Date Approved	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2023	
Date of Next Review	August 2024					
Publication	Staff Access					
	Student Access			x		
	Public Access via Website			x		

If you have a disability which makes reading this document or navigating our website difficult and you would like to receive information in an alternative format, please contact: [support@pointblankmusicschool.com](mailto:support@pointblankmusicschool.com).

**Document Revision History**

**Version Log**

<b>Committee / Approval Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Page Reference &amp; Summary</b>

**Related Documentation**

<b>Document Reference No. (Policy version / Supporting doc. #)</b>	<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Link or Dept. Owner</b>	<b>Document Title</b>

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline clearly and transparently Point Blank's approach to handling academic appeals.
- 1.2 This policy is in place to ensure that all academic appeals are handled fairly, equitably and reasonably.
- 1.3 This policy must be read in conjunction with Section G of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations.

## 2. POLICY DETAILS

- 2.1 An academic appeal is defined as a challenge to or request for reconsideration of a decision by an academic body that makes decisions on student progress, assessment and awards. This may include a request to change marks or progress decisions, or final award classifications.
- 2.2 Academic appeals can normally only be made against published decisions of an Assessment Board.
- 2.3 Academic appeals must be submitted by a registered or recently registered student of Point Blank. Academic appeals submitted by a third party (e.g. parent, guardian or other representative) will not normally be considered. Students may identify a representative to support them in writing and submitting their academic appeal.
- 2.4 Disabled students may request that adjustments are made to the academic appeals process, where reasonable. This may include timeline extensions, or submission of a complaint in an alternative format (e.g. a verbal submission).
- 2.5 An academic appeal can be lodged on the following grounds:
  - i. There has been a procedural irregularity in the management and administration of the assessment;
  - ii. Bias or reasonable perception of bias;
  - iii. There have been circumstances affecting the student's performance where, for good reason, the student was unable or unwilling to inform the Assessment Board (via the Extenuating Circumstances or Reasonable Adjustments processes) prior to the Assessment Board making its decision.
- 2.6 The following would not constitute as valid grounds for lodging an appeal:
  - i. Requests to change grades or other requests that fundamentally disagree with the academic judgement of an assessor, or Assessment Board in assessing the merits of academic work; or in reaching a decision on progression or final degree outcome;
  - ii. The student was not aware of or did not understand the published assessment criteria, regulations or procedures of the assessment, module or programme;
  - iii. The student changed personal contact details without updating Point Blank and/ or failed to read emails to their Point Blank email address, resulting in missing the assessment information.

### Early Resolution

- 2.7 Every effort will be made to resolve the appeal at the early resolution stage. This may involve arranging a meeting between the student and a relevant member of staff to discuss the outcome of their assessment in more detail.

- 2.8 The early resolution stage is carried out by Point Blank.
- 2.9 Should there be sufficient reason to do so, the student may request to escalate their appeal directly to the formal stage, without attempting early resolution.

### **Formal Appeals**

- 2.10 Full guidance on the formal stage regulations should be sought from Section G of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations.
- 2.11 Should the matter not be resolved at the early resolution stage, or a resolution was offered but not accepted by the student, the student may raise a formal appeal.
- 2.12 Formal appeals must be submitted in writing via the appeals form on the Middlesex University UniHub (unless otherwise agreed under reasonable adjustments) along with any documentation/ evidence in support of the appeal.
- 2.13 A student (whether currently enrolled or recently enrolled) wishing to lodge an academic appeal must do so within 28 calendar days of the publication of the Assessment Board decision (e.g. the publication of grades, or letter detailing insufficient credits to progress). Appeals received outside of this timescale will not normally be considered.
- 2.14 Students can normally expect Middlesex University to issue an outcome for an academic appeal within 90 calendar days. There may be occasions where, for good reason, this timeline will need to be extended, in which case Middlesex University will notify the student.
- 2.15 The decision of the Assessment Board remains in force until it is formally notified by the Secretary to Middlesex University Academic Board to have been rescinded. Therefore, the student remains responsible for:
- i. Conforming to the requirements for a referral, resubmission of work to be assessed or resitting an examination pending the outcome of the appeal;
  - ii. The consequence of not complying with these requirements should the subsequent decision of the appeal process not be in the student's favour.

### **Review Stage**

- 2.16 Full guidance on the review stage regulations should be sought from Section G of the Middlesex University Academic Regulations.
- 2.17 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they may, within 10 working days of receiving notification that the internal appeal procedures of the University have been completed, request a Review of the academic appeal process on any of the following grounds:
- i. That there is new and relevant evidence that the student was demonstrably and for the most exceptional reasons unable to present to the Secretary to Academic Board during the appeal process;
  - ii. That the appeal regulations and procedures were not complied with in such a way that materially affected the decision.
  - iii. That the decision reached was unreasonable based on the information that had been available to the University when the case was considered.
- 2.18 This is not a reopening of the appeal. Dissatisfaction with the outcome of the appeal alone is not a valid reason for requesting a review.

### **The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)**

- 2.19 Should the student wish to take the matter further, they may, within twelve months of receiving the Academic Appeal Letter of Outcome or, following an Internal Review, the Completion of Procedures letter from Middlesex University, write to the OIA, Second Floor, Abbey Wharf, 57-75 Kings Road, Reading RG1 3AB, United Kingdom, enclosing a copy of the Completion of Procedures letter requested from Middlesex University or issued by Middlesex University following an Internal Review, and stating reasons for seeking redress from the Higher Education Independent Adjudicator. Email enquiries may be sent to [enquiries@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oiahe.org.uk). The website address is [www.oiahe.org.uk](http://www.oiahe.org.uk). If the student requests Middlesex University to provide the Completion of Procedures letter beyond the 28 calendar day deadline specified in the Academic Appeal Letter of Outcome, the twelve month period of time for bringing the complaint to the OIA will run from the date of the Academic Appeal Letter of Outcome.

### **3. POLICY SCOPE**

- 3.1 This policy applies to students at Point Blank London and Online studying on Higher Education programmes validated by Middlesex University.
- 3.2 Students on professional programmes at Point Blank London and Online should consult the Student Complaints and Grievances Policy should an issue arise.

### **4. RELATED POLICIES**

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Student Complaints and Grievances Policy

### **5. POLICY OWNER**

This policy is under the responsibility of the Quality and Standards Committee. The responsible committee will ensure the cyclical review of this policy is carried out in line with Point Blank's Quality Assurance Framework.

The Quality and Standards Committee delegates the operational responsibility of the informal stages of this policy to the following staff:

- Assessment Manager
- Assessments Officers

All stages and matters relating to formal appeals are the responsibility of Middlesex University.

### **6. PROCEDURES**

The relevant procedure to accompany this policy is titled PRO 001 Academic Appeals and can be found at [www.pointblankmusicschool.com/legal/public-policies/](http://www.pointblankmusicschool.com/legal/public-policies/).

### **7. EXHIBITS, APPENDICES AND FORMS**

- Academic Appeal Form

### **8. REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 8.1 Internal
- Quality Assurance Handbook
- 8.2 External

- Middlesex University Academic Regulations, Section G – Appeal Regulations and Procedures.
- OIA Good Practice Framework – Appeals and Complaints

## **9. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW**

Version: 2

Approved on: TBC

Approved by: QSC

Date of Next Review: August 2024