

# **Postgraduate Research Student Appeals**

## Procedure

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# Postgraduate Research Student Appeals Procedure

## 1. Introduction

**1.1** This document outlines the procedure that Postgraduate Research (PGR) students on programmes delivered by UCEM and awarded by The Open University (OU) can use to raise appeals. As processes are held between both the OU and UCEM this document must be read in conjunction with:

**1.2** The OU documents:

- [Student Complaints and Appeals Procedures](#)

**1.3** UCEM documents:

- Research Degrees Regulations
- [Fitness to Study Procedure](#)
- [The UCEM Student Disciplinary Procedure \(opens new window\)](#)
- Plagiarism and Research Misconduct Policy – Postgraduate Research Students
- [Student Complaints Procedure](#)

## 2. Scope

**2.1** This document applies to all students on UCEM PGR programmes. It does not apply to students studying on undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes who should follow the Student Appeals Procedure.

## 3. What is an appeal?

**3.1** An appeal is ‘a request for a review of a decision made by an individual or body (e.g. one of the UCEM or the OU committees) charged with determining applications for admission and making decisions about student progression, assessment, and awards’.

**3.2** UCEM and the OU often must take decisions that affect your academic progression. If you think that your case has not been properly considered or that a decision is unfair, you have the right to appeal against it. Within this document a distinction is made between appeals against decisions made by UCEM and the OU decision making authorities.

**3.3** Please see Part A for the following types of appeals where UCEM is the decision-making body:

- Applications and Admissions where UCEM is the decision maker (this is usually within the initial application screening stage),
- Fitness to Study Panel decisions,
- Disciplinary Panel decisions,
- Decisions on the provision of reasonable adjustments,
- Decisions relating to fees and financial support.

**3.4** Please see Part B for the following types of appeals where the OU is the decision-making body, and the OU procedures will apply:

- Plagiarism and research misconduct,
- Registration for a research degree,
- The end of registration for a research degree,

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- Refusal of permission to submit a thesis for exam,
- Extensions of time limits,
- any other academic decision not referred to in paragraph 17.2 'Other academic decisions reviewed only by the Senate Academic Appeals Review Panel.'

**3.5** Appeals are different to complaints. If you wish to make a complaint, including complaints about supervision or academic services, you must use the UCEM [Student Complaints Procedure](#). A complaint is 'an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more students about UCEM's action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by, or on behalf of UCEM.' If you are unsure whether your case is an appeal or complaint, you can contact UCEM's Appeals Officer for advice on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk).

## Part A – UCEM Appeals

### 4. Appeals considered

4.1 This section outlines the procedure for appeals where UCEM was the decision-making body.

4.2 This includes appeals relating to:

- Applications and Admissions where UCEM is the decision maker (this is usually within the initial application screening stage),
- Fitness to Study Panel decisions,
- Disciplinary Panel decisions,
- Decisions on the provision of reasonable adjustments,
- Decisions relating to fees and financial support.

**4.3** The Appeals procedure is evidence based. Supporting documentation should be provided within the appeal submission to support the grounds for appeal and any circumstances cited.

**4.4** Appeals made by third parties on your behalf will not normally be accepted. However, if you have a disability or other impairment which makes you unable to represent yourself, please contact the Appeals Officer on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) for details on how to appoint a representative.

### 5. What are the possible outcomes of a UCEM appeal?

5.1 Having considered your appeal, the reviewer will find that your appeal is either:

- Justified;
- Partly Justified; or
- Not Justified.

**5.2** If your appeal is found to be justified, or partly justified, the original decision-making body will be asked to reconsider the original decision, with a recommendation from the reviewer to either reverse or alter the original decision. The decision made following this reconsideration will be confirmed in the appeal outcome provided to you. If your appeal is found to be not justified, the original decision is confirmed. All outcomes will include clarification on the decision-making process.

### 6. Support

**6.1** If you need help or support at any point in the procedure, you can contact the Appeals Officer on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk).

**6.2** UCEM has a dedicated Disability and Welfare Team that can provide information, advice, and guidance to support disabled students to fully engage with UCEM processes. If students are experiencing any barriers to engaging in the process or are finding their mental health is being impacted, they can contact [wellbeing@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:wellbeing@ucem.ac.uk) for support.

### 7. How do I make an appeal?

The appeals procedure has three stages:

- Stage 1: Informal Appeal;
- Stage 2: Formal Appeal ;
- Stage 3: Review.

#### 7.1 Stage 1: Informal Appeal

**7.1.1** Before making an appeal, it is recommended that students seek advice and guidance from a trusted source, such as their Supervisor, Personal Tutor or Graduate Research School. The Appeals Officer will be pleased to provide impartial advice regarding the Student Appeals Procedure.

**7.1.2** Appeals should be raised contacting the Appeals team directly via [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) in writing as soon as possible, but within **10 working days**, after receiving the decision that you are appealing against.

Although not required at Stage 1, appellants may find the [Postgraduate Student Appeal Form \(opens new window\)](#) useful to set out their appeal.

**7.1.3** At Stage 1 you are encouraged to include relevant documentation to support the appeal that you wish to be considered. Examples of evidence you may wish to include are:

- dated medical documents,
- reports by professionals,
- financial information,
- witness statements,
- copies of communication you reference in your appeal,
- evidence of prior learning, and/or evidence of practical work experience gained for application and admissions appeals.

**7.1.4** Once all relevant information has been provided, UCEM will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within two working days.

**7.1.5** UCEM will review your appeal and provide a full response within **20 working days**.

**7.1.6** UCEM will make every effort to resolve your appeal at Stage 1. If you are satisfied with the response, this is where the procedure ends. If you are not satisfied with the response, you have the right to escalate your appeal to Stage 2: Formal Appeal.

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**7.1.7** Stage 1 does not apply to appeals against disciplinary decisions or the Fitness to Study Panel. To appeal a disciplinary decision or decisions of the Fitness to Study Panel, you should begin with [Stage 2 Formal Appeal](#).

### 7.2 Stage 2: Formal Appeal

**7.2.1** An appeal can only be raised at Stage 2 after Stage 1 of the appeals procedure has been completed (except for appeals against Disciplinary decisions or decisions of the Fitness to Study Panel which should be raised at Stage 2 in the first instance).

**7.2.2** Stage 2 can take up to 40 working days (excluding resubmission opportunity) to complete. You should therefore consider the implication of awaiting a decision as, if your appeal is not successful, the delay may inhibit your progress on your programme.

**7.2.3** To raise a Stage 2 Formal Appeal, complete and sign the Student Appeal Form, attaching any relevant evidence not previously considered and submit it to UCEM's Appeals Officer on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) within 10 working days of receiving the Stage 1 response. For appeals against disciplinary decisions or decisions of the Fitness to Study Panel, you must submit the form within 10 working days of the written confirmation of the decision.

**7.2.4** UCEM will acknowledge receipt of your appeal within two working days.

### 7.3 Demonstrating valid grounds for appeal at Stage 2

**7.3.1** The Appeals Officer will review your appeal form and decide whether it demonstrates that your appeal falls under one or more of the allowed grounds. This is called 'demonstrating valid grounds for appeal.' This will be determined solely on whether or not your appeal comes within the allowed grounds for appeal and does not imply a judgement on the merit of an appeal.

**7.3.2** The Appeals Officer will consider any new information or evidence which, for good reason, was not provided at an earlier opportunity, as well as any change in grounds from the Stage 1 appeal when making their decision. The appellant will be expected to provide a brief explanation of why they wish to escalate the appeal.

**7.3.3** You cannot escalate your appeal simply on the basis that you disagree with the reviewer's outcome.

**7.3.4** The Appeals Officer may confer with a Senior Academic, or member of Student and Registry services teams, including sharing any and all documentation related to the appeal, in order to reach a decision on the validity of the appeal.

**7.3.5** You will be notified of the Appeals Officer's decision within 20 working days of UCEM's receipt of your Stage 2 appeal form.

**7.3.6** If the Appeals Officer determines you have demonstrated valid grounds to escalate your appeal, your appeal will be allocated to a Reviewer. If this is the case, please skip to Section 7.4: Stage 2 Review for the next steps.

**7.3.7** If the Appeals Officer determines you have not demonstrated valid grounds for appeal, they will provide you with an explanation. If you wish, you will have one further opportunity to revise your appeal and resubmit it to [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) for reconsideration, **within 10 working days**.

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**7.3.8** Any resubmission will be reviewed by the Appeals Officer. You will be notified of the decision within 10 working days.

**7.3.9** If, following this reconsideration, the Appeals Officer determines you have now demonstrated valid grounds for appeal, your appeal will be allocated to a Reviewer. If this is the case, please skip to Section 7.4: Stage 2 Appeal for the next steps.

**7.3.10** If you choose not to revise and resubmit your appeal or if, following your resubmission, the Appeals Officer determines you have not demonstrated valid grounds for appeal then there is no further opportunity to appeal. You will be provided a 'Completion of Procedures' letter detailing UCEM's final response to the appeal. The Completion of Procedures letter is a requirement of the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator \(opens new window\) \(OIA\)](#) and confirms that the appeal has reached the end of UCEM's internal procedure.

**7.3.11** The Appeals Officer, in consultation with the Chair of Academic Board (or nominee), reserves the right to allow an appeal to proceed based on a significant reason not covered by the following grounds, but which is felt to have had a significant detrimental effect on the student:

- **Ground i)** There are mitigating or other circumstances potentially affecting you which were not known to, or could not, for good reason, be drawn to the attention of the decision-making body at the time the decision was made.
- **Ground ii)** There has been an administrative error or other irregularity by UCEM or the decision-making body.
- **Ground iii)** UCEM did not follow its own rules and procedures under the academic regulations, or reached a decision that no reasonable impartial body, properly directed and taking into account all relevant factors, could have arrived at.

## 7.4 Stage 2 Appeal

**7.4.1** Following the decision that you have demonstrated valid grounds for appeal, the Appeals Officer will allocate a Stage 2 Reviewer to consider your appeal.

**7.4.2** The Stage 2 Reviewer will be a member of UCEM's Senior Leadership Team with no previous involvement in the case.

**7.4.3** The Reviewer will normally provide you with a response within 20 working days.

**7.4.4** The Reviewer will be given a copy of:

- your Stage 2 appeal submission,
- any documentation relating to the original decision,
- any evidence provided by the appellant,
- a copy of your Stage 1 appeal and UCEM's response,
- relevant communications between you and UCEM, and
- full particulars of your academic record as far as it relates to the subject of your appeal.

**7.4.5** The Reviewer may request any further information they feel is needed to undertake deliberations fairly and impartially, such as copies of previous correspondence. The Reviewer may also choose to consult with key members of staff.



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**7.4.6** You will be invited to present your case to the Reviewer, via an online meeting. You may be accompanied by a family member, friend, or colleague who can act as a companion but not a legal representative for you. The Reviewer may also use this as an opportunity to ask questions relating to your appeal and your preferred outcome. The Appeals Officer (or nominee) will attend the meeting to take notes and a copy of these will be provided to you five working days after the meeting. If you disagree with the notes of the meeting, you can suggest amendments within five working days, and these will be recorded.

**7.4.7** You will be given adequate notice of this meeting, and every effort will be made to facilitate your attendance. However, if, after reasonable efforts made by UCEM, you fail to attend, the Reviewer will consider your appeal based on the documentary evidence only. Any delays in attending this meeting may impact on the timescale for response.

**7.4.8** Prior to the meeting you will be provided with a copy of any documentation the Reviewer will take into account in their decision, as outlined in 7.4.4, unless this is restricted by [UCEM Data Protection Policy \(opens new window\)](#) and [UCEM Privacy Policy \(opens new window\)](#), the Data Protection Act 2018 or the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 (GDPR). If, following the meeting, the Reviewer obtains any further documentation not previously shared with you, this will be shared with you.

**7.4.9** The Reviewer may also confer with other members of the Senior Leadership Team and Student and Registry services teams including sharing any and all documentation related to the appeal, in order to reach a fair and impartial decision.

**7.4.10** The Stage 2 Reviewer will not enter into correspondence with you following deliver of their decision. If you are satisfied with the response, this is where the procedure ends. If you are not satisfied with the response, you have the right to begin Stage 3: Review.

### 7.5 Stage 3: Review

**7.5.1** An appeal can only be raised at Stage 3 after Stage 2 of the appeals procedure has been completed.

**7.5.2** To raise a Stage 3 review, contact UCEM's Appeals Officer on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) within **10 working days** of receiving the Stage 2 response and request that your case is referred for Stage 3 Review.

**7.5.3** UCEM will acknowledge receipt of your request within two working days.

**7.5.4** The Appeals Officer will allocate a Stage 3 Reviewer to consider your appeal.

**7.5.5** The Stage 3 review is completed by an external independent reviewer, normally an Independent Trustee from the Board of Trustees, who sits outside of UCEM's management structure.

**7.5.6** The Reviewer will normally provide a response within 20 working days.

**7.5.7** The Stage 3 Review is confined to:

- A review of whether the appropriate procedures were followed at Stage 2 of the appeal,
- A consideration of whether the decision was reasonable in all circumstances,
- A review of any new material evidence which the student was unable, for valid reasons (to be decided by the Reviewer), to provide earlier in the procedure.

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**7.5.8** This is the final stage of the appeals procedure. For all outcomes you will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter detailing UCEM's final response to the appeal within 28 days of the Stage 3 outcome. The Completion of Procedures letter is a requirement of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and confirms that the appeal has reached the end of UCEM's appeals procedure.

**7.5.9** If you are not satisfied with the response at Stage 3 your appeal may be eligible for consideration by the OIA. [How to complain to us - OIAHE](#).

## 8. Late appeals

**8.1** [Section 7: How do I make an Appeal?](#) outlines the deadlines for submitting your appeal. Any appeal submitted outside of these deadlines will be rejected unless they are accompanied by acceptable evidence of mitigating or other circumstances which impacted your ability to submit the appeal within the required timescale. This could include issues related to mental health.

**8.2** If you are requesting a late appeal, alongside your appeal you should submit your reasons, supported by evidence for the late appeal to [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk).

**8.3** The reasons provided will be discussed with relevant staff members, including the UCEM Disability and Welfare Manager, to ensure you are treated fairly, according to the Equality Act 2010.

**8.4** If you submit a late appeal and UCEM makes the decision not to allow the appeal to proceed, you will be provided with an explanation and a 'Completion of Procedures' letter detailing UCEM's final response. The Completion of Procedures letter is a requirement of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) and confirms that the appeal has reached the end of the UCEM appeals procedure.

## 9. Time limits

**9.1** Appeals should be raised by contacting the Appeals team directly [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) in writing as soon as possible, but within 10 working days, after receiving the decision against which you are appealing.

**9.2** Appendix A outlines the key steps in each stage of making a UCEM administrative appeal. More detail can be found in [Section 7: How do I make an Appeal?](#)

### 10. Admissions and applicant appeals

10.1 UCEM will conduct initial applicant screening and then put forward candidates to OU for approval.

10.2 You can appeal against UCEM decisions not to progress your application.

10.3 Entry requirements for UCEM programmes are detailed in the Programme Specification and on the [UCEM Website \(opens new window\)](#). The requirements for applications are outlined in the Research Degree Regulations.

10.4 If you are an applicant, you can raise your Stage 1 administrative Appeal by contacting; [Graduate Research School](#) (graduateresearchschool@ucem.ac.uk) or [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](#).

### 11. Fitness to Study Panel appeals

11.1 The Fitness to Study Panel will have considered all the evidence available to them to consider whether you are able to fully engage and safely undertake your academic studies in accordance with the [Fitness to Study Procedure \(opens new window\)](#).

11.2 The health and wellbeing of you and your fellow students are of the paramount concern to the Panel.

11.3 As part of the Fitness to Study Procedure you will have already been given the opportunity to respond to the concerns raised, either in writing or by attending the panel hearing. You will also have received a letter explaining the decision of the panel.

### 12. Disciplinary decision appeals

12.1 UCEM communicates its conduct expectations of students through its Research Degree Regulations, [Terms and Conditions of Contract \(opens new window\)](#) and the Student Disciplinary Procedure. You agree to abide by these expectations.

12.2 [The UCEM Student Disciplinary Procedure \(opens new window\)](#) has three stages and the range of potential sanctions/ outcomes are outlined in the procedure. Before determining an appropriate sanction, UCEM will have already considered whether the offence was intentional, the degree of remorse you have shown, any efforts you have made to resolve and remedy the situation as well as the impact and harm on others. Appeals that are based on the fact a colleague/friend received a different sanction for what you think are similar circumstances will not be considered. Appeals based on any difficulty you envisage due to an applied sanction will not be considered.

12.3 Where offences are criminal, it is UCEM's policy that we report these to the relevant authorities.

### 13. Decisions on the provision of Reasonable Adjustments appeals

13.1 Provision of reasonable adjustments can only be made if verified, identifiable evidence is provided. Reasonable adjustments you may have had at a previous educational institution prior to you starting a programme of study at UCEM will not necessarily be adopted, unless they are supported by verified, identifiable evidence.

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**13.2** Appeals that are based on the fact a colleague/friend received reasonable adjustments, but you did not, will not be considered.

**13.3** If your evidence is not accepted for the reasonable adjustment(s) requested, the Disability and Welfare Team will provide you an explanation why. You can resubmit additional or new evidence in support of your request for reasonable adjustments and we would encourage you to speak to the team on [disability@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:disability@ucem.ac.uk) to help you understand the requirements of any additional evidence required.

### 14. Decisions on financial support

**14.1** UCEM makes decisions on financial support including on how the Financial Support fund is allocated. Appeals against these decisions can be made in line with the procedure set out in section 7 above.

## Part B OU Academic Appeals

### 15. Appeals considered

**15.1** The following types of appeals are considered under the **OU's General Academic Appeals Procedure**:

- Plagiarism and research misconduct,
- Registration for a research degree,
- The end of registration for a research degree,
- Refusal of permission to submit a thesis for exam,
- Extensions of time limits,
- Any other academic decision not referred to in 17.2 'Other academic decisions reviewed only by the Senate Academic Appeals Review Panel.'

**15.2** The following types of appeals are considered under other academic decisions reviewed only by the Senate Academic Appeals Review Panel:

- The result of an examination for a research degree, approved on behalf of the Senate by the Research Degrees Examination Result Approval Committee (RDRAC)
  - i) Please note, if as the result of an appeal, there is a re-examination of your thesis and the result of the re-examination is less favourable to you than that of the first examination, the result of the first examination will stand subject to the original corrections, amendments or revisions.
- The decision of a Selection Panel.

**15.3** You cannot appeal against an outcome simply because you disagree with the academic judgement, are disappointed with the decision or because of consequences that a decision may have. You must make a case, with evidence to support it, that the OU has made a procedural error in reaching that result under one or more of the grounds set out in B5.4.1c of the OU Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

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**15.4** The OU is committed to investigating and resolving appeals fairly and in accordance with the OIA Good Practice Framework: Handling complaints and academic appeals. No student who brings a genuine appeal under this procedure will be disadvantaged by the OU regardless of the outcome. The OU aims to promote a positive culture whereby students can raise genuine concerns confidently.

**15.5** You cannot appeal against an academic decision because you disagree with the academic judgement of the OU. You may appeal against an academic decision where there are specific grounds relating to the fairness or adequacy of the procedures followed.

### **16. Support**

**16.1** The OU Students Association can provide support through the Individual Representation service. The service offers free, confidential, and independent advice, support and guidance for all students going through the complaints and appeals process.

### **17. Procedure for appeals under the OU's General and Academic Appeals**

**17.1** For appeals under the OU's General and Academic Appeals procedure please refer to section B2 of the [OU Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#).

### **18. Procedure for appeals under the Senate Academic Appeals Review Panel**

**18.1** For the Procedure for appeals considered under the Academic Appeals Review Procedure please see section B5 of the [OU Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#).

The [Individual Representation Service](#) can provide direct case support to Open University students who are thinking about making a complaint, or have an existing and open stage 1 or 2 complaint or appeal, stage 3 case review and central disciplinary cases.

### **19. What are the possible outcomes of an OU appeal?**

**19.1** Having considered your appeal, the Reviewer will find that your appeal is either:

- Upheld,
- Partly upheld,
- Not upheld.

**19.2** If your appeal is found to be upheld, or partly upheld, the original decision-making body will be asked to reconsider their decision, with a recommendation from the Reviewer to either reverse or alter the original decision. The decision made following this reconsideration will be confirmed in the appeal outcome provided to you.

**19.3** If your appeal is found to be not upheld, the original decision is confirmed.

**19.4** All outcomes will include clarification on the decision-making process.

### 20. Time limits

**20.1** The OU aims to complete the internal complaints and appeals procedures within 90 calendar days of a student submitting a stage 2 formal complaint or appeal. Similarly, there are time limits by which you must raise your concern or query, escalate the appeal to the next stage if you remain dissatisfied and by which we must provide a full response to you. See [OU Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure](#) for further information.

**20.2** Any complaint or appeal received after a time limit (within 10 working days, after receiving the decision against which you are appealing) will not be considered unless it is accepted that exceptional circumstances prevented you from submitting or escalating it to the next stage within the time limit. For example, if you have been seriously ill, we will take this into account when considering if your complaint or appeal can be accepted.

You should anticipate the likely requirement for supporting evidence from the period of exceptional circumstance(s), such as a medical note, to show that you were unable to submit or escalate your complaint or appeal within the given time limit.

## Part C Information Applicable to Appeals against UCEM and OU decisions

### 21. Final Arbitration

**21.1** If all internal procedures are exhausted and you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, then your case may be eligible for consideration by the OIA. The deadline for referring your case to the OIA is within twelve months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter issued by UCEM. Details on how to make a complaint to the OIA can be found by clicking here - [How to complain to us - OIAHE](#) (opens new window).

### 22. Appeals and complaints about multiple interconnected issues.

**22.1** In the first instance contact UCEM on [appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:appeals&complaints@ucem.ac.uk) and we can advise on the best approach for getting the appeal or complaint resolved.

**22.2** If you raise a complaint or appeal which does not fall neatly into the category of either a complaint or an appeal, or if your concern contains issues of complaint and an appeal, we will advise you which issues will be looked at under which procedure. This will be irrespective of which procedure you have used to formally raise your concern.

**22.3** Your concern may be managed under an alternative procedure if that is appropriate. We may decide to consider all matters together particularly if, for example, the findings of a complaint are likely to influence an appeal decision. You will be advised of any implications of following two procedures at once, and we may suspend one procedure pending the outcome of the other.

### 23. Vexatious or malicious appeals

**23.1** UCEM reserves the right to recommend the removal of a student from a programme if they make repeated, unfounded, or vexatious appeals and/or complaints regarding the programme and/or its delivery where, in the opinion of UCEM, their conduct is considered to be untruthful or frivolous. Making repeated and/or unfounded false, malicious and vexatious appeals and/or complaints may be considered misconduct and result in the application of the Disciplinary Procedure.

### 24. Confidentiality and data retention

**24.1** UCEM and the OU will treat students' personal information gathered during appeals confidentially, in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). Relevant case information will only be disclosed to UCEM and the OU staff dealing with the appeal.

**24.2** Student information on appeals will be retained throughout your registration with UCEM and the OU and for a minimum of six years from the date of completion of the appeals process. Completion may occur at stage 1, 2, or 3, depending on whether you have decided to progress your appeal or not.

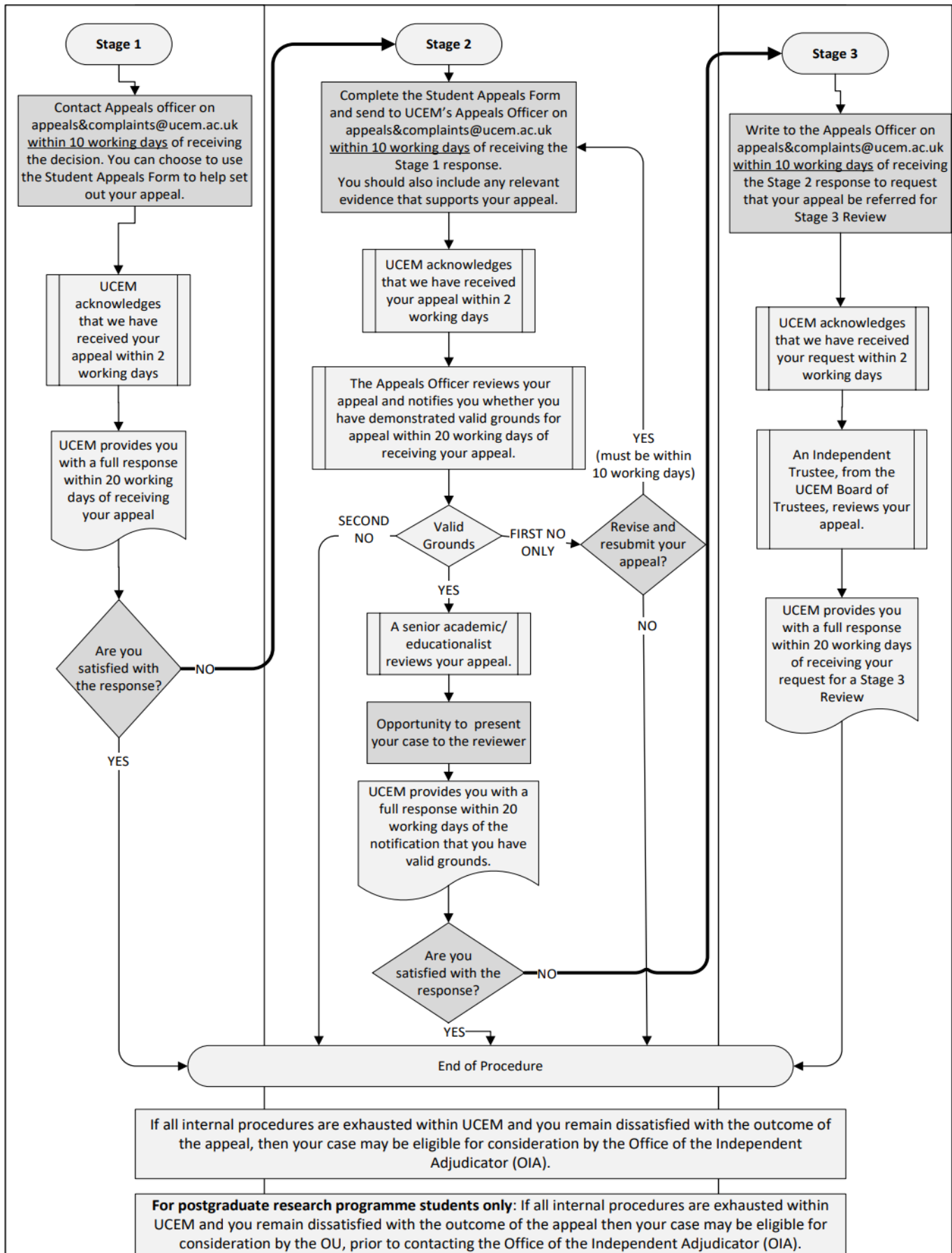
**24.3** To preserve the confidentiality of others, you are asked not to include unnecessary personal information about third parties such as family members when submitting an appeal. Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR, UCEM and the OU are required to notify third parties if it is processing their information, so please think carefully before submitting personal information about yourself or others. You may wish to seek advice from UCEM's Data Protection Officer on [dataprotection@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:dataprotection@ucem.ac.uk).

**24.4** In line with guidance from the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the OIA, the Appeals Officer will record all appeal outcomes. Monitoring appeals is an effective way of helping UCEM and the OU to ensure that procedures are fair and are working as intended.

**24.5** Details of appeals, including outcome, are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the UCEM Senior Leadership Team and Board of Trustees. The appeal log will be analysed for continuous improvement in processes and provision. An anonymised summary of appeals and how they are managed are reported annually to UCEM's Quality Standards and Enhancement Committee.

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### Appendix A - Key steps in each stage of making a UCEM appeal





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### Appendix B - Key steps in each stage of making an appeal with the OU

