

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE 2019

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ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE		
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Summary/Description:		
<p>This document defines the process students can use to appeal when they feel the assessment procedure which has been applied to their work for any of the Open University Validated Awards at All Nations Christian College, has been unfair.</p>		
<p>Although paragraphs may have been reformatted and rephrased, no alterations have been made to the policy and procedures of the previous version of this document.</p>		
<p>Approved by Chair's Action 24.9.19, ratified by Academic Board 20.11.19</p>		

ALL NATIONS CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

To train and equip men and women for effective participation in God's mission to His multicultural world.

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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2 AIM

All Nations Christian College would like you to have a positive experience in your dealings with us. However, we understand that we do not always get everything right. Students who are dissatisfied with the decision of an academic body may wish to appeal against that decision and those who have been rejected a place on a programme may also wish to appeal. The majority of concerns can usually be dealt with informally through discussion, but if your concerns cannot be addressed informally, this policy and procedure will enable you to make a formal complaint or appeal.

3 WHICH POLICY SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?

- 3.1** This is the policy and procedure you should follow if you wish to request a review of a decision taken by an academic body (i.e. tutor, moderator or Examination Board) charged with making decisions about student admissions, progression, assessment and awards. However, such a review may not question the academic judgement of academic staff.
- 3.2** The College Complaints Policy and Procedure should be followed if you wish to express your dissatisfaction with either the service we have provided or the lack of a service, about which an individual is unhappy and seeks action by the College. It must relate to services that you were led to believe would be provided.
- 3.3** A complaint concerning unreasonable delay in returning work would be dealt with by the Complaints Procedure and not the Appeals Procedure since the complaint concerns dissatisfaction with the administration service rather than any academic decision.
- 3.4** A **review** is a request for the decision to your complaint or your appeal to be reviewed. Therefore, the Complaints Policy and the Appeals Policy both contain procedures for requesting a review of the decision reached by those considering your complaint or appeal.

- 3.5 In all of the above situations, you must have **reasonable grounds** for making a complaint or appealing a decision or asking for a review of a decision. This document will explain what those grounds are.

4 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The College will comply with the Equal Opportunities Act 2010 and the Data Protection Act 2018 when dealing with complaints and appeals in addition to its own and the Open University's rules and regulations, where applicable. Complaints also comply with the Consumer Protection Act 2015. This document has also been written in compliance with The Good Practice Framework: Handling Student Complaints and Academic Appeals by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

5 DEFINITION

As outlined in section 3, an appeal is a request for a review of a decision taken by an academic body (i.e. tutor, moderator or Examination Board) charged with making decisions about student admissions, progression, assessment and awards. However, such a review may not question the academic judgement of academic staff.

6 SCOPE

- 6.1 An appeal will only be considered for students who are taking undergraduate or postgraduate studies at All Nations Christian College or if you were an applicant for either of these programmes.
- 6.2 Appeals by alumni must be initiated within 3 months of leaving College (e.g. within three months of the receipt of their final award or the end of their registration if they leave with a transcript.)

7 APPEAL POLICY PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of all the College complaints, appeals and review procedures are as follows:

- i. We aim to respond to your appeal confidentially, fairly and promptly and in accordance with the College's **Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy**.
- ii. All appeals will be managed in a sensitive way and with due regard to data protection legislation and the College **Data Protection Policy**. If your appeal involves providing evidence (e.g. a witness statement or medical evidence) confidentiality may not always be possible without hampering a thorough investigation of the facts. In these circumstances therefore the college will discuss with you the best way to approach the submission of evidence before releasing all or some of the evidence to the investigating officer or any others involved in the investigation.
- iii. Students involved in an investigation will be offered support by the College's pastoral team. They may also choose to be accompanied by or represented at any meetings by a supportive friend. This must be someone independent of the circumstances that gave rise to the meeting and therefore not be the person offering them pastoral support through the process.
- iv. Informal appeals are generally verbal and will be responded to in kind. Wherever possible the student should receive a response within 14 calendar days of receiving all the relevant information and the Vice-Principal (Academic) notified.
- v. Formal written appeals should be recorded, acknowledged within 7 calendar days and investigated, wherever possible, within 30 calendar days of receiving all the relevant information, and the Vice-Principal (Academic) notified. You will be informed in the event of any unavoidable delay and its reason given, for example staff unavailability.

- vi. Formal reviews, should be recorded, acknowledged within 7 calendar days and investigated, wherever possible, within 30 calendar days of receiving all the relevant information and the Vice-Principal (Academic) notified. You will be informed in the event of any unavoidable delay and the reason given.
- vii. The processing of the formal appeal together with any review should take no longer than 90 calendar days in total. This requires you to meet any College deadlines for the submission of material. If there are good reasons for extending the timeframe, you will be notified of any delays and regularly informed of progress and you shall similarly notify the College.
- viii. Group appeals are permissible where the issue raised affects a number of students. In such circumstances, in order to manage the progression of the appeal, we ask the group to nominate one student to act as a group representative; this student may also be supported by one other person.
- ix. You will always be informed of the outcome of an appeal or review in writing and with reasons given for the decision which has been reached. You will be informed at the same time of any further appeal processes which may still be available to you.
- x. Any review of the decision will be heard by someone who was not involved in the original investigation and will occur according to the timescales given. You will be informed in the event that there is going to be any unavoidable delay.
- xi. A formal detailed record will be kept of all formal investigations, appeals or reviews.
- xii. No-one will be disadvantaged by making an appeal.
- xiii. The appeal may be withdrawn without prejudice at any time during the process. (The College must be informed in writing. Any decision made by the College at the previous stage in the procedure will then be upheld and become the final outcome.)
- xiv. The College will not investigate any formal appeal or review which it considers to be frivolous or vexatious.
- xv. All Appeals procedures should be available to all, monitored regularly, and reviewed and evaluated periodically.

8 INFORMAL PROCEDURE

The majority of concerns can usually be dealt with informally by speaking with the relevant person. (E.g. the module tutor in the case of a module mark, the recruitment and training administrator who has been dealing with your admission or the Programme Leader in the case of a final award). If your concerns cannot be addressed informally, the following formal procedures are available to you.

9 GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

9.1 Admissible Grounds for Appeal

You can appeal only on the following grounds:

- i. **Administrative Error:** For example:
 - When there is an allegation of failure to apply the College regulations in arriving at the decision e.g. the final module mark or the decision to deny an applicant a place contradicts the published entry or application criteria,
 - When incorrect information was provided e.g. regarding the required assessment or deadline.
- ii. **Unfair:** When the grading criteria/learning outcomes published in the handbook were not fairly and consistently applied by the marker or there was discrimination when denying an applicant a place on the grounds of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, class or other non-academic grounds.
- iii. **Extenuating Circumstances:** When your performance was adversely affected by illness or other factors which you were unable or, **with valid reason**, unwilling to

divulge to the relevant academic body when it made its decision. Your appeal must be accompanied by documentary evidence acceptable to the academic body.

9.2 Inadmissible Grounds for Appeal

There is no right of appeal where:

- i. **Academic Grounds:** The dispute concerns academic judgement; e.g. because you do not agree with the mark awarded or the decision about your academic suitability to be admitted to a programme.
- ii. **Unawareness of Criteria:** The dispute concerns a claim of unawareness of the published assessment regulations (e.g. word count, submission deadline, etc.) or admissions criteria.
- iii. **Extenuating Circumstances:** If the dispute concerns a student who was given an extension to an assignment deadline due to illness, but chooses to submit their assignment/sit the examination before the given deadline, they may not subsequently claim that their performance was adversely affected by that illness.

10 APPEAL PROCEDURE

10.1 Admissions Appeals Procedure:

If you think that you meet any of the above criteria you can appeal by:

- a. Completing a **formal academic appeal form**. This is attached as an appendix to this document.
- b. The completed and **signed** form, together with all your supporting evidence, should be given to the Recruitment and Training Administrator who was dealing with your admission's application (paper or electronic copies are acceptable).
- c. The form and supporting evidence should be submitted within 14 calendar days of receiving the result of your application. This will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days.
- d. The relevant Programme Leader will discuss the appeal with the Admissions Team and aims to communicate the result to you, with rationale, within one calendar month of receiving the appeal form.
- e. You will be informed of any further internal review process available to you at the same time as hearing the outcome of the investigation.
- f. You may withdraw a formal appeal in writing without prejudice at any time during the process.

10.2 Module Appeals Procedure:

If you think that you meet any of the above criteria you can appeal by:

- a. Completing a **formal academic appeal form**. This is attached as an appendix to this document.
- b. The completed and **signed** form, together with all your supporting evidence, should be given to the Recruitment and Training Administrator of your Programme (paper or electronic copies are acceptable).
- c. The form and supporting evidence should be submitted within 14 calendar days of publishing the mark. This will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days.
- d. The Programme Leader will discuss the appeal with the first marker and moderator and seek to reach a mutual agreement. The College aims to communicate the result to you within one calendar month of receiving the appeal form.
- e. If no such agreement is reached the matter will be resolved in consultation with the external examiners for a final decision, which will then be communicated to you in writing. In this case, the College aims to communicate the result to you within 14 calendar days. This

written response will include any actions required by you or the College to follow up and implement that decision.

- f. Should you remain dissatisfied on the grounds that you were unfairly/impartially treated, you have one month to seek a formal review. (See below for the internal review procedure).
- g. You may withdraw a formal complaint or appeal in writing without prejudice at any time during the process.

10.3 Final Award Appeals Procedure

If you feel your complaint fulfils the grounds above, you may appeal by:

- a. Completing a **formal academic appeal form**. This is attached as an appendix to this document.
- b. The completed and **signed** form, together with all your supporting evidence, should be given to the Recruitment and Training Administrator of the relevant Programme within 14 calendar days of receiving the result of the relevant assessment or final award (paper or electronic copies are acceptable). This will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days.
- c. It should clearly set out the reasons for the appeal and include, where appropriate, supporting documentary evidence.
- d. The Programme Leader shall, within 14 calendar working days, consider the academic appeal and determine whether there is a *prima facie* case to answer.
- e. In the perceived absence of a valid case to answer, the Programme Leader will explain to you in full the reasons behind the Board's original decision and provide you with those reasons in writing. This written response will include any actions required by you or the College to follow up and implement that decision.
- f. If, conversely, there is perceived to be an academic case to answer, the Programme Leader will submit the academic appeal with all appropriate documentation to the members of the Examination Board for discussion and final decision. You will then be informed of the Examination Board's decision in writing by the Programme Leader within one calendar month of the Programme Leader's judgement. You will be kept informed if there is going to be any unavoidable delay.
- g. If you fail, without good cause, to provide the markers, in advance of their marking, with information about personal circumstances that may have affected your performance in assessments, the Examination Board has authority to reject the request on those grounds.
- h. You may withdraw a formal academic appeal in writing without prejudice at any time during the procedure. Any decision made by the College at the previous stage in the procedure will then be upheld and become the final outcome.
- i. If, when you are informed of the result of your appeal, you are still dissatisfied you will be informed of the internal review procedure which may be open to you if you meet the criteria below.

11 INTERNAL REVIEW PROCEDURE

11.1 Admissible Grounds for Review:

- i. If the College has not followed its own published procedures properly
- ii. If the College has not dealt with the complaint fairly.

11.2 Internal Review Procedure:

11.2.1 Admissions Review

If you think that you meet any of the above criteria you can request a review of the decision by:

- a. Submitting a signed and completed **formal complaint form** within one calendar month of receiving the result of the appeal, to the person dealing with your application. This will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days. This form can be found as an appendix to this document.
- b. Explain on the form the grounds (as stated above), beyond a simple disagreement with the outcome.
- c. Provide any additional supporting documentary evidence with, where appropriate, an explanation of why this was not submitted with the original complaint. Without a valid explanation, further evidence will not be accepted.
- d. The Principal/CEO will, within 14 calendar days, consider whether he feels there is a *prima facie* case to answer. If so, he will call a panel, comprising himself, a member of staff not involved in either your application or your appeal and an external member who is a member of a College Board.
- e. The panel will consider the evidence presented and, if they feel it to be necessary, invite you to meet with them to discuss the evidence. You may be accompanied by a supporter to this meeting and minutes will be taken (see 5c above).
- f. The Principal/CEO or his nominee will inform you of the outcome of the review in writing, within one calendar month of you lodging the review, with the reasons given. You will also be informed of any further appeal process which may still be available to you.
- g. You may withdraw a formal complaint or appeal in writing without prejudice at any time during the process.

11.2.2 Academic Result Review

- a. Submitting a signed and completed **formal complaint form** within 14 calendar days of receiving the judgement of the appeal to the Recruitment and Training Administrator of your programme (the person dealing with your application). This will be acknowledged in writing within 7 working days. This form can be found as an appendix to this document.
- b. Explain on the form the grounds (as stated above), beyond a simple disagreement with the outcome.
- c. Provide any additional supporting documentary evidence with, where appropriate, an explanation of why this was not submitted with the original complaint. Without a valid explanation, further evidence will not be accepted.
- d. The Principal/CEO will, within 14 calendar days, consider whether he feels there is a *prima facie* case to answer. If so, he will refer the appeal to the Examination Board members for a final decision; if not, he will explain the reasons for the rejection of the appeal to you.
- e. If there is felt to be a *prima facie* case to answer, the Examination Board or its representatives may call a meeting with you for an explanatory meeting. You may be accompanied by or represented at this meeting by supportive friend (see 5c above). The timescale of the judgement may depend on whether any further documentary evidence is required to be reviewed before a final decision can be reached, but is expected to be within one calendar month.
- f. Minutes will be taken.
- g. The Principal/CEO or his nominee will inform you of the outcome of the review in writing, and with the reasons given. You will also be informed of any further appeal process which may still be available to you.
- h. You may withdraw a formal complaint in writing without prejudice at any time during the investigation. Any decision made by the College at the previous stage in the procedure will then be upheld and become the final outcome.

- i. The College will endeavour to complete the processing of a formal complaint or academic appeal and any associated review within 90 calendar days. The 90-calendar day timeframe is subject to the student meeting any College deadlines for the submission of material.
- j. There will occasionally be circumstances when, for good reason, the College will need to extend the timeframe for the investigation. Where this is the case the College will notify the student and keep the student regularly informed of progress.

12 EXTERNAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

12.1 Students registered with the Open University:

- a. When you have exhausted the College's internal appeal and review procedures you will be informed how you may escalate your concern to an external body should you still be dissatisfied with the outcome and have reasonable grounds.
- b. Your first option is to appeal to the Open University (OU); however, they will not consider your appeal until you have exhausted the College's internal appeal and review processes.
- c. Your final option is to complain to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) but they will similarly not consider your complaint until you have exhausted the College and the Open University's appeals/complaints procedures. The Open University will give you a Completion of Procedures letter at the conclusion of their processes which you will need to lodge your appeal with the OIA.

12.2 Students not registered with the Open University:

- a. If you are not registered with the Open University you are not eligible to escalate your complaint to them.
- b. On completion of our internal processes we will give you a Completion of Procedures Letter which will permit you to complain to the OIA (see below). They will not hear a complaint until you have exhausted the College's appeals/complaints procedures.

12.3 Appealing to the Open University:

- The Open University accredits our institution and validates our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Please see the Open University's current Handbook for Validated Awards: Appendix 3: Appeals and Complaints to find out the timescales, admissible grounds and procedures for appealing to them after you have concluded our internal complaints and review procedures.

Or contact them:

- By writing to The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA U.K.
- By email to: OUVP_Director@open.ac.uk
- By phone: 01908 332840

12.4 Appealing to The Office of The Independent Adjudicator:

- The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) was set up under the Higher Education Act 2004 to provide 'an independent student complaints scheme'. All Higher Education Institutions in England and Wales are required to comply with the scheme, which is free to students.
- Complaints can be submitted to the OIA **after** their appeal to the Open University if they are dissatisfied with the result of either the College or the OU complaints or appeals processes. However the OIA can only consider unresolved complaints from students **after** the College's and the OU's own complaints and appeals procedures has been concluded.
- The OIA will not usually consider complaints about admissions.
- Please contact them at: www.oiahe.org.uk.

13 ESTABLISHED PROCEDURAL IRREGULARITY

- 13.1** In cases where procedural irregularity is established as a result of an appeal, the Examination Board should then be responsible for ensuring appropriate follow-up action.
- 13.2** If an error or irregularity is found to have affected more than one candidate, the Examination Board must reconsider all the relevant grades and classifications and take appropriate follow-up actions. In this case it is the responsibility of the Examination Board to confirm the revised grades and classifications in the presence of an OU representative.

14 RESULT OF APPEAL

- 14.1** Whenever an appeal is concluded, the result and reason for the decision will be submitted in writing to the student. Should the appeal have been dismissed, the student will be advised of their right to a review of the appeal.
- 14.2** Where a decision is upheld a recommendation must be made for reconsideration by the Examination Board.
- 14.3** Should the examiners agree to amend their decision but are uncertain about the most appropriate alternative recommendation they should seek additional evidence of the student's performance. This may be obtained either through reassessment at the next opportunity, or through a viva voce examination or, through another form of assessment appropriate to the student's circumstances and to the requirements of the programme of study.

15 REVIEW OF APPEAL PROCEDURE

The issues and outcomes of any appeals will be discussed with the Programme Leaders and the Training Team. They will be discussed further in the Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Quality Assurance Committees to monitor and ensure the effectiveness of the appeal, the quality of the student learning experience and the issue of confidence in the appeal and complaints processes. The Academic Board also monitors the entire processes and outcomes.

16 RESPONSIBILITIES, POLICY APPROVAL AND REVIEW

- i. The Principal/CEO and the Senior Leadership Team have overall responsibility for the Complaints and Appeals policy, including its approval and annual review.
- ii. They also have responsibility for overseeing the complaints and appeals process and ensuring that decision making complies with other relevant College regulations, Open University regulations and other legislation, where applicable.
- iii. The Programme Leaders will be nominated by the Senior Leadership Team to have particular responsibility for the academic appeals part of this policy.
- iv. The Programme Leaders, along with the Training and Recruitment Administrators, have responsibility for overseeing the complaints and appeals process and ensuring that decision making complies with Open University regulations.

17 POLICY COMMUNICATION

- i. This document can be found in the student area on the College VLE and on the College website: www.allnations.ac.uk .
- ii. Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.
- iii. This policy will be included in staff and student induction.

18 RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following regulations, policies and procedures. This list is not exhaustive:

- All Nations Christian College Undergraduate Handbook
- All Nations Christian College Postgraduate Handbook
- All Nations Christian College Admissions Policy
- All Nations Christian College Moderation Policy
- All Nations Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy
- All Nations Christian College Data Protection Policy
- QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- Open University Handbook for Validated Awards

19 APPENDICES: Appeals and Review Forms

APPENDIX 1:

FORMAL APPEAL FORM (ACADEMIC)			
Student Name		Student No.	
Preferred email contact details: If this is a complaint made by a group of students, please give the email details of <u>one</u> nominated point of contact.			
Do you have a disability or specific learning difficult you would like us to be aware of when considering your appeal?		Yes/No (circle). If yes, please give details of adjustments that will assist you.	
Course:		Level	
Appeal relates to: (what academic decision do you feel was wrong or unfair?)	<input type="checkbox"/> Admissions decision <input type="checkbox"/> Assignment mark <input type="checkbox"/> Module mark <input type="checkbox"/> Final Award <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Other		
I am making this Academic Appeal/ Review based on the following grounds (tick the relevant box(es) only if they are listed as permissible grounds in this policy)		I offer the following information in support of the ground(s) selected (complete the relevant box(es) below):	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Admin Error (e.g. Failure to apply the College regulations or criteria OR incorrect information provided by the College)		(You need to state clearly the precise nature of the error)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. Unfair or inconsistent application of the regulations (e.g. regarding grading criteria/learning outcomes published in the handbook/admissions criteria etc.)		(You need to state clearly the precise nature of the error)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 4. You have new material evidence that you were unable to provide earlier regarding extenuating circumstances. (You must give us this evidence and explain why it was not available when the decision was made. This reason can also be used to appeal for a lighter penalty in a case of Academic Misconduct, but only if the evidence was unavailable at the time of the investigation.		(By material evidence, we mean information that might have the potential to change a decision, although this cannot be guaranteed. State the evidence and explain why this information was not given to the College at the correct time.)	

Brief factual outline why you feel a review of this academic decision should be made:			
Optional: Additional information offered for consideration:			
Where New Evidence is available (section 4), list attachments if applicable:			
Do you have anyone to support you with this complaint? Please speak with your personal tutor or a friend/other staff member about this so that they can support you.			
Signed (Student)		Date:	

NEXT STEP

1. Have you completed all sections of this form?
2. Have you included all supporting documents (if appropriate)?
3. Have you checked this policy to check you have the grounds and are within the time limits for making this appeal?
4. You should pass this completed and signed form on to either the Recruitment and Training Administrator of the relevant Programme or the College Administrator.

5. **APPENDIX 2:**

FORMAL REVIEW FORM			
Student Name		Student No.	
Preferred email contact details: If this is a complaint made by a group of students, please give the email details of <u>one</u> nominated point of contact.			
Do you have a disability or specific learning difficult you would like us to be aware of when considering your appeal?		Yes/No (circle). If yes, please give details of adjustments that will assist you.	
Course:		Level	
Appeal relates to:	(State the decision about which you are seeking a review and/or the policy which was used in any original investigation)		
Informal Appeal: Have you raised the concerns informally in the first instance? If yes , please say who with and when:	Yes/No (circle) When and with whom (if applicable)		
I am making this Appeal/ Review based on the following grounds: (tick the relevant box(es) only if they are listed as permissible grounds in the appeals section of the relevant College policy)		I offer the following information in support of the ground(s) selected (complete the relevant box(es) below):	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1. The College Procedure was not followed correctly.		(You need to state clearly which parts of the procedure used in the original investigation was not followed correctly.)	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2. You have new material evidence that you were unable to provide earlier. (By material evidence, we mean information that might have the potential to change a decision, although this cannot be guaranteed.)		(State the evidence and explain why this information was not given to the College at the correct time.)	

Optional: Additional information offered for consideration:			
Where New Evidence is available (ground 3), list attachments if applicable:			
Do you have anyone to support you with this complaint? Please speak with your personal tutor or a friend/other staff member about this so that they can support you.			
Signed (Student)		Date:	

6. Have you completed all sections of this form?
7. Have you included all supporting documents (if appropriate)?
8. Have you checked this policy to check you have the grounds and are within the time limits for requesting this review?
9. You should pass this completed and signed form on to either the Recruitment and Training Administrator of the relevant Programme or the College Administrator.

APPENDIX 3:

Outcome Letter Template

Dear [*Name of complainant*],

Complaint/Appeal Outcome

This letter confirms that All Nations Christian College has completed its internal investigation into your complaint appeal regarding: [*please describe*]

OR

This letter confirms that All Nations Christian College has completed its internal investigation into your appeal against the decision of [*which body*] to [*please describe*]:

The issues that you raised in your *complaint / appeal etc** were [*details*]

The issue(s) that were considered in relation to your *complaint / appeal etc was / were**: [*brief summary of the complaint etc*].

The procedures / regulations applied were*: [*name of policy and procedure documents*].

The final decision of the College is [*detail*] because [*reasons*].

Appeal Options:

The Open University accredits our institution and validates our undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome you may be able to apply for a review of *your complaint / appeal etc.*, by contacting The OU for the next and final step of the internal process, using any of the following methods:

- By writing to The Director, Open University Validation Partnerships, The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA U.K.
- By email to: OUVV_Director@open.ac.uk
- By phone: 01908 332840

Following investigation, The OU will issue you with a Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter.

Only when The OU has issued a CoP letter can you (if still dissatisfied) go to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA was set up under the Higher Education Act 2004 to provide 'an independent student complaints scheme'. This scheme is free to students.

Any complaint made to the OIA can only be made:

- If your complaint is eligible under its rules
- Usually, only if has first been dealt with through the College and The OU's internal procedures and not until after their completion.
- If it is received by the OIA within 12 months of the date of your CoP letter from The Open University.

Yours sincerely,

[Authorised signatory]