



ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS

August 2025

WTC Academic Appeals Process

Purpose	To outline the Academic Appeals process for students at WTC.
Enquiries	Enquiries about the Academic Appeals Process should be directed to the WTC Registrar (registrar@wtctheology.org.uk)
UKPRN	10030973
Legal Address	Suite 5, Winchcombe House, 37-39 Winchcombe Street, Cheltenham, GL52 2NA
Author	Registrar
Approved by	Principal, Dean of Studies
Next Review	August 2026
Staff member responsible for update	Dean of Studies
Policy / procedure relevant to	MyWTC

Introduction

The academic appeals procedure allows WTC students to raise any concerns about their academic process where there is evidence to suggest that it is reasonable to do so. The procedure is designed to ensure that any student concerns are fully considered, and where appropriate, action is taken. This is separate from the Students Complaints Policy which covers non-academic issues. For non-academic matters students should refer to the [Students Complaints Policy](#) on MyWTC.

Part 1 - What the Academic Appeal Process covers

1.1. If a student believes that there has been an administrative error in the submission of their grades, they should contact the WTC Registry Team who will investigate the matter. If there has been an administrative error, this will be corrected without the need for a formal appeal.

1.2 This process covers the following academic appeal situations:

- Cases where examination or assessment performance has genuinely been affected by adverse personal circumstances that were unexpected and unavoidable at the time of assessment. WTC has a process that takes into account mitigating circumstances.
- Outcomes from the Programme Assessment Board (on solely academic matters) on the grounds of:
 - Material irregularity in the way the student's case was considered by the Programme Assessment Boards.
 - Extenuating circumstances which affected the student's performance of which the Board was unaware and where it was not possible to notify the Board beforehand.
- Outcomes from a Mitigating Circumstances Board (on the same grounds as those listed above).
- Outcomes from an Academic Conduct Investigation (on the same grounds as those listed above).

1.3 This process does not cover the following:

- General dissatisfaction with assessment marks.
All module assessments are subject to a stringent moderation process and are further reviewed by an External Examiner to verify the standards and consistency of marking. Consequently, marks may not be appealed except in cases that meet the criteria outlined in point 1.2 above.
- Alleged poor teaching
- Supervision or academic guidance
These final two issues should be raised at the time either with the Director of Student Services, or through the student's respective Student Representative, or through the Students Complaints Policy.

1.4 The academic appeals process is primarily evidence based, and it is the student's responsibility to provide sufficient independent documentary evidence to substantiate the contents of their appeal. If there is insufficient or no evidence, this will result in the appeal being unsuccessful. This evidence might include:

- **Appeals for medical or other exceptional personal circumstances**

- The student should provide medical, professional, or other independent evidence. This evidence should clearly outline the circumstances and how they affected the student at point of assessment.
- The evidence must sufficiently explain why the student did not follow the procedures for requesting an extension, or deferral, or submit an application to the Mitigating Circumstances Board.
- If the student has a long term condition, and the student does not have evidence that relates specifically to the time period when assessments were due, an appropriate medical diagnosis might be sufficient. This is especially so in cases where it is reasonable for the Appeals Board to assume that the student was suffering for a significant period prior to diagnosis. However, this will be acceptable on only one occasion, as the appeals procedure is not a substitute for the normal extension, deferral, or mitigating circumstances procedures.
- Medical evidence should contain a clear medical diagnosis or the opinion of an appropriate qualified healthcare professional. It should not be a simple report where the student told the healthcare professional they were feeling unwell.
- The evidence must relate to the student in question. If the student is submitting medical evidence relating to someone else, they must also provide supporting evidence of their relationship to the person and how their illness impacted the student. This additional evidence could include:
 - Evidence of travel journeys taken;
 - Confirmation of time taken off work;
 - Letters confirming caring responsibilities from independent bodies.
- The evidence must be wholly independent. This means that letters from family members, friends, and others not acting in a professional capacity would not be acceptable.
- The evidence must be provided in English. When documentation is in another language, the students must arrange for it to be professionally translated and provide a certified copy.

- **Appeals relating to procedural or administrative irregularity**
 - The student's statement must be clear for the Appeals Board to understand the point that the student is making. Wherever possible, they should provide evidence to support their claim. This could include:
 - Copies of relevant emails between the student and members of staff;
 - Copies of statements made in the module handbook/Moodle page;
 - Copies of marked work and/or feedback sheets.

The information here is not an exhaustive list and is for guidance only. Students can choose what documentation to submit to support their appeal. If in any doubt, it is better to supply more, rather than less documentary evidence.

1.5 Academic Appeals which are not based on the acceptable grounds will be dismissed.

1.6 Indicative timescales throughout these procedures are given in calendar days. However, where a deadline (whether for the student, or WTC) falls on Saturday, Sunday, Bank Holiday, or other day where WTC is closed (such as holidays and immediately following a teaching residential week), the deadline is extended to the next available working day.

Part 2 - Rights and Responsibilities

2.1 Any decision that is the subject of an academic appeal remains in force while the appeal is being considered, and the appellant must abide by that decision until the academic appeals procedure has been completed.

2.2 Where a student has completed a programme of study, they must not attend any award ceremony until the academic appeal is completed. Attendance at a ceremony will invalidate the appeal and all decisions will stand.

2.3 Any student who submits an academic appeal under this procedure will not be academically disadvantaged for doing so. Any student who believes that they have been academically disadvantaged by submitting an academic appeal should contact the WTC Director of Student Services immediately.

2.4 WTC accepts that any student who submits an academic appeal under this procedure is doing so in good faith, and that any statements they have made in writing or verbally are truthful. However, WTC, reserves the right to investigate the authenticity of any documents submitted in support of an academic appeal. Any

student found to have deliberately attempted to deceive, manipulate or in any way interfere with the operation of this procedure will be subject to disciplinary action.

2.5 All members of staff who have been involved in the investigation, management or administration of an academic appeal will observe the requirements for confidentiality. The student has the right to restrict the extent to which any part of their appeal submission is disclosed outside of a WTC Academic Appeals Board. However, students exercising this right must be aware that doing so may impair the full investigation of the case.

2.6 As long as the student has not had their studies with WTC terminated or has otherwise completed their programme of study, they will retain the same rights of access to the resources and support of WTC as any other student. Following submission of an appeal, communication which directly relates to the substance of that appeal must be channelled through the WTC Academic Appeals Board.

2.7 WTC will use its best endeavours to ensure that academic appeals are dealt with in a timely way. If the appellant meets all of the deadlines outlined in these procedures, a decision by the Academic Appeals Board should normally be made within 60 days of the date of submission. Where any delay is caused by WTC, the appellant will be kept informed and reasons will be provided.

2.8 To facilitate the swift handling of appeals, communication will be to the student's WTC email address and may be copied to one other alternate email address specified by the student. It is the student's responsibility to check their email regularly during the appeals process. WTC will regard any email sent to an appellant by 4pm (Monday-Friday) as having been received on the same day.

2.9 If at any point in the conduct of an appeal under these procedures it appears that other students who may or may not have appealed have been affected by an alleged or identified irregularity, this will be reported to the WTC Dean of Studies and the Registrar who jointly shall be empowered to instruct that appeals are considered on behalf of all students believed to have been affected.

Part 3 - Responsibilities for Academic Appeals Process

3.1. Overall and final responsibility for the Academic Appeals Process:

Principal, Dean of Studies, Director of Student Services, Registrar, Assistant Registrar.

3.2. Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring any Academic Appeals applications are correctly processed and signed off:

Registrar (*UG Students*), Assistant Registrar (*PG Students*).

Final authorisation from the Programme Leader: Ben Blackwell (Principal) or
Freddy Hedley (Dean of Studies).

Review Date - August 2025

Signed	Job Role	Date
	Dean of Studies	3rd August 2025