

## Tips for Writing A Good Appeal Letter

- 1. Word Limit:** Your letter should be concise and should not exceed 500-800 words (or a page to a page and a half) typed and single spaced.
- 2. Address:** Address your letter to the Associate Dean (Studies)
- 3. Structure:** The appeal letter should be structured in three parts:

- a. The Request:**

State clearly what your appeal is about. (For instance: "I am appealing the Faculty's decision that I must withdraw from Queen's for a minimum of three years." Or "I am appealing to drop POLS 264\* (Fall, 2005)...").

- b. Explanation of Extenuating Circumstances:**

In the second section of the appeal, provide a concise explanation of the extenuating circumstances--those personal events beyond your control--which have directly affected your academic performance. "Extenuating circumstances, beyond your control" that students typically describe include a physical illness, a psychological challenge, domestic or family problems, or an unusual academic event. Note that the actual detailed personal circumstances are not as important as the effects of these events on your academic performance.

Therefore, you should make a direct connection between the extenuating circumstances as outlined in the supporting documents and their effect on your academic performance. Please discuss when the particular events occurred, how long you were affected, and what work in your courses was affected. You might also outline what steps you took to deal with the extenuating circumstances during or after their occurrence (for example, consultation with a health-care professional or personal counselor).

- c. Future plan**

An appeal should normally include a plan for achieving academic success should your appeal be granted. In the case of a temporary extenuating circumstance, such as a physical illness, the plan for coping with the extenuating circumstance is often straightforward. For example, you are appealing to drop a course late and you propose to retake the course the following year or over the spring session.

However, in the case of more severe or ongoing extenuating circumstances, you should indicate how you will make personal adjustments to succeed in your future studies. Some of your plans might address academics (e.g., such as taking a lighter course load, changing programs etc) whereas others might pertain more directly to your extenuating circumstance such as maintaining regular meetings with a medical professional or personal counselor. Your appeal letter should specify how your future plans will support your academic goals. You are encouraged to consult with an academic or personal advisor.