Guidelines for Appeals at the BISC

The BISC follows the Queen’s regulations on academic appeals, which are available on the Faculty of Arts and Science (FAS) website: http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/sites/default/files/appeal_regulations.pdf. We recommend that all students and instructors familiarise themselves with these regulations. In particular, we refer students to the “What can I appeal?” section of the FAS website: http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/students-at-queens/academic-appeals which provides detailed explanations on the options available to students. Several types of appeal exist: course-level or review of instructor’s decision on grading of an assignment or examination.

Course level appeal:

- Appeal to add or drop a course after the official deadline
- Appeal for the extension of an Incomplete Grade
- Appeal for Aegrotat (AG) or Credit Standing (CR)

Aegrotat Grade (AG):

Students who, because of illness or other extenuating circumstances beyond their control, are unable to complete all the work of the course, must appeal in writing to the instructor and to the Academic Director for aegrotat standing. At least 60 per cent of the work to be evaluated in the course (assignments, midterms, laboratories, final examination, as specified in the course syllabus) must be completed. A medical certificate or other documentation that demonstrates extenuating circumstances should be provided with the letter of appeal. If this request is granted, the instructors involved will be asked to provide an estimated final grade (e.g., 70 AG) or, if that is not possible, to advise whether the student may be granted credit for the course without a grade (e.g., CR AG). Students may appeal for aegrotat standing no later than 21 days after being assigned a final grade in the course.

Credit Standing (CR):

Students who have completed all of the work of the course including the final examination, and achieved a passing grade, but due to illness or other extenuating circumstances beyond their control, earned a substantially lower grade than might have been expected, must appeal in writing to the instructor and to the Academic Director for credit standing. A medical certificate or other documentation that demonstrates extenuating circumstances should be provided with the letter of

At the BISC, course-level appeals should be discussed with the Deputy Academic Director or the Academic Advisers. Guidance will be provided. Students must then submit their appeal using the Queen’s online submission portal at
Review of instructor’s decision on grading:

If a student decides to appeal a grade, they may do so within 21 days of the grade being received. Here is the procedure to appeal a grade:

1. First level of appeal

As a first stage, students must approach the course instructor to request a review of the grade. The student will explain why they are concerned about the grading of their assignment or exam. This explanation must be documented (either it will be submitted via email or it will be minuted during an in-person discussion). Concerns are likely to be:

- Procedural; supported by e.g. the assignment guidelines, course syllabus and expectations, any class notes about assignment expectation, the assessment rubric + an explanation of why they feel their assignment or exam was not assessed in accordance with these documents.
- Academic; such as inconsistency between assessment content and course material (e.g. if course notes or PowerPoint slides provide information but that same information is marked down in the assessment), undervaluation of academic work, etc.

The instructor will consider the request to review the grade. Once the evidence submitted by the student has been considered, the instructor will send an “Informal Appeal Response” email with a summary of the discussion and their decision. The Deputy Academic Director must be copied in on this email as well as the Appeals Office on main campus, asc.appeals@queensu.ca (note that for COMM courses, our internal record is sufficient). The instructor’s decision can be a maintenance of the original grade or a re-evaluation of the assignment.

2. Second level of appeal

If the outcome of the informal appeal is unsatisfactory to the student, they have the right to proceed to a formal appeal. The formal appeal is submitted online at https://webapp.queensu.ca/artsci/appeals/. The appeal will be received by the Appeals Office on main campus and will then be confidentially passed on to the BISC Deputy Academic Director1, who will act as the head of unit and arrange for a second assessor to evaluate the student’s work. As part of the appeal request, the student will need to:

1 If the appeal relates to a course assessed by the Deputy Academic Director, then it will be received by the Academic Director to avoid a conflict of interest.
“(i) clearly articulate grounds for reconsideration and identify specifically the substance of an answer where the student feels the mark given was not evaluated fully, for example:

- show, in an objective answer, that a correct answer has been counted as incorrect;
- show, in a subjective or essay answer, that the response has been under evaluated substantially and

(ii) provide relevant documentation to support the appeal (i.e. class notes, etc.).

It is the responsibility of the student to preserve all exercises, papers, reports and other graded material for the course and to submit these materials with the appeal. In any formal appeal of term work, the student must accept the responsibility for ensuring that the work presented for reassessment is in fact the original term work submitted for evaluation” (Academic Regulation 11).