

APPEALING A DECISION

Academic regulations at Queen's University were designed to ensure that students are being treated fairly and equitably while upholding the academic standards of the institution. On occasion, there are extenuating circumstances that are usually beyond a student's control that may have impacted their performance at Queen's. Appeal processes were developed to reconsider the appropriateness of any sanctions or penalties that may have been imposed upon a student who may have extenuating circumstances.

Before deciding to appeal:

- Consider why you are pursuing an appeal. In general, only extenuating circumstances that were outside of your control are considered appealable
- Review the rules & regulations of your faculty - it is your responsibility to inform yourself of them
- Be mindful of any dates, deadlines and specific processes you must follow
- Think about the impacts of proceeding with your appeal - weigh the pros and cons
- Seek advice from an Academic Advisor in your home faculty

TIPS ON ORGANIZATION

DO:

- ✓ Use plain English
- ✓ Be upfront and provide an accurate account of facts
- ✓ Indicate how extenuating circumstances directly affected academic performance
- ✓ Include any relevant policies or procedures
- ✓ Include supporting documentation

DON'T:

- ✗ Write a story (use only facts)
- ✗ Over-exaggerate
- ✗ Include irrelevant information (ie. not all e-mails and every conversation are relevant)
- ✗ Feel the need to disclose very personal or sensitive information
- ✗ Assume anything in terms of your reader or other people involved

*Some information has been adapted from the [UBC Ombudsperson Making a Chronology](#) Resource

Appeal
Letter

SUBMITTING AN APPEAL

If you are planning to submit an appeal you will typically need to include an appeal letter. This letter is your opportunity to provide a written account on your extenuating circumstances to support your appeal. It should detail what happened, when it happened (is it still on-going?), and how it affected you or your studies.

**500-800
Words**
Suggested length

THE APPEAL LETTER

1 Introduction

Consider who your audience is and provide an opening introduction in a short paragraph that summarizes your concern. State clearly what your appeal is about.

2 Explanation of Extenuating Circumstances

Provide a clear and concise explanation of your extenuating circumstances, those unforeseen personal events beyond your control, which have directly affected your academic performance.

- Specifically address the timeline of your circumstances and describe how serious or severe they are or were at the time
- Ensure that you connect the timing of the extenuating circumstances to the timing of the course you are appealing
- Explain what specific impact these circumstances had on your performance in this particular course
- Outline the steps you took to deal with the extenuating circumstances during or after their occurrence
- Ensure you address other information specific to your own situation in the appeal letter
- Seek advice from an Academic Advisor in your home Faculty for guidance

3 Future Plan

An appeal typically includes 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.

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 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.

*Some information has been adapted from [Faculty of Arts & Science Appeal Information](#) website