

Non Academic Appeals Policy

September 2026

SLT Responsibility – Adam Fahey

Policy Author – Sharon Dunphy



Significant Changes Following Review

PAGE NUMBER OR HEADING NAME	DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	CHANGES MADE BY
New Policy	New Policy	Sharon Dunphy

Equality Impact Assessment

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the UCSE. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	August 2026
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	Sharon Dunphy
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change?	All Higher Education students enrolled at University Centre South Essex (UCSE) who wish to appeal a non-academic

	decision. Staff involved in the administration, investigation and review of appeals may also be affected
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.?	To establish a clear, transparent and consistent process for reviewing non-academic decisions affecting students. The policy supports fairness, procedural integrity, natural justice and compliance with Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) good practice guidance.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age	1	Neutral. Policy applies equally to all students regardless of age. Policy available in accessible formats. No age-related barriers identified.	Monitor appeals data to ensure no age group is disadvantaged.	Ongoing – Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality
Disability	3	Positive/Neutral. Students with disabilities may require additional support, alternative formats, assistive technology, or advocacy to access the appeals process fully.	Provide reasonable adjustments, alternative formats, and support from Student Services and Disability Support where required.	Ongoing – HE Disability Officer and Student Services Team
Gender (Sex)	1	Neutral. Appeals process applies consistently regardless of sex. No barriers identified.	Continue to monitor outcomes to ensure equitable treatment.	Ongoing – Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Gender Reassignment	1	Neutral. Policy supports fair treatment and confidentiality for all students. No barriers identified.	Ensure confidentiality and dignity are maintained throughout the appeals process.	Ongoing – Examination and Assessments Officer / Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality
Marriage or Civil Partnership	1	Neutral. No differential impact identified.	No action required.	N/A
Pregnancy / Maternity	2	Neutral/Positive. Students who are pregnant or have caring responsibilities may require flexibility in engagement with meetings or timescales.	Consider reasonable flexibility where evidenced circumstances affect participation in the appeals process.	Examination and Assessments Officer

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Race	1	Neutral. Policy applies consistently regardless of race, ethnicity, or nationality. Policy available in clear language.	Provide support where English is not a first language and ensure accessibility of information.	Ongoing – Student Services Team
Religion or Religious Belief	1	Neutral. No barriers identified. Religious observance may occasionally affect availability for meetings.	Where possible, take account of religious observance when arranging meetings.	Ongoing – Examination and Assessments Officer
Sexual Orientation	1	Neutral. No barriers identified.	Continue to ensure appeals are handled fairly and without discrimination.	Ongoing – Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality

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1. Purpose

This Policy sets out the process by which students may appeal non-academic decisions made by University Centre South Essex (UCSE). It ensures that appeals are managed fairly, transparently, and consistently. An appeal under this Policy may only be submitted once the student has exhausted the relevant UCSE procedure and received a final outcome.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all students enrolled on Higher Education Programmes at UCSE and covers appeals against non-academic decisions, including but not limited to:

- Disciplinary outcomes
- Attendance and Engagement outcomes
- Fitness to Study decisions
- Fitness to Practice decisions (where not academic in nature)
- Withdrawal or exclusion decisions (where not academic in nature)
- Decisions relating to student status (e.g. suspension where not academic in nature)
- Decisions regarding bursaries or funding

This policy does not cover:

- Academic appeals (which are covered under the Academic Appeals Policy by the Validating Partner)
- Complaints: academic and non-academic about services or provision (refer to the Complaints Policy)

3. Principles

UCSE will ensure that all appeals are treated seriously and resolved as quickly as possible. Students will be treated fairly and without prejudice throughout the process, and clear reasons will be provided for all decisions. Students will be kept informed of outcomes and any next steps, and no student will be disadvantaged for submitting an appeal in good faith.

4. Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be submitted on one or more of the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity in the original decision-making process
- New evidence that could not reasonably have been provided at the time of the original decision
- Evidence of bias or lack of fairness in the process
- The decision was unreasonable or disproportionate in the circumstances

Dissatisfaction with a decision alone is not sufficient grounds for appeal.

5. Timeframes

- Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the date of the decision outcome being issued
- UCSE will acknowledge receipt of appeal within 5 working days
- Appeals will normally be resolved within 20 working days

6. Submission of Appeal

Students must submit their appeal in writing using the appropriate appeal form and send it to appeals@southessex.ac.uk. Appeals should include:

- The grounds for appeal
- Any supporting evidence

Late appeals will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Appeals will be reviewed by the Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality/Appropriate Senior Nominee/Head of School who has no prior involvement in the original decision. Where appropriate, a panel may be convened to consider complex cases.

The reviewer/panel will:

- Review all submitted evidence
- Determine whether the appeal meets the stated grounds
- Decide whether to uphold, partially uphold, or reject the appeal

The reviewer/panel may:

- Confirm the original decision
- Amend the decision
- Refer the case back for reconsideration

7. Outcome

Students will receive a written outcome including:

- The decision
- The reasons for the decision
- Any actions to be taken
- Information about further steps available

The outcome of the appeal represent the final stage of UCSE's internal procedure. A Completion of Procedures Letter will be issued to the student upon conclusion of the appeal process.

Once all stages of UCSE's internal appeals procedure have been completed and a Completion of Procedures Letter has been issued, students may ask the Office

of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) to review their case. All applications to the OIA must be made within twelve months of the date of the Completion of Procedures letter issued by UCSE or Validating Partner to the student. The OIA considers complaints from people who remain dissatisfied at the conclusion of the appeals procedure. The OIA looks at issues such as whether UCSE followed its policy, and whether the final decision was reasonable in all the circumstances.

The OIA cannot normally consider appeals:

- where the student has not progressed through all stages of the appeals process
- where the appeal refers to matters more than three years old
- where the Completion of Procedures letter is received to them outside the twelve month time limit
- Where matters have been or are being considered in court.

Full details of the scheme are available at www.oiahe.org.uk. Or visit <https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students/how-to-complain-to-us/>

8. Support

Students may seek advice and support from student services or student representatives when submitting an appeal. Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to support students with disabilities or additional needs throughout the appeals process.

9. Monitoring and Review

UCSE will monitor appeals to identify trends, ensure consistency, and inform improvements to policies and procedures.

10. Related Policies

- Academic Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Assessment and Engagement Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Fitness to Practice Policy

All policies can be found on our website www.southessex.ac.uk/he

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Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality
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