

## Academic Appeals and Consideration Policy

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**Approved By:**  
 Board of Governors  
 President and Vice  
Presidents

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### 1. Purpose

This document sets out the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning's ("Sheridan") policy by which Sheridan students may appeal an academic decision.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all Sheridan full and part-time students and does not cover appeals alleging discriminatory bias based on the prohibited grounds outlined in Sheridan's Harassment and Discrimination Policy. For further information on Sheridan's Harassment and Discrimination Policy or to make a non-academic appeal, please refer to the Sheridan Discrimination and Harassment Policy and /or contact the Director, Human Rights & Equity at x2915.

The steps, outlined in the Academic Appeals and Consideration Procedure, apply only to final grade decisions and academic decisions. For example, Admission Appeals are processed through the Admission Policy and appeals related to Language Assessment Placement are handled through a separate process. In most cases, non-academic misconduct will be dealt with under the Student Code of Conduct, but a decision-maker dealing with an appeal under this Policy has the jurisdiction to deal with any non-academic misconduct which is related to the matter under appeal.

### 3. Definitions

#### Academic Decision

An academic decision is a decision made by Sheridan acting in accordance with academic policies and procedures. Examples of decisions that may be appealed include but are not limited to:

- Sanctions for a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy
- Progression or graduation decisions
- Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) decisions and/or,
- Advanced Standing decisions
- Research Integrity

Decisions that are not appealable include but are not limited to:

- Grade point average (GPA) requirements for graduation
- Incomplete grades
- Academic Expulsions

### **Final Grade**

A final grade is awarded upon completion of the course.

### **Final Grade Appeal**

A final grade appeal is a request that a final grade be reviewed and amended based on evidence supplied by the student. This can include requests from students who were unable to withdraw without academic penalty from the course by the drop deadline. Appeals of both failing and passing final grades will be considered. A grade appeal may result in the final grade being increased, decreased or unchanged.

### **Level 1 Academic Appeal**

A Level 1 academic appeal is the first stage in the appeal process.

### **Level 2 Academic Appeal**

A Level 2 academic appeal is the last stage of the appeal process and may be used by students who wish to appeal a Level 1 academic appeal decision.

### **Mark**

A mark is awarded for each individual evaluation within the course; each mark contributes to the final grade.

### **Sheridan Academic Appeals Committee**

The Sheridan Academic Appeals Committee (hereafter “the Committee”) is a standing committee of the Office of the Provost and VPA.

The decision of the committee is final and binding.

## **4. Policy Statement**

Sheridan is committed to promoting academic success and to ensuring that a students’ record accurately reflects their academic abilities and achievements. Students who disagree with a decision made concerning their academic status have the right to appeal the decision. Sheridan recognizes the right of students to appeal:

- i. Final grade decisions\*
- ii. Academic decisions

\* Students who are not satisfied with a mark they have received on any course work that contributes to their final grade are encouraged to speak with their faculty immediately to seek clarification, and/or resolution (refer to the Student Assessment and Evaluation Procedure). If a resolution cannot be reached, the student may appeal their final grade received in the course.

#### **4.1 Principles:**

The general principles of Sheridan's Academic Appeals and Considerations Policy are as follows:

- Students have the right to appeal without fear of disadvantage or reprisal.
- Appeals should ideally be resolved informally by parties involved.
- Appeals will be addressed in a timely manner adhering to time limits.
- Students are encouraged to consult with Student Advisement for guidance and information at any stage of the process.
- Students have the option of having a support person present during any stage of their appeal. This support person shall not speak on behalf of the student.
- Students should inform faculty at the earliest opportunity of any circumstance that may affect their academic performance so that alternative arrangements can be made.
- Appeals do not impact enrolment eligibility; students will maintain their registration status until the appeal is resolved. Exceptions to this principle may be necessary in the case of a student expected to participate in a work placement and/or in the case of a student who is subject to an interim or final decision prohibiting the student from attending campus or restricting their access to campus (i.e., under the Student Code of Conduct, security, court decision).
- Transparency is paramount and students may request that Sheridan provide rationale and explanations for decisions.
- Students' privacy and confidentiality will be respected throughout the appeal process.

#### **4.2 Time Limits:**

In order to ensure that decisions are made in a timely manner, time limits are associated with each step in the academic appeal process. Refer to the Academic Appeals and Consideration Procedure for time limit details.

#### **4.3 Grounds for Appeal:**

To make an academic appeal, a student must establish that there are grounds for an appeal. Appeals filed without grounds or appropriate documentation may be dismissed.

There are five (5) grounds that may be considered when filing a Level 1 academic appeal:

<b>Grounds</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Appropriate Documentation</b>
Academic Evaluation	Students may appeal a final grade they believe to be unfair.	Document the events or evidence that support the appeal. If appropriate, students shall provide the course outline, grading rubric, or disputed course work.
Course Management	Concerns about how a course was delivered or managed, or final grades that represent a significant departure from the course outline or the evaluation criteria.	Document the events or evidence that support the appeal. If appropriate, students shall provide the course outline, grading rubric, or disputed course work.
Compassionate	Events or circumstances beyond the control of, and often unforeseen by, the student, which seriously impacted their academic performance.	Documentation <u>may</u> include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Death Certificate/Notice</li> <li>• Relevant Travel Documents</li> <li>• Legal Documentation</li> <li>• Letter from Religious Leader</li> </ul>
Medical	An illness or medical condition which seriously impacted a student's academic performance.	Medical Certificate/Letter from Physician (should include: name, date medical attention was sought, the impact the illness/medical condition had on their ability to complete course work, any restrictions/limitations, etc.)
Procedural Error	A belief an academic policy was improperly applied or not followed or a final grade was miscalculated.	Document any events or evidence that support the alleged error.

There are three (3) grounds that may be considered when filing a Level 2 academic appeal:

1. A significant procedural error has occurred in the first level of appeal.
2. Compelling new evidence is available that could potentially influence the appeal and that could not reasonably have been obtained during the first level of appeal.
3. Sanctions imposed are unreasonable or substantially disproportionate to the circumstance or offence.

#### **4.4 Burden of Proof:**

It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate through clear evidence that appropriate grounds for appeal exist and that their appeal should be considered.

Should an appeal be dismissed due to lack of appropriate grounds the decision maker, or delegate, may identify an Alternate Resolution as a means of addressing the student's concern.

#### **4.5 Information and Communication:**

Changes to existing and new academic policies and procedures will be broadly communicated to the Students through various means and the Sheridan community is responsible for remaining up to date with all of Sheridan's policies and procedures.

The Responsible Office(s) shall be: Office of the Registrar.

Contact/Support: Student Advisement

#### **5. Related Documentation (Procedures/Additional Policies/Forms)**

[Academic Appeal Form Level 1](#)

[Academic Appeal Form Level 2](#)

[Academic Appeals and Consideration Procedure](#)

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Academic Standing Policy](#)

[Free Speech Policy](#)

[Graduation Policy](#)

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) Policy](#)

[Student Assessment and Evaluation Procedure](#)