

# APPEAL GUIDELINES

Academic regulations at NSCAD University are 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 NSCAD. 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. NSCAD University students have the right to appeal academic decisions or to ask for an exception to a university rule or policy on an academic matter.

*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 division - 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 a Chair/Program Director in your division

# GET ORGANIZED

DO:	DON'T:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Be upfront and provide accurate account of facts</li> <li>➤ Keep it simple</li> <li>➤ Indicate how extenuating circumstances directly affected academic performance</li> <li>➤ Include any relevant policies or procedures</li> <li>➤ Include supporting documentation</li> <li>➤ Submit before the deadline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Write a story (use only facts)</li> <li>➤ Over-exaggerate</li> <li>➤ Include irrelevant information (ie. not all e-mails and every conversation are relevant)</li> <li>➤ Feel the need to disclose very personal or sensitive information</li> <li>➤ Assume anything in terms of your reader or other people involved</li> <li>➤ Get others to prepare the letter for you</li> </ul>

# SUBMITTING AN APPEAL

If you are planning to submit an appeal you will have 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. Please keep the letter to less than 1000 words.

## THE APPEAL LETTER

The appeal should be in the form of a letter written and signed you. The letter should clearly and concisely explain the appeal, state the matter being appealed in the first sentence, and include all relevant information in support of the appeal. The appeal must include the following on the first page in the upper left corner.

- Your full name
- Your student ID number
- Your current postal address
- Your NSCAD email
- Phone number

### **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.

### **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/program you are appealing
- Explain what specific impact these circumstances had on your performance in this particular course/program
- 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 a Program Chair/Director in your area for guidance
- Although advisors can provide advice, you are ultimately responsible for knowing and understanding the degree requirements and policies related to your own academic progress

**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.

**Documentation**

Include any documents that support your appeal. These could be medical/mental health records, a letter from your healthcare provider, or any evidence of a personal hardship