



Academic Appeals and Student Complaints Procedure

Date: June 2026

1 Introduction and Scope

This procedure applies to all enrolled students at the London Institute of Actuarial Studies (LIAS). It covers two distinct but related processes:

- **Academic Appeals:** Challenges to academic decisions affecting a student's progress, assessment, or award (e.g., grade disputes, assessment irregularities, exam board decisions).
- **Student Complaints:** Concerns about the quality of service, teaching, supervision, facilities, or other non-academic aspects of the student experience.

This procedure is separate from:

- The **Complaints and Appeals Procedure** for applicants (admissions-related concerns).
- The **Student Protection Plan** (major disruption to studies, course closure, institutional exit).
- The **Tuition Fee Refund and Compensation Policy** (financial redress).

LIAS is committed to handling appeals and complaints fairly, transparently, and promptly. This procedure has been developed with reference to good practice in the UK higher education sector and the expectations of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). LIAS is not yet registered with the OfS, but we align our processes with OIA principles.

2 Definitions and Key Principles

2.1 Definitions

- **Academic Appeal:** A request to review a formal academic decision (e.g., mark, progression decision, degree classification) on grounds of procedural irregularity, error, bias, or failure to take relevant information into account.
- **Student Complaint:** An expression of dissatisfaction about a service, action, or lack of action by LIAS or its staff, which does not involve an academic decision.

2.2 Principles

LIAS will ensure that:

- Students are not disadvantaged in good faith for raising a concern.
- Appeals and complaints are handled by staff not directly involved in the original decision.
- Timeframes are clear and adhered to (extensions may be granted with prior notice).
- Confidentiality is maintained except where disclosure is required by law or to investigate the matter.
- A record of all appeals and complaints is kept for monitoring and quality assurance.

3 Academic Appeals

3.1 Grounds for an Appeal

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

1. A procedural irregularity in the assessment or examination process.
2. A material error in the calculation or recording of marks.
3. Evidence of bias or lack of proper consideration by an assessor.
4. New evidence that could not reasonably have been made available earlier and that would have materially affected the outcome.

Appeals based solely on disagreement with academic judgment (e.g., “I deserved a higher mark”) will not be accepted.

3.2 Informal Discussion

Students are encouraged to first discuss their concern with the module leader, supervisor, or relevant academic lead. This informal stage should be initiated within **10 working days** of receiving the result or decision. Many issues can be resolved at this stage.

3.3 Formal Appeal Submission

If the matter is not resolved informally, the student may submit a formal academic appeal within **15 working days** of the informal discussion (or directly if the informal stage is not appropriate).

The appeal must be sent to appeals@lias.org.uk and include:

- Full name and student ID.
- Programme name and module/assessment concerned.
- The grounds for appeal (as above).
- A clear statement of the outcome sought.
- Supporting evidence (e.g., emails, assessment scripts, medical evidence where relevant).

The appeal will be acknowledged within **5 working days**.

3.4 Review of Appeal

A senior academic lead (or a member of the Advisory Team) who was not involved in the original decision will review the appeal. The review will consider the written submission and any relevant documentation. In complex cases, the reviewer may request further information from the student or the original assessor.

A written outcome will be provided within **20 working days** of the appeal submission. If the appeal is upheld, the reviewer will specify the corrective action (e.g., re-marking, re-assessment, adjustment of record).

3.5 Further Review (Final Internal Stage)

If the student remains dissatisfied, they may request a final review by the Director (founder) or a delegated member of the Advisory Team. This request must be made within **10 working days** of the appeal outcome and will be acknowledged within **5 working days**.

The Director will issue a final written decision within **15 working days**. This decision concludes LIAS's internal procedures.

4 Student Complaints

4.1 Scope of Complaints

Student complaints may cover, for example:

- Quality of teaching, supervision, or academic support.
- Administrative errors or delays.
- Poor communication or unhelpful behaviour by staff.
- Facilities, IT, library, or online learning platforms.
- Complaints about other students (e.g., harassment, bullying – refer also to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy).

4.2 Informal Resolution

Students should first raise the matter with the relevant staff member (e.g., module leader, programme lead, student support officer). This informal stage should be initiated within **10 working days** of the incident. Most complaints can be resolved promptly at this level.

4.3 Formal Complaint Submission

If informal resolution fails, the student may submit a formal complaint within **15 working days** of the informal discussion (or directly if the informal stage is inappropriate).

The complaint must be sent to complaints@lias.org.uk and include:

- Full name and student ID.
- Description of the issue, including dates and individuals involved.
- Copies of any relevant correspondence.
- The desired outcome.

The complaint will be acknowledged within **5 working days**.

4.4 Investigation and Response

A senior member of the student support team or an academic lead (not involved in the issue) will investigate. They may speak with the student and relevant staff. A written response will be provided within **20 working days**, explaining the findings and any actions to be taken.

4.5 Review by the Director

If the student is not satisfied with the response, they may request a review by the Director (founder) or a delegated member of the Advisory Team. This request must be made within **10 working days** and will be acknowledged within **5 working days**.

The Director will issue a final decision within **15 working days**. This concludes LIAS's internal complaints procedure.

5 External Review (OIA)

LIAS is not yet registered with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education. Once we become OfS-registered, students who have exhausted our internal procedures may be eligible to refer their academic appeal or complaint to the OIA. Further information will be provided at that time.

6 Record-Keeping, Confidentiality and Monitoring

LIAS will:

- Maintain a secure log of all formal appeals and complaints, including outcomes and actions taken.
- Handle personal data in accordance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Ensure access to records is restricted to authorised staff.
- Use anonymised data for quality assurance and institutional improvement.

The Director, in consultation with the Advisory Team, will receive an annual anonymised summary of appeals and complaints.

7 Governance and Review

Responsibility for this procedure rests with the Director (founder), supported by the Advisory Team and experienced academic leads.

This procedure will be reviewed by **30 June 2027** and annually thereafter. Material amendments will be emailed to all current students at least 14 days before taking effect, except in emergencies.

Any personal data processed in connection with an appeal or complaint will be handled in accordance with our Privacy Notices and UK GDPR. For queries, contact the Data Protection Lead at privacy@lias.org.uk.