

STUDENT AWARDS AGENCY SCOTLAND

# A GUIDE TO APPEALS

Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) is committed to making our service easy to use and in line with our statutory equalities duties. We will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to help you access and use our services. This guide can be printed in other languages and formats (such as large print, audio and Braille).

This guide describes our appeals procedures.

We understand that there may be an occasion where you, or someone else acting on your behalf, believe that there are grounds to appeal our decision on entitlement to student funding and/or the assessment of how much support should be given.

Appeals will be treated fairly, objectively and independently from the original decision maker. We will consider the facts and circumstances of each appeal and will take into account all relevant considerations when making a decision.

## | WHAT IS AN APPEAL?

An appeal is a formal request to review our decision about funding. The grounds for an appeal is that our decision, based on all relevant evidence available to SAAS at the time, was wrong. To establish that a decision was wrong, you must demonstrate why it was wrong and support your request with relevant documentary evidence (other information that was not presented at the time of the original decision).

We may also consider an appeal on extenuating or mitigating circumstances. These requests must be supported by independent evidence such as medical information or from your institution.

The appeal provides a decision, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, on whether the action taken in the case agrees with the regulations, which govern the scheme and our processes.

## | WHAT CAN YOU APPEAL?

You can make an appeal on a decision about your funding and/or the amount of funding you have been awarded.

However, before making an appeal you should look at the guide to funding which explains in more detail, as to why the original decision was made.

## | WHAT IS NOT AN APPEAL?

This list is not exhaustive but you cannot appeal issues that should be dealt with through our Complaints Handling Procedures. These are:

- a delay in responding to an enquiry or requests
- our failure to provide a service

- a request for information that we have not actioned
- the quality and standard of service
- treatment by or attitude of a staff member
- our failure to follow proper administrative process
- our policy

## | WHO CAN APPEAL?

We understand that there may be reason why a student is unable or reluctant to make an appeal. You may wish to ask someone else to make and manage the appeal on your behalf. You must ensure that anyone acting on your behalf has a written and signed agreement ([third party consent form](#)) from you, as we will need to see this before we can pass any information we hold on you to another person.

## | HOW DO I MAKE AN APPEAL?

Appeals must be completed on the [attached template](#).

You must tell us:

- your full name, address and student reference number
- what your appeal is about
- why you think our decision is wrong
- what documents you have provided in support of your appeal
- how you want us to resolve the matter

An appeal request that is not supported with the relevant information will be returned and no action will be taken.

## | WHEN CAN I MAKE AN APPEAL?

An appeal should be raised as soon as possible after receiving our decision or within six months of the original decision.

We may consider an appeal after the time limit in exceptional circumstances. Please tell us why the time limit should not apply to your appeal.

## | WHERE DO I SUBMIT THE APPEAL?

Your appeal should be sent to [SAASComplaints.Appeals@gov.scot](mailto:SAASComplaints.Appeals@gov.scot) or in writing to:  
Student Awards Agency Scotland, Complaints and Appeals Team,  
Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3UT.

# OUR TWO STAGE APPEALS PROCEDURE

## | STAGE ONE

Your appeal will be allocated to an appeals officer who has not been involved in any earlier decision making on your case. They will investigate the appeal by:

- reviewing your student record
- listening to telephone calls made by you or on your behalf
- reviewing the additional evidence submitted with the appeal
- preparing a report
- discussing with a team manager

A decision letter will be issued which will advise you whether we have:

- upheld the original decision
- not upheld the original decision
- partially upheld the original decision

We will also process your application for funding and, if there are any additional payments to be made, these will be made to you. We will also revise your award notice.

We will also advise you of the next steps.

### **Timescales**

We aim to reply within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. If this is not possible, we will let you know when a response will be issued.

## | STAGE TWO

We cannot progress to a second stage appeal if you do not provide additional supporting evidence.

Your appeal will be allocated to a different appeals officer who will carry out a further investigation. They will prepare a background report, which is submitted, to a member of the Executive Team who will review the case and make a decision on behalf of the Chief Executive. This decision is final therefore, you should ensure that you have submitted all the supporting evidence relating to your appeal.

## | RECORDING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING APPEALS

We keep a record of all the appeals received and use the information to review our processes and policies to make continuous improvements.

## | RESTRICTED FUNDING (NOT FIT FOR SUPPORT)

It is key that we only pay money to individuals that we assess as being entitled to receive support. In certain circumstances, we may take the decision that an individual has acted in bad faith and as a result, lost their entitlement to receive public funding for education. We will follow our Restricted Funding Policy and place a restriction on the level of support they receive.

Appeals on these occasions must be addressed to the Chief Executive's office and sent to [SAASComplaints\\_Appeals@gov.scot](mailto:SAASComplaints_Appeals@gov.scot). Appeals can be made about the decision to place someone on the Restricted Funding Register. This is a one-stage appeals process.