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| <b>Policy Title:</b>               | Postgraduate Appeals Process                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Description:</b>                | Policy to outline the circumstances in which students on taught postgraduate programmes are allowed to ask for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress. |
| <b>Author (Position):</b>          | Vice President (Academic Affairs) and Registrar                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Version:</b>                    | 3.1                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Approved By:</b>                | MIE Governing Body                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Policy Approval Date:</b>       | June 2023                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Date of Next Policy Review:</b> | June 2027(or as necessary)                                                                                                                                                 |

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# Postgraduate Appeals Process

## 1 Context

Marino Institute of Education (MIE) recognises that in the context of its examination and assessment procedures, a student may wish to appeal a decision made in relation to their academic progress. The appeals procedure may be used only when there are eligible grounds (see [Section 2.1](#)) for doing so and may not be used simply because a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of a decision concerning their academic progress. The Postgraduate Appeals Process shall not hear requests for re-check/re-mark of examinations and assessments. These should be processed according to the regulations stated in the MIE [Re-Check/Re-Mark of Assessments Procedure](#).

## 2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to outline the appeals process and the circumstances in which students in part-time and full-time postgraduate taught programmes such as the Master in Education Studies courses are allowed to ask for a review of a decision relating to their academic progress, where a student case;
- i. Is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of MIE, or
  - ii. Is based on a claim that the regulations of MIE were not properly applied in the applicant's case, or
  - iii. Represents an *ad misericordiam* appeal.

An appeal<sup>1</sup> other than an [ad misericordiam](#) cannot be heard against the normal application of MIE's academic regulations approved by the President.

- 2.2 Documentation that could be supplied for such appeals include;
- i. Evidence that a student has a situation that is not covered by the ordinary regulations. For example, a student may present circumstances where they have failed but they can show that the circumstances of their case is not covered by existing policies, including handbooks
  - ii. A student provides an example of correspondence from MIE which shows that the rules were not properly applied when making a decision about their situation.

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<sup>1</sup> See [Appeals Policy \(Academic Progression\)](#), [Court of First Appeal Process](#) and [Court of Second Appeal Process](#)

### 3 Benefits

This procedure and related documents referred to in [Section 9](#), support the management and conduct of academic appeals in a transparent and equitable way.

### 4 Scope

- 4.1 This procedure applies to all students registered in part-time and full-time postgraduate taught programmes in MIE and to those who have gone off the register, provided they bring their appeal within a three-month period. Appeals (See [Section 9](#)) concerning events occurring, or decisions made more than four months previously will only be considered in the most exceptional circumstances.
- 4.2 Requests for re-checking/re-marking of examinations and assessments are not covered by this policy<sup>2</sup>.

### 5 Principles

- 5.1 MIE is committed to ensuring that the management and conduct of appeals is equitable and consistent.
- 5.2 The procedure for any appeal will comply with the laws of natural justice.
- 5.3 The composition of the Appeals Committee consists of members who have not had any formal dealing with the student in any capacity.

### 6 Definitions

Ad misericordiam **appeal** refers to an appeal based on compassionate grounds.

### 7 Levels in the Appeals Process

- 7.1 There are three stages to the appeals process:
  - i. Programme Board<sup>3</sup>
  - ii. The Postgraduate Appeals' Committee and
  - iii. The Institute Appeals' Committee.

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<sup>2</sup> See [Re-Check/Re-Mark of Assessments Procedure](#)

<sup>3</sup> See [Programme Boards Terms of Reference](#)

### 7.1.2 Programme Board<sup>4</sup> (Stage 1)

Students who wish to make an appeal on matters of academic progress arising out of the Court of Examiners<sup>5</sup> decisions or academic circumstances should do so in writing through the Lead Tutor<sup>6</sup>. The Lead Tutor<sup>6</sup> will escalate this to the Course Leader of the student's programme notifying the Course Leader that the student wishes to make an appeal. The grounds for the appeal should be clearly stated and must fall under one of the three criteria listed above and be supported by documentary evidence (see [Section 2.2](#)). The Programme Board<sup>4</sup> will make a decision on the appeal, and this will be communicated to the Course Leader<sup>7</sup> and Lead Tutor<sup>6</sup>, who will then inform the student of the decision.

### 7.1.3 Postgraduate Appeals' Committee (Stage 2)

If the student does not accept the Programme Board's<sup>4</sup> decision found in Stage 1, the student may forward the case to Stage 2. The Lead Tutor<sup>6</sup>, on behalf of the student can appeal this decision of the Programme Board<sup>4</sup> to the Postgraduate Appeals Committee. This committee consists of

- i. A Chair – a Senior Lecturer in MIE
- ii. An independent person – typically, a Course Leader<sup>7</sup> on another postgraduate programme who has not previously taught the student seeking the appeal.
- iii. A student representative on the Governing Body<sup>8</sup>.

This Committee shall convene as and when necessary. Students will be directed by the Course Leader of the programme on which the appeal is being made or the Lead Tutor<sup>6</sup> to submit their case in writing to the Chair of the Committee. They must state in their submission, the criteria under which they are requesting an appeal and provide the necessary supporting documentation (see [Section 2.2](#)). Students can receive guidance and may be supported on their appeal from a staff member, member

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<sup>4</sup> See [Programme Boards Terms of Reference](#)

<sup>5</sup> See [Assessment Handbook](#)

<sup>6</sup> See [Tutor System Policy](#) and [Tutor System Procedure](#)

<sup>7</sup> If there is a conflict of interest or if the Course Leader is directly associated with the appeal, they may be either asked to absent themselves from the Programme Board meeting at which an appeal is heard or they may be called before the programme board to give their perspective on the appeal. In neither case would the Course Leader be involved in deliberations regarding the outcome of the appeal.

of the Students' Union, by the Lead Tutor<sup>9</sup> or an alternative member of the MIE community of the student's choice.

The decision of the Postgraduate Appeals' Committee is forwarded to the Vice President of Education and Strategic Development, who may approve or reject or vary this decision.

#### 7.1.4 The Institute Appeals' Committee (Stage 3)

Students are entitled to appeal the outcome of Stage 2, that is to appeal the decision of the Postgraduate Appeals' Committee or to appeal the decision of the Vice President of Education and Strategic Development, to the Institute Appeals' Committee. The Lead Tutor<sup>9</sup> will do this on behalf of the student. This committee consists of:

- i. A Dean in MIE (non-voting chair<sup>10</sup>)
- ii. A Senior Lecturer in MIE
- iii. Postgraduate student representative from the postgraduate course (usually the class representative)
- iv. A member of the MIE Governing Body<sup>11</sup>.

Decisions of the relevant Institute Appeals' Committee are presented to the MIE President for approval.

7.2 Any student who has an appeal in progress that could have implications for their degree result is advised not to proceed with degree conferral until the outcome of the appeal has been confirmed.

## 8 Responsibility

The responsibility for the Postgraduate Appeals' Process lies with the Registrar and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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<sup>9</sup> See [Tutor System Policy](#) and [Tutor System Procedure](#)

<sup>10</sup> Typically non-voting but where other members are evenly split on a decision, can exercise casting vote.

<sup>11</sup> See [Code of Governance](#) and [Matters Reserved for the Governing Body of MIE](#)

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## 9 Related Documents

This document should be read in conjunction with the following documents.

- 9.1 [Appeals Policy \(Academic Progression\)](#)
- 9.2 [Re-Check/Re-Mark of Assessments Procedure](#)
- 9.3 [Appeals Re-Check Form](#)
- 9.4 [Guidelines on Evidence in Support of an Ad Misericordiam Appeal](#)
- 9.5 [Assessment Handbook](#)
- 9.6 [Academic Assessment and Academic Progression](#)
- 9.7 [Court of First Appeal Process](#)
- 9.8 [Court of Second Appeal Process](#)
- 9.9 [Tutor System Policy](#)
- 9.10 [Tutor System Procedure](#)
- 9.11 [Code of Governance](#)
- 9.12 [Matters Reserved for the Governing Body of MIE](#)
- 9.13 [Programme Boards Terms of Reference](#)