

LAINÉ

THEATRE ARTS

Policies

Academic Appeals Policy

ACADEMIC APPEALS POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 These procedures ensure that students of Laine Theatre Arts (LTA) studying on courses validated by the University of Portsmouth and Trinity College London have a clear and fair process for appealing academic decisions. It explains the steps student should follow if they are unhappy with a decision and feel there are grounds for an appeal.

1.2 The College will apply this policy in accordance with the following principles:

- Fairness and transparency
- Consistency of decision-making
- Proportionality
- Timely resolution
- Independence of review
- Support for students engaging in the process
- Reasonable adjustments where necessary to ensure all students can access the process

2. SCOPE

2.1 Both the University of Portsmouth and Trinity College London delegate responsibility for Academic Appeals to Laine Theatre Arts as the Partner Institution. Therefore, this policy applies to all LTA students enrolled on programmes validated by the University of Portsmouth and Trinity College London.

2.2 Students may appeal against academic decisions relating to:

- Extenuating Circumstances
- Module Assessment Boards

- Boards of Examiners/LTA Progression Boards
- Exclusion and disciplinary outcomes where these are linked to academic progress

3. EXCEPTIONS

3.1 Trinity Diploma Students who wish to appeal a 'fail' result for the Performance Unit or the overall qualification should access the TCL Complaints Procedures: <https://www.trinitycollege.com/resource?id=4519>.

4. TIMESCALES

4.1 The College will aim to resolve appeals within:

- Stage 1: 10 working days
- Stage 2: 20 working days
- Stage 3: 20 working days

4.2 Students will be informed of any delays.

5. KEY RULES FOR APPEALS

5.1 Appeals may only be made on permitted grounds (see Section 8).

5.2 Appeals cannot challenge the academic judgment of examiners/assessors.

5.3 Appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the mark/decision/outcome which the student believes constitutes grounds for appeal.

5.4 Students will not be disadvantaged for making a genuine appeal.

5.5 All decisions under this policy will be made on the balance of probabilities.

5.6 Outcomes of appeals will ensure that no student gains an unfair academic advantage.

6. RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION

- 6.1 Students should not be disadvantaged or discriminated against as a result of raising a genuine appeal. If a student believes they have been treated differently as a result of appealing, they should raise a complaint under the Student Complaints Policy.
- 6.2 If students are abusive in communications towards the staff dealing with their appeal, or if staff are contacted so often that it is not possible to respond to each communication, students will be issued with a warning that, should such behaviour continue, the College may stop consideration of the appeal either until the behaviour changes, or completely. At this point, students would be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter to allow them to submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education (BA students) or to Trinity College London (Diploma Students).

7. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA SHARING

- 7.1 Information will be handled confidentially in accordance with data protection legislation. Students may discuss their case for the purposes of seeking advice. Information may be shared where necessary to ensure a fair investigation.

8. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

- 8.1 An appeal will be considered only if one or more of the following applies:
- a. A material and significant administrative error occurred;
 - b. An assessment or decision was not conducted in line with approved regulations;
 - c. A material irregularity occurred in the process;

- d. The student was prevented from attending/submitting an assessment due to illness or other good cause, which could not reasonably have been disclosed before the deadline for extenuating circumstances.
- e. The decision of the Extenuating Circumstances Officer was perverse in light of evidence provided.

8.2 As stated in the Assessment Regulations (UoP and LTA versions), disagreement with the academic judgement of the markers/examiners assessing the merits of an individual piece of work or in reaching any decision based on the marks, grades and other information relating to a students' performance does not constitute acceptable grounds for making an academic appeal - "Students may not question the academic judgement of the examiners and any requests based on such grounds alone will be dismissed."

9. APPEALS PROCEDURE

9.1 It is expected that all appeals will be dealt with under Stage 1 of the procedure and that the College will only use the further stages if Stage 1 has not been successful in dealing with an appeal to the student's satisfaction.

STAGE 1 – EARLY RESOLUTION

- a. A student unhappy with an academic outcome should first request a meeting with the Director of Courses.
- b. If an obvious administrative error is identified, it will be corrected immediately.
- c. If unresolved, the student may escalate to Stage 2.

STAGE 2 – FORMAL APPEAL

A written appeal must be submitted within 10 working days of the Stage 1 outcome, using the LTA Appeals Form (see Annex A). Students will be provided with all relevant evidence and given an opportunity to respond before a decision is reached.

Appeals must:

- a. State which permitted ground(s) apply
- b. Provide supporting evidence.
- c. Specify the desired outcome.

Appeals will be reviewed by a member of staff not previously involved. The student may be invited to a meeting (in person or online).

The outcome will be communicated in writing, explaining:

- a. Whether the appeal was upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld.
- b. Reasons for the decision.
- c. Any actions to be taken.

If upheld, the matter will be referred back to the original decision-maker for reconsideration. If rejected, the student may request a Stage 3 review.

STAGE 3 – REVIEW STAGE

A request for review must be submitted within 10 working days of the Stage 2 outcome.

Grounds for review must align with permitted grounds for appeal and include:

- Procedural irregularity
- New evidence
- Unreasonable outcome

Stage 3 will be conducted by a Review Panel, chaired by a senior member of staff not previously involved, and including at least one additional member independent of earlier stages.

If the appeal is rejected, BA students may escalate their appeal to the University of Portsmouth (see section 12 of this policy). Students studying the Trinity Diploma may

raise a complaint with Trinity College London who will conduct a review of the College's Academic Appeals procedures.

9.2 If a complaint is reviewed, and ultimately rejected by the University of Portsmouth, the University will issue the student with a completion of procedures letter, allowing them to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) (see section 14).

10. RE-MARKS AND REVIEW OF MARKS

10.1 The re-marking process is distinct from the appeals process and applies only to cases involving potential marking error. Appeals relating to process or irregularity should follow Sections 8-9.

10.2 Re-marks are permitted only if:

- a. A material administrative error occurred.
- b. A procedural irregularity occurred.

10.3 Requests must be made within 10 working days of results, with a copy of the work submitted.

10.4 The Academic Team will arrange a remark by an independent marker.

10.5 The remarked mark may be higher, lower, or unchanged. This is final with no further right of appeal.

10.6 Where systemic issues are identified, all affected assessments will be reviewed.

10.7 Certain assessments (e.g., presentations) cannot be remarked, but alternative remedies may be offered under course management procedures.

11. INTERACTION WITH THE LTA COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

11.1 If an appeal contains elements that should be dealt with as a complaint under the Student Complaints Policy, the College will decide the most appropriate course of action, whether this is for the procedures to run concurrently or consecutively. Key factors in this decision will include the best chance of early resolution bearing in mind the complexity of the issues raised. Normally, the appeal will be resolved before the complaint outcome report is completed.

12. MAKING AN APPEAL TO THE AWARDING BODY – BA STUDENTS

12.1 Following completion of all internal stages at LTA, BA students may escalate their appeal externally to the University of Portsmouth, which operates the final stage of the process.

12.2 In these circumstances, students are entitled to access the University's Appeals Procedure at Stage 3. (see link):

<https://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-260.pdf>

If the appeal is rejected by the University of Portsmouth, the University will issue the student with a completion of procedures letter, allowing the student to refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) (see section 14).

13. MAKING A COMPLAINT TO THE AWARDING BODY – LEVEL 6 DIPLOMA STUDENTS

13.1 Level 6 Diploma Students who remain dissatisfied with the outcome of an appeal made against a decision relating to either the externally assessed performance unit or the overall qualification may raise a complaint with Trinity College London, using the Complaints Policy and Procedure (see link):

<https://www.trinitycollege.com/resource?id=4519>

14. OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

14.1 BA (Hons) Students who remain dissatisfied after Stage 3 may refer their case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) within 12 months of receiving the Completion of Procedures letter. Please note that Students studying the Level 6 Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre are not eligible for OIA support.

14.2 Students must fill in an electronic OIA Complaint Form and submit it to the OIA within 12 months of the date of the CoP letter. Further information on how to do this can be found at www.oiahe.org.uk.

14.3 The OIA may try to settle the matter before carrying out a full investigation if it believes the matter could be dealt with in this way. Or, if the OIA completes a full investigation, it will provide a 'complaint outcome' which may include recommendations to resolve the complaint.

14.4 The College will maintain a record of appeals and undertake annual analysis to identify trends, and a summary report will be provided to Academic Board.

15. RECORD KEEPING

15.1 All appeal documents will be retained securely for six years in line with the College's *Retention Policy*.

ANNEX A – LAINE THEATRE ARTS ACADEMIC APPEALS FORM

Academic Appeals Form

- Student Name:
- Student ID:
- Programme of Study:
- Year of Study:
- Assessment/Decision being appealed:
- Date of Notification of Decision:

Grounds for Appeal (Indicate 'Y' to all that apply):

- Administrative error
- Assessment not conducted in accordance with regulations
- Material irregularity
- Illness or personal circumstances not previously disclosed (for valid reason)
- Decision on Extenuating Circumstances unreasonable

Statement of Case:

(Attach sheets if required)

Evidence Attached:

(List documents)

Declaration:

I confirm the information provided is true.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX B – LAINE THEATRE ARTS APPEALS PANEL OUTCOME FORM

Appeals Panel Outcome Form

1. Student Name:
2. Student ID:
3. Programme of Study:
4. Assessment/Decision being appealed:
5. Panel Members:
6. Grounds considered:
7. Decision of Panel:
8. Reasons for Decision:
9. Actions to be taken:
10. Date decision communicated:

Signature (Chair): _____

Date: _____

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version:	4
Approved by:	Approved by Academic Board on 23rd April 2026 by email
Review Interval:	3 Years
Last Review Date:	April 2026
Next Review Date:	March 2029