

Scottish Parliament Region: North East Scotland

Case 200503082: The Robert Gordon University

Summary of Investigation

Category

Scottish Higher Education: Appeals process

Overview

The complainant was dissatisfied with the Appeal Board's decision not to uphold his appeal against the level of award granted upon completion of a post graduate qualification. The complaint was that the Appeal Board had failed to consider all relevant factors affecting the complainant's academic performance.

Specific complaint and conclusion

The complaint which has been investigated is the Handling of Appeal (*not upheld*).

Recommendation

The Ombudsman has no recommendation to make.

Main Investigation Report

Introduction

1. The complainant shall be referred to as Mr C. Mr C's complaint was that the Appeal Board (the Board) had not upheld his academic appeal, effectively refusing to allow him to resubmit his thesis for a taught Masters course he had completed. Mr C claimed that the Board had not taken all relevant information into account when considering his appeal. Mr C lodged his complaint with the Ombudsman's Office on 9 February 2006. The complaint had exhausted the University's complaints procedure, thus making the complaint eligible for investigation by the Ombudsman.

2. The complaint from Mr C which I have investigated is that the Board failed to take all relevant factors affecting Mr C's academic performance into account when reviewing his appeal.

Investigation

3. I reviewed the complaint and additional documentation provided by Mr C in support of his complaint. I then identified the information I would require from the University in order to investigate the complaint fully.

Complaint: Handling of Appeal

4. I made two separate written requests of the Robert Gordon University (the University) and obtained detailed responses to each request. I obtained copies of the information that was provided by Mr C in support of his appeal to the Board. I cross referenced this with the information that Mr C had stated as affecting his performance and, therefore, formed the grounds of appeal.

5. I have not included in this report every detail investigated but I am satisfied that no matter of significance has been overlooked. The University and Mr C have both had the opportunity to provide comment on a draft of this report.

6. I am satisfied that all relevant issues were drawn to the attention of the Board in the evidence that was reviewed in assessing Mr C's appeal. I also consulted 'A3: Student Conduct, Appeals and Complaints' procedure which was provided by

the University. I am satisfied also that Mr C's appeal was conducted within the parameters of this policy. The complaint, therefore, is not upheld.

7. As there is no evidence of maladministration, the Ombudsman can not challenge the decision of the Board to not uphold Mr C's appeal.

8. It is also important to note that Mr C had been granted a substantial extension on producing his thesis while studying.

Conclusion

9. Mr C's appeal has been conducted within the parameters of the relevant policy. All the relevant information was provided to the Board for consideration when reviewing Mr C's appeal.

31 October 2006

Explanation of abbreviations used

Mr C	The complainant
The Board	The Appeal Board that considered Mr C's appeal
The University	The Robert Gordon University

List of legislation and policies considered

A3: Student Conduct, Appeals and Complaints