



<i>To be completed by initiator of policy/policy owner</i>	
1. TITLE	Procedure and Guidelines on Appeals against Academic Exclusions for Masters and Doctoral degrees
2. APPROVING AUTHORITY:	Senate
3. FIELD OF APPLICATION:	Academic Appeals
4. COMPLIANCE OFFICER(S):	Deputy Registrar, Executive Deans and HoD's
5. CONSULTATION	HDC
6. STATUS OF POLICY/PROCEDURE	Review
7. REVIEW DATE:	August 2012
8. DESIGNATION OF POLICY OWNER:	Registrar
9. NAME OF POLICY OWNER:	Dr TD Mokoena
10. APPROVED	

PROCEDURE AND GUIDELINES ON APPEALS AGAINST ACADEMIC EXCLUSIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. These procedural guidelines recognise the Vaal University of Technology's responsibility to provide a fair and equitable opportunity for students to appeal against the University's application of regulations and policies as well as against behaviour that affect the students directly. The procedures described in this document are intended to provide a mechanism to remedy real or perceived injustices in the application of and appeals against decisions based on the Admissions Policy's Procedure on Continuation of Studies.
- 1.2. Students who wish to express a concern are strongly encouraged to communicate informally with their lecturers, HoD's, executive deans and/or the appropriate administrative officers before seeking a review under formal procedures. Experience shows that the great majority of questions or complaints can be resolved satisfactorily through informal communication.

2. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL

The grounds for appeals against academic exclusions typically fall under the following categories:

- a) A student questions the assessment of his/her performance or his/her academic standing and alleges error in the academic judgement of his/her work.
- b) A student questions the assessment of his/her performance in a course, or his/her academic standing, and alleges error or injustice on grounds other than the academic judgement of his/her work.
- c) A student believes that the decision of a VUT authority or the action of a VUT official (faculty, staff or employee) in relation to his/her VUT life, not necessarily related to courses or to program or degree requirements has not been fair, just or reasonable.
- d) A student acknowledges that the rules and regulations of the VUT have been applied fairly, but is requesting that an exception to the regulations be made because of special circumstances.

3. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES AND PROVISIONS

- 3.1. An appeal is the final step a student may take within the VUT to secure a remedy for the academic exclusions stemming from the application of the Continuation of Studies policy and procedure.
- 3.2. The standard of proof for appeal cases is "on the balance of probabilities."
- 3.3. In any appeal, the appellant shall bear the burden of proof that (i) an error in academic judgment has occurred, (ii) an error or injustice has occurred, or (iii) a decision or action made or taken has not been fair, just or reasonable.
- 3.4. The appeals committee shall conduct itself in accordance with the principles of natural justice, which provides that justice must not only be done but must be seen to be done.

4. PROCEDURE FOR REVIEWS AND APPEALS

4.1 Office of the Deputy Registrar

- 4.1.1 The student shall make a prompt and timely request for an appeal (by the published closing date for this purpose), by submitting such an appeal on the prescribed form to the Office of the Deputy Registrar.
- 4.1.2 The application shall include the following information:
 - a statement (description) of the grievance/problem/issue;
 - the grounds for the appeal;
 - the relief sought; and
 - any documents the Appellant wishes to submit to the Appeal Committee as evidence in support of the appeal.

- 4.1.4 The Office of the Deputy Registrar, upon receipt of the appeal form from the appellant, shall capture the appeal on the database then forward the appeal within 12 hours to the relevant HoD/Faculty Officer.

4.2 Faculty Appeals Panel

- 4.2.1 Upon receipt of the appeal documents from the Office of the Deputy Registrar, the Faculty will initiate the preparations for a faculty appeal panel. Such preparations shall include but will not be limited to:
- Profiling of the student's academic work,
 - Sourcing of information from relevant parties such as the relevant HoD and the Counseling Department (to include NBT profile, aptitude test, personal interview and career-oriented assessment).
- 4.2.2 The faculty panel will be constituted as follows:
- The Executive Dean of the Faculty;
 - The relevant HoD(s);
 - The relevant lecturer(s); and
 - The Faculty Officer of SRC.
- 4.2.3 Within two working days of the conclusion of the appeals process, the secretary of the faculty panel shall give written notice of the outcome to the Deputy Registrar's Office and the Office of the Deputy Registrar, with reasons, to the student and to the Office of the Deputy Registrar for recording onto the database.

4.3 Management Committee of HDC

- 4.3.1 Should the student wish to request a review of the outcome of the appeal process, such an application for a review needs to be done in writing to the Management Committee of HDC through the Office of the Deputy Registrar within five working days of receiving the outcome of the faculty appeal process.
- 4.3.2 The application form should clearly outline the grounds for the review.
- 4.3.3 The Registrar will call a meeting of the HDC Mancom, which will make a ruling.
- 4.3.4 The ruling in 4.3.3 above will be communicated to the student in writing within 48 hours Deputy Registrar's Office.