

<b>Policy Title:</b>	<b>ACADEMIC GRADE APPEAL POLICY</b>	<b>Area of Responsibility:</b> <b>VICE PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC</b>
<b>Policy Section:</b>	<b>ACADEMIC</b>	<b>Policy No: 1.4.2</b>
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## **1.4.2. ACADEMIC GRADE APPEAL POLICY**

### **Purpose**

1. St. Clair College and its faculty members are committed to quality academic decision-making and to ensuring that academic records genuinely and accurately reflect our learners' academic accomplishments. Academic decisions should be based on impartially assessed performance outcomes which measure the learning of students and these decisions must be free of bias, prejudice, unfairness or other inappropriate personal or systemic influences. The purpose of this policy is to provide students with access to a respectful, thorough, judicious, impartial and timely review of academic grading decisions.

### **Consistent, Progressive Review Process**

2. This policy establishes a consistent, progressive pathway for the resolution of concerns or disputes relating to the grades, marks or academic status conferred in academic courses delivered to St. Clair College students. It is intended that the normal route followed by an appeal of an academic grade will be:
  - Firstly, addressing the concern with the faculty member or members who conferred the grade.
  - Secondly, appealing to the Program Chair of the academic school or department that delivers the academic course to determine a resolution of the dispute.

- Thirdly, in the event that either party to the grade appeal is not satisfied with the decision of the Program Chair, appealing to the St. Clair College Grade Appeal Panel for a final review of the grading dispute.
3. The review of academic grades is subject to the rules of natural justice, principles of equity and fairness as well as to the policies and processes of St. Clair College.

### **Jurisdiction and Composition of Grade Appeal Panel**

4. This policy establishes the St. Clair College Grade Appeal Panel whose function shall be to conduct reviews of final grades assigned in the various academic courses delivered by the College.
  - Once the final grade has been assigned, the College Grade Appeal Panel has jurisdiction to review the entire grading process and each assessment component that builds to the calculation and assignment of the final grade.
  - Generally, a student may not appeal a grade to the College Grade Appeal Panel until being officially notified by the Registrar's Office of the final grades through the issuing of a St. Clair College Academic transcript. However, there are exceptional circumstances where a student may be terminated early from a course and the right of appeal established by this policy is available immediately that the Chair or Coordinator has informed the student that the student has been terminated, and therefore failed, in a particular course.

### **Composition of College Grade Appeal Panel**

5. The College Grade Appeal Panel shall be composed of an academic administrator who shall be the Chair of the Appeal Panel, a faculty member, and a student representative chosen by the Student Representative Council or Thames Students Inc.
6. The faculty member who serves on any particular grade appeal panel shall not be a member of the faculty of the School or department from which the grade appeal is arising.
7. Generally, the student representative should be from a School or department different from the School or department from which the appeal is arising. If it is impossible to select a student representative who is a member of a different school or department, then the student shall be in a different program than the one from which the appeal is arising.

### **Administrative Members of the College Appeal Panel**

8. The ongoing Chair of the College Appeal Panel will be designated by the President of St. Clair College. The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will normally be designated as the Chair of the College Appeal Panel, but the President may also designate another College administrator as the ongoing Chair of a College Appeal Panel.
  - The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will ensure that the individual selected to serve as either an ongoing Chair or an interim or temporary Chair is trained and knowledgeable in the operation of this policy, the conduct of appeal hearings, the policies under which appeals may be made as well as the rules of natural justice and principles of equity.

9. The Chair of the Grade Appeal Panel shall maintain control and integrity over the process and has an inherent authority to make reasonable decisions not specifically authorized by this policy, based upon Principles of Natural Justice and procedural fairness, in order to maintain control and integrity over the process.

### **Faculty Representatives on the College Grade Appeal Panel**

10. The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will circulate a call for full-time faculty members to serve on the College Grade Appeal Panel. This call will usually be made before the end of September or at such other time as may be required and appropriate.
  - The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will use a process of selection designed to build a grouping of full-time permanent faculty members who will serve on the College Grade Appeal Panel on a rotating basis. This process will strive to ensure as much as possible that all schools are represented on the Panel.
  - The usual term of a faculty member on the College Grade Appeal Panel grouping will be two years and may be renewed for additional terms as necessary.
  - The final group of volunteer faculty members should have at least one faculty member from each school if possible.
  - The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability shall ensure that all faculty members prior to serving on the College Grade Appeal Panel are trained in the operation of this policy, appropriate College policies which impact the grade appeal process, the requirement of confidentiality, the rules of natural justice and principles of equity and fairness.

### **Student Representatives on the College Grade Appeal Panel**

11. The selection of the student representatives on the College Appeal Panel shall be the responsibility of the Student Representative Council.
  - For the purpose of serving on the College Grade Appeal Panel, the executive of the SRC or the TSI may select any student who has been elected to serve in any capacity on their student council or may choose the SRC or TSI manager or anyone else whom the executive feels will represent the interests of students appropriately.
  - Prior to serving on the College Appeal Panel student members of the Panel must undergo training in the operation of this policy, the policies under which appeals are heard, the requirement of confidentiality, the rules of natural justice and principles of equity.
  - The training is essential not only for serving on the College Grade Appeal Panel but also for advising students of their rights and obligations with respect to bringing an appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel and with respect to the various policies under which an appeal can be made to the Panel.

**Conflict of Interest**

12. Members of the College Grade Appeal Panel shall have no prior direct involvement in the determination of the grade for which an appeal is being made or have a personal or professional relationship with any party involved in the appeal. Members may have been involved in the giving of generic advice concerning grounds for an appeal or in explaining the processes of an appeal without being in a conflict of interest.
13. Members of the College Grade Appeal Panel must disclose any direct conflict of interest of any type or any prior involvement in the matters under review. The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will review the situation and make a determination of whether there is an actual conflict of interest or sufficient reason to replace the panel member. The disclosure shall take place as quickly as possible and prior to the commencement of the appeal hearing. If there is an actual conflict of interest or a sufficient reason to replace the member, that member shall be replaced with an appropriate substitute by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability.

**Prohibition of Reprisals for Initiating and Pursuing a Grade Appeal**

14. The College prohibits reprisals or the threat of reprisal against any individual who initiates, makes use of or participates in proceedings under this Grade Appeal Policy and in proceedings before the St. Clair College Grade Appeal Panel. Any College employee who violates this provision will be subject to disciplinary measures.

**Proceedings before the College Grade Appeal Panel**

15. The Chair of the College Appeal Panel shall conduct the proceedings in accordance with the principles of natural justice and the principles of equity or fairness. Proceedings must be conducted in an atmosphere of truthfulness, honesty, fairness to and to ensure respect for all parties.
16. An oath is not taken, and the strict rules of evidence do not apply to the hearing conducted by the College Grade Appeal Panel.
17. Evidence presented to the College Grade Appeal Panel must be credible, compelling and persuasive in order to be taken into account.
18. Information presented to the Panel cannot be secondhand information or hearsay.
19. The parties to proceedings before the College Grade Appeal Panel are reminded that the responsibility for making academic decisions rests primarily with the faculty and that this responsibility is never interfered with lightly.
20. The parties to the proceedings before the College Grade Appeal Panel are also reminded that the interests of students in having fair, accurate, impartial decisions free of improper considerations and bias is paramount.

21. The College Grade Appeal Panel will correct evident errors in the mathematical calculation of grades; round-up a grade in appropriate circumstances or provide alternate or additional methods of assessment that were unfairly or inappropriately denied to the student.
22. Though the College Grade Appeal Panel will not review any part of the content of an assignment, paper, exam or test, it will, in appropriate circumstances, direct that the student's work or some part of it be re-evaluated by other appropriate internal or external evaluators.

### **Resource Person or Advisor for the appellant**

23. Though it is not required during the Appeal process, a student may request another person to act as a resource person and to provide advice or support during any stage of the Appeal process. This resource person may be a member of the executive of the Student Representative Council or the Thames Student Inc., a parent or other relative, a friend, a fellow student, a personal counselor, or a legal representative.
24. There is no absolute right to representation before the College Grade Appeal Panel. However, the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel has discretion to permit the presence of a resource person or advisor.
25. When a resource person or advisor participates at any step in the Appeal process, that resource person is strictly a resource or advisor for the appellant. The resource person or advisor will not be permitted to speak, make submissions or to advocate on behalf of the appellant.
26. In the event that the resource person attempts to advocate, speak, or interfere with the conduct of the Appeal, that person may be excluded from the proceedings at the sole discretion of the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel.
27. If, due to language, hearing or other communication barrier, the student encounters difficulty understanding or expressing himself/herself, the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel has the discretion to permit the resource person or personal advisor to file written submissions on behalf of the student.
28. The appellant may request reasonable periods during the Appeal process to consult with the resource person. The number and length of the periods of consultation are subject to the sole discretion of the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel.
29. Any costs associated with the student being assisted by legal counsel or any other paid advisor or resource person shall be the sole responsibility of the appellant.
30. In all cases, where a student wishes to have a resource person or advisor participate at any stage of the proceedings, the student shall advise the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel of the identity of the advisor or resource person as early as is reasonably possible in the circumstances. The approval of the advisor or resource person is at the discretion of the Chair.

### **Onus or Burden of Proof**

31. At the hearing, the Appellant has the onus of satisfying the College Grade Appeal Panel that there is sufficient or compelling reason to question the grade assigned or to challenge the process that

was used to determine the grade. The Appellant must raise a reasonable doubt about the appropriateness or fairness of the grade and how it was calculated or determined.

32. If the Appellant meets the previous onus, then the onus will shift to the respondent to substantiate the appropriateness of the process that was used to determine the final grade, each of the components of that final grade and the appropriateness and fairness of any rules applied to the determination of the grade and its conformity with College policies.
33. During the Chair-level inquiry, the onus or burden of proof shall be the same as is identified in the two previous sections.

### **Informal Process of Appeal**

34. The professional and courteous route to follow in seeking the resolution of disputes is for the student to request a meeting with the faculty member to discuss the grade and to attempt to obtain a mutually acceptable resolution of the grading decision. Wherever possible, students are encouraged to follow this route with respect to their grading concerns.
35. The failure to pursue an informal process of Appeal does not preclude the student from proceeding with the formal process of review.
36. The purpose of this informal process is to ensure that the student is fully aware of the grounds and rationale for the grading decision and that the decision-maker can substantiate the grounds for the decision to the student.
37. If the student attempts an informal resolution of the decision, the faculty member who made the grading decision in question shall meet with the student to explain why the decision was made, the grounds for the decision and any policy under which the decision was made.
38. The student shall be provided with all appropriate documentation relating to the grade, the weighting and the calculation of the grade.
39. The student shall be allowed to state his or her reasons why the decision should be changed.
40. If the student and the College decision maker cannot arrive at a mutually agreeable resolution of the student's concern, the student should consider whether they wish to launch a formal Appeal under this policy.
41. If the appeal goes to the College Grade Appeal Panel, the Panel may question both the appellant and the respondent concerning what attempts were made to resolve this dispute using the informal process of discussion between the parties.
42. The informal process may include discussions with the Chair concerning the resolution of the disputed grade.

### **Formal Process of Appeal**

43. Students have a right to two levels of formal Appeal; a first level of Appeal to a Program Chair and a second and final Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel.

**Time Limits for Formal Appeals**

44. A formal appeal of an academic grading decision should be made immediately following the official communication to the student of a final grade assigned to that student in a course.
45. Official communication of a final grade may occur in any of the following ways:
  - a issuing of the official transcript by the Registrar's Office,
  - b specific communication by the Coordinator of the Program or Chair of the School that a student is being removed from a clinical placement setting and assigned a failing grade in the clinical placement course together with the reasons for the termination of the clinical placement,
  - c specific communication by the Chair of a School that a student is being assigned a failing grade because of an act of academic dishonesty or other academic misconduct.
46. An appeal from a grading decision cannot be made after the lapse of 10 College business days from the date of the communication of the final grade to the student. Any Grade Appeals filed beyond the 10-day timeline will not be heard by the College Grade Appeal Panel except as outlined by this section.
47. If a student has not been able to launch a formal Appeal within 10 College business days from the date of the communication of the final grade owing to verifiable and documented circumstances that are beyond the control of the student, the student should contact the office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability for permission to file or to continue the grade appeal. This contact can be made in person or by email.
48. The Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will make an immediate determination of whether to allow the appeal to go forward based on the rationale provided by the student as to why the timeline was not met and based on the reasonableness of that rationale. The extension of the time limit is not an absolute right and the decision of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will be final.

**Process for Initiating a Formal Appeal at the Chair Level of Inquiry**

49. In order to launch the formal appeal process, a student should complete and file with the Registrar's Office a Notice of Grade Appeal form, which can be obtained from the St. Clair College website.
50. The student shall clearly identify the grounds for launching the Appeal. The Notice of Grade Appeal requires that the reasons for disagreeing with the conferred grade must be clearly set out or specified in the Notice of Grade Appeal document. The appellant must also include complete contact information for the appellant including phone, mail and email addresses if any, where the appellant can be reliably and quickly contacted. The Notice of the Grade Appeal shall identify the appellant's program, the course being appealed, and the grade obtained in both numeric and letter grade format, if possible, in the course being appealed.
51. An administrative charge is payable for filing the Notice of Grade Appeal but is refundable if the Appeal is successful. The payment shall be made at the time of filing of the Notice of Grade Appeal.
52. The Registrar's Office will review the amount set for the administrative charge on an annual basis.

53. On the filing of a Notice of Grade Appeal, the Registrar's Office will validate the filing of the Notice of Grade Appeal.
54. The Registrar's Office will immediately scan the Notice of Grade Appeal and direct it electronically to the Program Chair of the program in which the student is registered or to the Program Chair of the department that delivers the course that is the subject of the Grade Appeal, as appropriate. The Notice of Appeal will be copied to the appellant and the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability to permit tracking of the appeal.
55. Upon receipt of the Notice of Grade Appeal, the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, shall review its contents to ensure the subject matter of the appeal falls within the parameters of this policy and not some other College policy. If the appeal does not fall within the parameters of this policy, the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, shall remove the appeal from the list and advise all stakeholders, including the student, that the appeal must proceed under a different College policy. Should this be required, the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, shall identify the appropriate College policy for the appeal and forward the student submission appropriately. The student's submission filed under the Grade Appeal will be considered the student's submission for the identified College policy as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability.
56. For those appeals that do not fall under some other College policy, the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability shall also review the Notice of Grade Appeal to ensure it complies with section 50 of this policy, in that it clearly sets out specific grounds and reasons for challenging the fairness of the assigned grade and/or the process used to determine the assigned grade. For those appeals that do not meet this criterion, the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability shall summarily dismiss the appeal upon notice to all stakeholders. If the appeal is dismissed in this fashion, it will not proceed further in the process and the student will not be entitled to a Chair Decision or hearing before the Grade Appeal Panel.

There shall be no appeal of a summary dismissal made in accordance with this section; however, any dismissal shall be without prejudice to the student to file a proper Notice of Grade Appeal, provided it is submitted within the timelines set out in s. 46 of this policy.
57. In the event that the Program Chair to whom the Notice of Grade Appeal is directed has a conflict of interest or who has been directly involved in making the grading decision which is the subject of the Notice of Grade Appeal, the Program Chair shall immediately notify the Vice President, Academic & Registrar who will assign another Academic Chair to conduct the first level inquiry. The office of the Vice President, Academic & Registrar will notify the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability of this situation and the identity of the Chair who will hear the Chair-level appeal hearing.
58. If the course which is the subject of Appeal falls under the jurisdiction of a Chair who is not the Program Chair, the Notice of Grade Appeal shall be directed immediately to the Program Chair of the department or school that delivers the course.
59. When the Office of any Chair receives the email with the attached Notice of Grade Appeal from the Registrar's Office, the date for the receipt of the Notice of Appeal shall be the day following the date on the email for the purposes of calculating timelines.



**Timeline for Chair-Level Inquiry and Decision**

60. The Program Chair to whom the Notice of Grade Appeal has been directed shall immediately take steps to hold a full inquiry into the matters concerned in the Appeal and to make a determination with respect to the appeal within 8 College business days from the date on which the Notice of Grade Appeal was received by the Office of the Program Chair.

**Extension of Time for Chair Decision**

61. The Program Chair and the appellant may mutually agree on a longer period of time to accommodate extenuating circumstances which both parties agree need a longer time period within which to conduct the inquiry. Any agreement to extend deadlines must be documented in writing signed by the Chair and the appellant or corroborated by an email or other written confirmation from the appellant to the Chair agreeing to the extension and the date of the new deadline. (See Appendix J for template)

**Direct Referral to College Grade Appeal Panel**

62. Where a Program Chair has thoroughly reviewed the grading decision at the request of the appellant immediately prior to the appellant launching the formal appeal, if there is no new information available that might affect the Chair's original decision with respect to the grading decision, there is no need for the Chair to re-conduct the investigation into the grading decision. The Chair may refer the appeal directly to the College Grade Appeal Panel by emailing both the appellant and the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability stating that the appeal is being immediately referred and by providing a detailed rationale which supports and explains the Chair's decision with respect to the disputed grade.

**Conditional Progression to the Next Semester and Binding Condition**

63. Where a formal Appeal has been made against a grade or academic standing status which would prevent progression to the next semester of an academic program or enrolment in a course, the Program Chair will permit the appellant to continue in the program and to be conditionally admitted to the course or courses in the next semester pending the outcome of the final decision on the Appeal.
64. The Program Chair will require that the appellant sign a written conditional progression to the next semester and acceptance of a binding condition of cancellation of admission to the course or courses in the next semester should the Appeal be denied.
65. As an exception to section 62, where the student would proceed into an active clinical placement in hospitals, long-term care homes, nursing homes or other locations where a student would have direct contact with health-care patients, or where a student could be a danger to patients, or clients in a health care setting, at the Program Chair's discretion, deny to an appellant the right to proceed into that active clinical placement until the grade appeal has been finalized.
66. Where the Chair has determined that the clinical placement should be denied, the Chair should use all possible speed to hear the appeal and, if necessary, facilitate its referral to the College Grade

Appeal Panel. The College Grade Appeal Panel will be held as quickly as possible in order to minimize the impact on the academic progression of the student.

67. Where the clinical placement has been denied, if the grade appeal is ultimately successful, the Program Chair of the School must provide to the successful appellant a clinical placement opportunity that minimizes any inconvenience to the student, and which is offered at no cost to the successful grade appeal appellant.

### **Chair-Level Inquiry**

68. The Program Chair shall conduct a fair and thorough inquiry into the matters that are the subject of the Appeal with the persons concerned in the decision being appealed, including the student (appellant), the faculty member(s) (respondent) or other College employee who has information relating to the conferred grade.
69. The inquiry shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of natural justice, the principles of fairness and equity and in compliance with college policies.
70. The faculty member whose grade is being appealed shall provide written documentation to the Chair and to the student, showing clearly how the final grade was determined including all components on which the student was assessed, the marks obtained for each component and the weighting of each component in the determination of the grade that was assigned before being converted to a letter grade.
71. At this first level of Appeal, the Program Chair is not required to, but may choose to hold an informal hearing at which all stakeholders attend for the purpose of investigation of matters relating to the disputed grade. In any event the Chair shall conduct a full inquiry or investigation of the matters under Appeal.
72. In conducting the inquiry, the Program Chair shall provide the appellant with an opportunity to present the reasons why the appellant disagrees with the decision that is being appealed. These reasons shall be documented in writing either by the appellant or by the Program Chair with the consent of the appellant.
73. In conducting the inquiry, the Program Chair shall provide the faculty member(s) or other participants in the inquiry process with the opportunity to present information and documentation to substantiate the original decision. This information should be documented in writing by the person presenting it or recorded by the Chair who receives it.
74. All materials and information received by the Program Chair shall be shared with both the appellant (student) and the respondent (faculty member). The Program Chair conducting the inquiry shall provide the appellant and respondent with the opportunity to respond to the information and documentation received by the Chair.

### **Mediated Resolution of Appeal - minutes of settlement**

75. With the concurrence of both the appellant and the faculty member(s) who conferred the disputed grade (respondent[s]), the Program Chair shall use their best efforts to facilitate or mediate a resolution of the issue under Appeal.

76. In the event that the parties to the Appeal reach a voluntary settlement of the issues in the Appeal, the resolution of the matter shall be captured in writing in Minutes of Settlement and a copy of the resolution shall be provided to both parties.
77. A copy of the minutes of settlement shall also be sent to the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability to record the outcome of the appeal and to process the refund of the appeal fee if appropriate.
78. If the resolution affects the student's academic status or the conferred grade, the Program Chair who conducted the inquiry shall immediately ensure that the appropriate documentation is processed with the Registrar's Office to reflect the terms of the settlement.
79. Once signed, the Minutes of Settlement are final and binding on both sides to the dispute and the grade appeal is terminated.
  - a The Program Chair shall process any appropriate grade changes and request the office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability to process a refund, if appropriate.
  - b The Program Chair will provide a copy of the minutes of settlement to the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability.

#### **Withdrawal of Appeal - refund**

80. During the Chair-level inquiry, the appellant may withdraw his appeal and request a refund of his appeal fees.
  - The intention to withdraw from the appeal shall be documented in writing and a signed copy of the withdrawal of the appeal shall be sent to the office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability.
  - The notice of intention to withdraw an appeal may take the form of an email from the appellant which clearly states the intention to withdraw from or terminate the appeal.
  - The office of the Program Chair will process a refund upon the submission of an intention to withdraw document as outlined above.

#### **Decision of Chair with Rationale**

81. Where a Program Chair is unable to mediate a resolution of the grade appeal, the Program Chair will make a determination of the appeal based on the information disclosed in the Program Chair's investigation of the appeal. The decision of the Program Chair must be indicated including the details of any remedies provided, together with the reasons on which the decision is based. This written decision with rationale must be provided immediately both to the appellant, the respondent, and to the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability using the form provided for the purpose of recording the decision of the Program Chair.

**Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel**

82. In the event that the Program Chair has failed to either mediate a resolution or make a determination with respect to a grade appeal within 8 college business days or within a mutually agreed time limit (between the appellant and the Program Chair) greater than 8 college business days, the appellant or respondent may refer the appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel by emailing or otherwise contacting the Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability indicating his or her intention to refer the appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel.
83. The appellant or the respondent to the Grade Appeal at the Program Chair level of inquiry may initiate a Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel where;
- a either party to the appeal is dissatisfied with the decision given by the Program Chair and that party has grounds to establish that the decision was made in error.
  - b the matter has not been dealt with or resolved within the time limits specified by this policy or within any agreed upon extension of the time limits.

**Time Limits for Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel**

84. A Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel must be received by the Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability within 3 College business days of the effective notification to the appellant or the respondent of the Program Chair's decision in the appeal or of the expiry of the timeframe for the resolution at the Program Chair level of Appeal whichever comes first.
- In the event of a dispute relating to the lapsing of the 3-day time limit to refer the appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel, either the appellant or the respondent may present an explanation to the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel who will review the explanation and make a determination as to whether the time limit for the referral has lapsed or not. This determination shall also be based on principles of natural justice and principles of fairness.

**Initiating an Appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel**

85. A Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel is initiated by submitting a Notice of Referral to the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability by:
- a an email addressed to the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability requesting that the appeal be referred to the College Grade Appeal Panel or
  - b a written notice requesting that the appeal be referred to the College Grade Appeal Panel
86. The submission of the Notice of Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel is the sole responsibility of the appellant or respondent. No other person may make this referral.
87. There shall be no additional fee or administrative charge for the initiation of a Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel.

**Processing of the Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel**

88. On the submission of a Notice of Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel, the Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability will verify the referral and will contact the person who referred the appeal to ensure that all information with respect to the appeal is accurate.
89. The Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability or designate will immediately confirm in writing via phone or email with the appellant and respondent of the receipt of the Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel.

**Time Limits for Processing the Referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel**

90. The College Grade Appeal Panel will sit at the earliest time possible to hear the Appeal and every effort should be made to hold the Appeal proceedings within 10 College business days after the receipt of notification of the referral to the College Grade Appeal Panel.
91. Either party to the appeal to the College Grade Appeal Panel may request an extension to the period of time for the hearing of the appeal. The Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel after consultation with both parties to the referral may agree to a reasonable extension of the time period for the hearing of the Appeal.

**Processes in Advance of the Hearing of the College Grade Appeal Panel**

92. Upon receipt of Notice of Referral, the Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability shall immediately inform the appellant and the respondent in writing of the receipt of the referral and provide the parties with a written overview of the process before the College Grade Appeal Panel.
93. The Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability shall immediately take steps to empanel the College Grade Appeal Panel in conformity with this policy.
94. Hearings shall be based on written submissions and written evidence submitted to the Panel by either side of the process, in accordance with the following sections. Oral hearings are not conducted.
95. Statements contained in the Notice of Grade Appeal and the Program Chair Decision shall be considered as evidence.
96. Following referral to the Panel, the Appellant shall have an additional 3 business days to electronically provide any additional written submissions or evidence to the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel.
97. Upon receipt of any additional submissions or evidence from the Appellant, the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel shall forward same to the Program Chair and the Respondent, who shall have an additional 3 business days to electronically provide any additional submissions or evidence to the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel.

98. Any additional evidence received from the Respondent shall be forwarded to the Appellant for written reply. Such reply shall be electronically forwarded to the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel within 2 business days of receipt of the submissions of the Respondent.
99. It is not necessary to file evidence or submissions in addition to the Notice of Grade Appeal and Program Chair Decision and failure to do so does not establish an adverse inference against either party. Filing of additional submissions or evidence is only required if either party has additional or new information to present to the Panel.
100. Once the evidence is complete, members of the College Grade Appeal Panel shall meet in camera, by way of conference call or other electronic means, to review the evidence and decide the appeal. Should the Panel have additional questions, those questions shall be forwarded electronically to both the Appellant and Respondent by the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel together with a timeline for a response.
101. Once a response has been received, or the timeline has expired with no response, the Panel shall re-convene to deliberate and decide the matter.
102. Once the decision has been written by the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel and endorsed by a majority of members of the Grade Appeal Panel, it shall be forwarded electronically to the Vice President, Academic & Registrar for review. Following a consideration of any concerns that may be raised by the Vice President, Academic & Registrar, the final decision shall be sent electronically to all participants by the Chair of the College Grade Appeal Panel, within 2 business days of endorsement by the Vice President, Academic & Registrar. Should the College Grade Appeal Panel be unable to address concerns of the Vice President Academic & Registrar, in a manner satisfactory to both the College Grade Appeal Panel and the Vice President Academic & Registrar, the matter shall be referred to the President for resolution.
103. Any immediate changes to the academic transcripts as a result of the determination by the decision of the College Grade Appeal Panel shall be prepared by the Office of the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability, signed by the Executive Director, Program and Degree Accountability and transmitted to the Registrar's Office for processing.
104. Changes to the academic transcript which are the result of the student's access to a fresh academic assessment or review by the School shall be processed by the appropriate Program Chair as soon as the Chair has been notified that the appellant has been successful in improving his or her grade as a result of a re-assessment or re-evaluation as a result of the order of the Grade Appeal Panel.
105. St. Clair College has provided a process that provides for a full and fair hearing of grading disputes that involves three levels of inquiry and investigation and accordingly, the determination of the College Grade Appeal Panel, as documented in the letter from the Vice President, Academic & Registrar, shall be final and binding on all parties to the Grade Appeal. There is no further right of appeal to any other person or office in the College.

**Referral to College Grade Appeal Panel**

1. Appellant emails Grade Appeal Panel and refers to Panel
2. Appeal Panel holds hearing within 10 College business days of receipt of referral
3. Decision with rationale to VPA Office within reasonable time
4. EDPDA Office communicates decision to students within 2 College business days



**Formal Grade Appeal – filed at Registrar’s Office – Chair Inquiry and Decision**

1. Within 10 College business days from the official communications of a final grade including (termination from clinical setting or termination owing to academic misconduct)
2. (Verifiable extenuating circumstances may extend time limit an additional 10 days)
3. Program Chair conducts a first level inquiry and attempts to secure a mediated resolution
4. If no mediated resolution, the Chair issues a decision based on investigation
5. (8 College business days for resolution by Chair)



**Informal Attempt to Resolve Grade Concern  
(WITH FACULTY)**

1. Discussion leading to voluntary resolution if possible and within time limits for launch of formal appeal
2. (Within 10 days after release of grades by registrar’s Office)