

Pamoja Appeals Policy

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The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all appeals relating to assessment outcomes in the Pamoja delivered IB Diploma Programme (DP) courses are handled in a fair, transparent, and consistent manner.

This policy mirrors the principles and structure of the **IB Assessment Appeals Procedure**, ensuring that decisions relating to assessment results, academic misconduct, adverse circumstances, and inclusive assessment arrangements follow a clear, evidence-based and procedurally sound process.

Pamoja is committed to upholding academic integrity, ensuring the correct application of assessment criteria, and providing a formal mechanism for reviewing decisions where procedural or administrative errors may have occurred.

This policy is intended for Pamoja academic staff, Teachers of Record, Course Advisors, Academic Operations staff, and Site-Based Coordinators. It sets out the formal process for reviewing assessment-related concerns in Pamoja-delivered IB DP courses. Schools are responsible for providing student-facing guidance on the appeals process, including how students should access and submit the Stage 1 Appeal Form.

1 Scope

This policy applies to all IB Diploma Programme (DP) courses delivered through Pamoja and outlines the circumstances under which an assessment-related decision may be appealed.

The appeals process covers:

1.1 Assessment Decisions

Appeals may be submitted in relation to:

- The marking of criterion-based assignments
- Summative assessments completed within the Pamoja platform
- Decision related to academic misconduct, on procedural grounds only
- Decisions relating to adverse circumstances
- Decisions relating to inclusive assessment arrangements
- Administrative or technical errors that may have affected an assessment outcome

1.2 Internal Review Requirements

Appeals relating to the application of assessment criteria, teacher feedback, or the marking student work must normally follow the two-stage structure:

- **Stage 1:** Student > Teacher of Record
- **Stage 2:** SBC > Pamoja Academic Review

For these appeals, Stage 1 must be completed before a Stage 2 appeal may be submitted.

Where the concern relates to a procedural, administrative, technical, academic misconduct, adverse circumstances, or inclusive access arrangements decision that cannot be reasonably reviewed by the Teacher of Record, the SBC may submit the matter directly to Pamoja for Stage 2 review.

1.3 Standard Timeframes

Appeals must be submitted within the following timeframes:

- **Stage 1:** within 14 working days of feedback being released
- **Stage 2:** within 10 working days of the Stage 1 outcome, or within 10 working days of the date when Stage 1 is not appropriate.
- **Final Escalation:** within 5 working days of the Stage 2 outcome.

Appeals submitted outside these timeframes will not normally be considered unless exceptional circumstances apply.

1.4 Exclusions

Appeals will not be considered if:

1. The appeal challenges the academic judgement of the teacher where the assessment criteria were correctly applied.
2. The student simply disagrees with the awarded grade.
3. The appeal lacks supporting evidence.
4. The appeal has not been submitted in line with this policy.
5. The appeal is submitted outside the standard timeframes set out in section 1.3, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

1.5 Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this policy:

Appeal

A formal request to review an assessment-related decision based on procedural, administrative, or criteria based grounds.

Assignment/ Assessment

Any task, criterion-based activity, or summative assessment conducted within a Pamoja IB DP course.

Teacher of Record (ToR)

The Pamoja-appointed teacher responsible for delivering the course and assessing student work.

Stage 1 Appeal

An internal request submitted by the student to the Teacher of Record for clarification or review of marking.

Stage 2 Appeal

A formal appeal submitted by the Site-Based Coordinator (SBC) to Pamoja following completion of Stage 1.

Academic Review Team

Pamoja staff designated to review Stage 2 appeals and ensure the correct application of criteria, procedures, and policy. Membership may vary depending on the nature of the appeal, but may include the relevant Academic Operations Manager, Course Advisor, and other appropriate academic staff.

Procedural Error

A failure to follow the required steps or processes may have affected the assessment outcome.

Misapplication of Criteria

Incorrect or inconsistent application of the published IB assessment criteria or task rubric.

Technical Error

A platform, submission, or system issue that impacts the assessment or its review.

Adverse Circumstances

Situations beyond a student's control that may impact performance.

2 Grounds for Appeal (Admissibility Criteria)

A request for appeal may be considered only when there is evidence that:

1. Assessment criteria or mark schemes were misapplied
2. A procedural error occurred in the marking or review process
3. A technical or administrative error affected the assessment outcome
4. New evidence is available relevant to an academic misconduct decision
5. Approved inclusive assessment arrangements were not applied correctly
6. Adverse circumstances procedures were not followed appropriately

Appeals will not be considered if:

1. The appeal challenges the academic judgement of the teacher where the assessment criteria were correctly applied.
2. The student simply disagrees with the awarded grade.
3. The appeal lacks supporting evidence.
4. The appeal has not been submitted in line with this policy.
5. The appeal is submitted outside the standard timeframes set out in section 1.3, unless exceptional circumstances apply.

3 Who May Submit an Appeal

3.1 Student (Stage 1 Appeals Only)

Students may initiate an appeal only at Stage 1 by submitting a Stage 1 Appeal Form directly to the Teacher of Record. The appeal must follow the prescribed format and include supporting evidence that aligns with the permissible grounds for appeal.

Students cannot submit a Stage 2 appeal directly to Pamoja.

3.2 Site-Based Coordinator (Stage 2 Appeals Only)

A Stage 2 appeal may only be submitted by the Site-Based Coordinator (SBC) on behalf of the student. Before submitting a Stage 2 appeal, the SBC must:

1. Verify that Stage 1 has been completed
2. Confirm that admissible grounds for appeal exist
3. Ensure that all required documentation is included
4. Submit the appeal within the designated timeline

Pamoja will not review any Stage 2 Appeal submitted by a parent, guardian or student.

3.3 Teacher of Record (Reviewer at Stage 1)

The Teacher of Record:

- Reviews the student's Stage 1 appeal
- Re-examines the work against the assessment criteria
- Provides a written response and outcome

Teachers cannot submit appeals on behalf of students.

3.4 Pamoja Academic Review Team (Reviewer at Stage 2)

The Pamoja Academic Review Team is responsible for:

- Screening Stage 2 submissions for admissibility
- Conducting an impartial review of evidence
- Ensuring criteria and procedures were correctly applied
- Issuing a formal decision and rationale

The Pamoja Academic Review Team is the sole decision-making body for Stage 2 appeals.

3.5 Finality of Submission Authority

Only submissions from the SBC, using the official Stage 2 form, will be accepted by Pamoja. Any appeal that bypasses the prescribed submission pathway will be considered invalid.

3.6 Accessing Appeal Forms

The required appeal forms are linked on the same Pamoja webpage as this Appeals Policy.

- 1. Stage 1 Student Appeal Form:** for students requesting an internal review by the ToR.
- 2. Stage 2 SBC Appeal Submission Form:** for Site-Based Coordinators submitting a formal appeal to Pamoja.

Final Escalation requests must be submitted by the SBC in writing following the Stage 2 outcome, where further review is permitted under this policy.

Appeals and Final Escalation requests must be submitted using the correct route and within the timeframes set out in this policy.

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Stage 1: Internal Review (Student > Teacher)

4.1 Purpose

Stage 1 applies to appeals concerning the application of assessment criteria, teacher feedback, or marking decisions. It provides students with a structured opportunity to request clarification or review from the ToR before the matter is escalated formally by the SBC.

This step ensures:

- Transparency in assessment
- Correct and consistent application of criteria
- Early resolution of concerns without formal escalation
- Student accountability and engagement with assessment standards

For appeals relating to marking, feedback, or the application of assessment criteria, Stage 1 must normally be completed before Stage 2.

Where the concern relates to a procedural, administrative, technical, academic misconduct, adverse circumstances, or inclusive access arrangements decisions that cannot reasonably be reviewed by the ToR, Pamoja may accept a Stage 2 appeal by the SBC where Stage 1 is not appropriate.

4.2 Students' Responsibilities at Stage 1

To initiate a Stage 1 appeal, the student must:

1. Submit the Stage 1 Appeal Form within 14 working days of receiving feedback.
2. Clearly identify the specific IB criteria or task descriptors they believe were incorrectly applied.
3. Provide evidence from their assessed work to support the claim.
4. Describe any relevant technical or procedural issues, if applicable.

Incomplete submissions or appeals without evidence will not proceed.

4.3 Teacher Responsibilities at Stage 1

Upon receiving a Stage 1 appeal, the ToR must:

1. Acknowledge receipt of the appeal within 2 working days.
2. Review the student's rationale and evidence.
3. Re-examine the assessed work using the published rubric or criteria.
4. Consult with a Course Advisor if needed for verification or moderation.
5. Record the outcome on the Stage 1 form.

4.4 Possible Outcomes at Stage 1

The ToR may determine that:

1. The original grade stands, with a clear explanation referencing the criteria.
2. The grade is adjusted due to misapplication of criteria or procedural oversight.
3. Further clarification is provided, addressing misconceptions or misunderstandings about the criteria.

4.5 Communication of Outcome

The ToR will provide a written response through the designated platform within 5 working days of receiving the appeal. The outcome should also be recorded on the Stage 1 Appeal Form.

The response should include:

1. Outcome
2. Rationale linked to criteria
3. Any adjustments made
4. Guidance for improvement

4.6 Completion of Stage 1

A Stage 1 appeal is considered complete when:

1. The ToR has issued a written decision.
2. The outcome has been recorded on the Stage 1 Appeal Form.
3. The outcome has been communicated to the student through the designated Pamoja platform.

If the student continues to believe an admissible procedural or criteria-based issue remains, they may request the SBC to consider a Stage 2 appeal.

For appeals relating to marking, feedback, or the application of assessment criteria, Stage 1 should normally be completed before Stage 2. For other admissible concerns, Pamoja may accept a Stage 2 submitted by the SBC where Stage 1 is not appropriate.

5 Stage 2: Formal Appeal (SBC > Pamoja Academic Review Team)

5.1 Purpose

Stage 2 provides a formal mechanism for reviewing assessment decisions when:

- Stage 1 did not resolve the concern, and there is credible evidence that an admissible error may have occurred; or
- Stage 1 is not appropriate because it relates to a procedural, administrative, technical, academic misconduct, adverse circumstances, or inclusive access arrangements decision that cannot reasonably be reviewed by the ToR.

This stage ensures that assessment decisions are consistent with IB criteria, Pamoja procedures, and principles of fairness and accuracy.

Only the Site-Based Coordinator (SBC) may initiate a Stage 2 Appeal.

5.2 Submission Requirements

To submit a Stage 2 appeal, the SBC must complete and submit the Stage 2 Appeal Form within 10 working days of the Stage 1 outcome, or within 10 working days of the relevant decision where Stage 1 is not appropriate.

The submission must include:

1. Completed Stage 2 Appeal Form
2. Evidence that Stage 1 was completed, where applicable. This may include:
 - a. Student's Stage 1 request
 - b. Teacher's Stage 1 response
3. Where Stage 1 was not completed, a clear explanation of why Stage 1 was not appropriate.
4. Relevant assessment documentation, including:
 - a. Task instructions
 - b. Rubric or assessment criteria
 - c. Teacher feedback
 - d. The student's submitted work
5. Supporting evidence, such as screenshots, platform logs, or correspondence.
6. A clear SBC rationale explaining why the appeal meets the admissibility criteria.

Stage 2 appeals submitted without the required documentation may be deemed inadmissible.

5.3 Admissibility Review

Upon receipt, Pamoja's Academic Review Team will conduct an admissibility check to determine whether the appeal:

- Falls within the permitted grounds for appeal
- Includes all required documentation
- Was submitted within the prescribed timeline
- Demonstrates a plausible procedural, technical, administrative or criteria-based concern

Appeals that do not meet these requirements will be declined, and the SBC will receive a written explanation.

5.4 Formal Review Process

If the appeal is deemed admissible, the Academic Review Team will:

1. Examine all evidence submitted by the SBC
2. Review the application of IB assessment criteria
3. Verify adherence to Pamoja procedures
4. Consult the Teacher of Record and the Course Advisor where necessary
5. Examine platform logs or technical data (if applicable)
6. Reach a determination based on evidence and policy

The review will be independent, impartial, and documented.

5.5 Possible Outcomes at Stage 2

The Academic Review Team may determine that:

- The original assessment decision is upheld
- The grade is adjusted due to misapplication of criteria or procedural error
- A procedural or administrative decision is corrected
- A new opportunity for assessment is provided, where appropriate (e.g. technical failure)
- Guidance for improvement is issued to staff if systematic issues are identified

Pamoja will not consider appeals that seek to challenge professional academic judgement where criteria were correctly applied.

5.6 Communication of Outcome

The SBC will receive a written decision within 15 working days of the submission of a complete appeal. The decision letter will include:

- Outcome
- Summary of the rationale
- Any changes to assessment results (if applicable)
- Confirmation of whether further escalation is available

5.7 Finality of the Stage 2 Outcome

If Final Escalation is permitted under section 6, the SBC may request Final Escalation following the Stage 2 outcome.

If Final Escalation is not permitted, the Stage 2 decision is considered final within Pamoja's internal processes.

6 Final Escalation Following Stage 2

Pamoja's appeals process consists of two stages: Stage 1 Internal Review and Stage 2 Formal Appeal. In limited circumstances, where a Stage 2 appeal has been completed, and the SBC believes that an admissible procedural, administrative, technical, or criteria-based concern remains unresolved, the SBC may request a Final Escalation.

The Final Escalation is not a third appeal stage. It is a limited final internal review of whether the Stage 2 process and outcome were procedurally sound and aligned with this policy.

6.1 Eligibility for Final Escalation

Final Escalation may be requested only when:

- A Stage 2 appeal has been completed in full.
- The SBC believes that a procedural, administrative, or criteria-based error remains unaddressed.
- The request meets the admissibility criteria for Final Escalation.

Final Escalation cannot be requested based on disagreement with professional academic judgement or dissatisfaction with an upheld decision.

6.2 Who May Request Final Escalation

Only the SBC may request Final Escalation on behalf of the student.

Requests submitted by students, parents, or guardians will not be considered.

6.3 Submission Requirements

The SBC must submit a written Final Escalation within 5 working days of receiving the Stage 2 outcome. The request must include:

1. A summary of the Stage 2 outcome
2. A clear explanation of the unresolved concern
3. Evidence demonstrating that admissible grounds still exist
4. Any additional documentation that may support the Final Escalation request

Failure to provide adequate justification may result in the request being declined at the screening stage.

6.4 Admissibility Screening for Final Escalation

Upon receipt, Pamoja will conduct an admissibility screening to determine whether:

1. The Final Escalation request meets the criteria set out in section 6.1.
2. The issue falls within the permissible scope of appeal.
3. All required documentation has been provided.
4. The concern could reasonably have affected the Stage 2 process or outcome.

If the request is deemed inadmissible, the SBC will receive written notification outlining the reasons.

6.5 Final Escalation Process

If admissible, the Final Escalation will be reviewed by the Academic Leadership Team, who will:

1. Review the full Stage 2 file
2. Review the SBC's escalation rationale
3. Examine all evidence submitted throughout the appeal
4. Consult external academic advisors, if required
5. Make a final determination based on evidence, criteria, and policy

This review is independent of the staff involved in Stage 2.

6.6 Possible Outcomes

The Academic Leadership Team may determine that:

- The Stage 2 decision is upheld, with rationale
- A correction is required due to a procedural or criteria-based error
- The grade or decision is amended
- Further remedial action is taken (e.g., reassessment opportunity where justified)

6.7 Communication of Final Decision

The SBC will receive a written outcome within 10 working days of the escalation being accepted for review.

The communication will include:

- The final decision
- A summary of the reasons
- Confirmation of any adjustments to outcomes
- Any required next steps

6.8 Finality of Decision

Decisions made by the Academic Leadership Team at the final stage are final.

No further internal appeal or review will be available.

7

Decision and Notification

7.1 Decision Format

All appeal decisions at Stage 1, Stage 2, and Final Escalation will be communicated in writing and will include:

- The outcome of the appeal, review or Final Escalation
- A summary of the rationale
- Reference to relevant assessment criteria, procedures, or policies
- Confirmation of any changes to grades or decisions, where applicable
- Confirmation of whether the decision is final within Pamoja's Internal Processes.

7.2 Communication channel

Stage 1 decisions will be communicated by the ToR through the designated Pamoja platform and recorded on the Stage 1 Appeal Form.

Stage 2 and Final Escalation decisions will be communicated to the SBC via the official Pamoja Academic email to ensure accuracy, confidentiality, and record-keeping.

7.3 Implementation of Outcomes

Where an appeal results in a change to an assessment outcome:

- Pamoja will implement the decision promptly
- Updated results will be reflected in the relevant systems
- The SBC will be responsible for communicating the outcome with the student

7 Decision and Notification

7.1 Decision Format

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- The outcome of the appeal, review or Final Escalation
- A summary of the rationale
- Reference to relevant assessment criteria, procedures, or policies
- Confirmation of any changes to grades or decisions, where applicable
- Confirmation of whether the decision is final within Pamoja's Internal Processes.

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7.3 Implementation of Outcomes

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- Updated results will be reflected in the relevant systems
- The SBC will be responsible for communicating the outcome with the student

8 Record-Keeping and Data Security

8.1 Documentation Retention

Pamoja will retain all appeal-related documentation for a minimum of two academic years, including:

- Appeal forms
- Supporting evidence
- Communications
- Review notes
- Final decisions

8.2 Confidentiality

All appeal documentation will be:

- Stored securely in access-restricted systems
- Accessed only by authorised staff
- Handled in accordance with applicable data protection regulations

8.3 Audit and Quality Assurance

Appeal records may be reviewed for:

- Internal quality assurance
- Consistency of assessment practices
- Alignment with IB standards and procedures

9 Policy Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Academic Senior Leadership Team to ensure:

- Continued alignment with IB regulations and updates
- Relevance to platform and delivery changes
- Responsiveness to stakeholder feedback.

10 Related Forms

The following forms support the appeals process and are available on the same Pamoja webpage as this policy:

- **Appendix A:** Stage 1 Student Appeal Form
- **Appendix B:** Stage 2 SBC Appeal Submission Form

Final Escalation requests do not require a separate form. They must be submitted in writing by the SBC following the Stage 2 outcome, where Final Escalation is permitted under this policy.

