I Failed a Unit. Can I Appeal My Grade?

One of the most common questions we receive after grade release is whether a student can "appeal" a grade.

In most cases, the first step is not an appeal. Instead, students should consider whether they are seeking:

- A review (re-mark) of an assessment item, or
- A complaint about a decision or process.

What should I do first?

Ask yourself why you believe the result should be changed.

If you believe:

- An assessment was marked incorrectly, you should request a review of the marked assessment item through your Course Coordinator.
- There was an issue with the process, fairness, communication, or how a decision was made, you may wish to lodge a complaint.

Can I appeal just because I failed?

Generally, no.

Wanting a different outcome, being close to a pass, needing the unit to graduate, financial impacts, or disappointment with the result are not usually sufficient grounds on their own for a grade to be changed.

You will need to explain why you believe there has been an error in the marking or decision-making process.

What if I think an assessment was marked incorrectly?

You can request a review of the marked assessment item from your Course Coordinator.

You should:

- Review the feedback and marking criteria.
- Clearly explain your academic rationale.
- Identify specific areas where you believe an error may have occurred.

Requests should generally be made within 10 working days of receiving the mark.

What if I am unhappy with a decision made by the Course Coordinator?

If you remain dissatisfied after receiving a decision, you may be able to lodge a complaint.

Examples may include concerns about:

- Procedural fairness.
- Whether relevant information was considered.
- Whether a policy or procedure was applied correctly.
- Communication or administrative issues affecting the outcome.

Complaints should generally be lodged within 10 working days of the decision you are concerned about.

How do I lodge a complaint?

CDU has an easy-to-complete online complaint form.

When lodging a complaint:

- Clearly explain the decision you are concerned about.
- Include any relevant evidence or documentation.
- Explain what outcome you are seeking and why.

What happens after I submit a complaint?

The complaints team will review the information provided and assess whether the matter requires further investigation or review.

You may be contacted for additional information during this process.

Student Advocacy Tip:



Before lodging a complaint, ask yourself: *"Am I unhappy with the mark, or do I believe there has been an error in the process?"*

A complaint is most effective when it focuses on what happened, what evidence supports your concerns, and why you believe the decision should be reviewed. Statements such as "I worked really hard", "I only missed out by a few marks", or "I need this unit to graduate" are understandable concerns, but they are unlikely on their own to result in a grade being changed. Focus on the facts, evidence, and any relevant policies or procedures that support your position.

Need Support?

The Student Advocacy team is independent, confidential, and free for all CDU students.

We can help you understand your options, navigate University processes, and prepare requests or supporting documentation.



Phone: (08) 8946 6288 (select option 3)



Submit an enquiry online via the Student Advocacy webpage:
www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/life-health-wellbeing/student-advocacy

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