



UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

APPEALS FOR COURSE OVERLOAD - GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Aim

These guidelines are intended to explain the process for appealing for course overloads. Typically, students are only able to take the approved number of courses as approved by the School Board of Studies in each academic year. However, students may petition to register for more courses in a given academic year. When requesting a course overload, the School Board of Studies need to confirm that the overload is necessary based on a thorough evaluation of student's appeal and performance.

1.2. Course Overload

A student shall normally take a normal course load prescribed in the regulations approved by the Senate of the University for each programme of study. Students are required to understand these regulations and consult School authorities in case of doubt during course selection and registration.

Students who wish to exceed the maximum number of courses in a session must request that any course going over the limit be added by the Dean of the School. Permission will only be given if there is are compelling reasons or circumstances and the student has a good academic record.

1.3. Scope

These guidelines are intended to deal with student appeals for course overloads and apply to all undergraduate students who have complete at least a full academic year. These guidelines do not apply to postgraduate students.

2. RESOLUTION OF APPEALS FOR COURSE OVERLOADS

2.1. Conditions or Circumstance for Appealing

The student needs to have a legitimate academic reason for making the request for course overload and be able to describe in detail how he or she will meet the demands of a heightened workload.

To be considered for an overload, a student must meet the following requirements:

- (a) Complete a full academic year before the overload year;
- (b) Not be repeating a course during the overload year;

- (c) Provide a clear statement of the reasons for desiring to take the overload.
- (d) Demonstrate academic ability with a minimum pass of C+ in all courses. Appeals from senior students (i.e. fourth year and above) whose grades are below this standard may be considered, but only where there is a clear and compelling need which warrants an exception;
- (e) Show that there are no available alternatives for achieving the student's goals;
- (f) Provide the total planned course load for the term in which the overload is desired;
- (g) Provide the student's career plans and the extent to which the overload may be relevant to them;
- (h) Provide the adverse consequences in case the overload is not granted; and
- (i) Provide other relevant information pertinent to the appeal.

2.2. Submission of an Appeal for Course Overload

If a student decides that he or she has eligible conditions or mitigating circumstances for appeal, the student should:

- (a) appeal on his/her own behalf and take the responsibility to obtain the required evidence;
- (b) note that the University will not contact third parties (e.g. doctors, social welfare personnel, etc.) on behalf of the student;
- (c) complete and submit the *Form for Lodging an Appeal for Course Overload* with supporting documentary evidence; and
- (d) ensure that the appeal is submitted by the stated deadline as a failure to do so will result in the appeal being disallowed. The deadline will be communicated on a year-by-year basis, but it is, in general **14 days from the start of course registration**.

On receipt of the appeal, the Quality Assurance Directorate will check whether the appeal is presented in the right format with sufficient supporting documents. If not, the student will be notified in writing and advised that the appeal cannot be accepted or the student will be offered the opportunity to supply more information or evidence within a stated timeframe.

All appeals will be acknowledged. Once an appeal has been received, it will be sent to the Dean of the School in which the student is registered.

2.3. Unacceptable Behaviour in Resolution of Academic Complaints

The University reserves the right not to continue with the appeal process if the appeal is conducted in a way which is abusive, offensive, defamatory, aggressive or intimidating, or pursued in an unreasonably persistent or vexatious manner. If there is good cause to consider that this is the case at any stage of the process, the matter shall be reported to the *Student Disciplinary Committee* for consideration and the procedure for resolution of the appeal shall be suspended pending the outcome of the student disciplinary process. If the Student Disciplinary Regulations are found to have been breached in the context of a appeal, the Quality Assurance Directorate may decide to close the matter and inform the appellant accordingly.

2.4. Appeal to the Vice-Chancellor

In exceptional cases, where a student believes that the appeal process has been conducted incorrectly or that the outcome is unreasonable in relation to the evidence, the student has the right to raise the matter for independent review by the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor

will use his/her discretion in constituting an advisory team, if need be, and his/her decision will be final. The appellant must show evidence that there are flaws in the appeal process.

3. PROCEDURE FOR RESOLUTION OF AN APPEAL FOR COURSE OVERLOAD

3.1. Stage 1: Lodging an Appeal for Course Overload

- (a) Download the *Form for Lodging an Appeal for Course Overload* from “*provide website here*” and complete it electronically.
- (b) Submit the form together with scanned copies of all supporting documents in PDF by email to “*director.qa@unza.zm*”. This ensures that your details cannot be altered. No paper submissions will be accepted.

3.2. Stage 2: Checking the Documents and Dispatch to School

- (a) On receipt of the appeal the Quality Assurance Directorate will check whether the appeal is presented in the right format with sufficient supporting documents. If not, the student will be notified in writing and advised that the appeal cannot be accepted or the student will be offered the opportunity to supply more information or evidence within a stated timeframe.
- (b) The Director, Quality Assurance shall write to the Dean of the appropriate school regarding the appeal. The Dean shall acknowledge in writing the receipt of the appeal within 2 week days.

3.3. Stage 3: Departmental Process

- (a) The Dean of the School will officially request the Head of the department in which the appeal is registered to check and consider the appeal within 2 week days.
- (b) The Head of Department shall consider the appeal and provide a response to the Dean within 2 days.
- (c) It is expected that the majority of appeals will be resolved by the Departments and the report sent to the Dean should be sufficient to close the matter.

3.4. Stage 4: Notification to Student

- (a) The Dean shall send to the Director, Quality Assurance a formal notification of the outcome of the appeal. The notification will be in form of a letter explaining the outcome and the reasons for it.
- (b) The Director, Quality Assurance shall notify the student by email of the formal outcome of the appeal process. The notification will contain an explanation of the outcome and the reasons for it.

3.5. Flowchart for Resolution of Students Academic Complaints

