

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201200674, University of Stirling  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** academic appeal/exam results/degree classification  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C had admitted that she consulted another student's work without referencing it when completing her dissertation. As a result, her dissertation was downgraded. She appealed this decision, saying that her health issues were not taken into account in assessing her work, but the university said that there were no grounds to take these concerns to their appeal panel.

Ms C complained to us that the university failed to adequately take into consideration her health issues when assessing her appeal and had failed to tell her that she could apply for an extension to her dissertation deadline. When we investigated, the university provided us with a number of documents that they make available to students. These included information which says that if there is a health problem, students should tell them at the time of the illness or shortly afterwards, and which explains how to request an extension to coursework deadlines and the grounds on which an extension can be granted. They also explained that, in cases of plagiarism and academic misconduct, motivation is not taken into account. As Ms C had been provided with and had access to information about how to inform the university of health issues and how to request an extension to coursework guidelines, we did not uphold her complaint.