

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201304417, University of Strathclyde  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** academic appeal/exam results/degree classification  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the way the university handled his appeal against the downgrading of his degree award from Master of Business Administration to Postgraduate Diploma in Business Administration. Mr C failed two exams at his fourth attempt, and appealed to the university asking them to take into consideration a number of factors that he said affected his performance in these exams. He also said that he had been misinformed about his marks in relation to previous exams, which meant that he did not have enough time to study for his re-sits. He also said that the university had delayed in responding when he asked to defer one of his exams to increase his chances of passing them both.

We reviewed the university's application of its two-stage appeal procedure. The first stage was handled by a faculty appeal committee and we found that this committee had considered all the issues Mr C raised, in line with their policy. We noted that they had not considered the full grounds on which he made his appeal, but as he had not provided any evidence in relation to these, we considered this to be reasonable.

The second stage of the appeal procedure was made to the university senate, with an initial review by the vice-principal to consider whether there were grounds for appeal to the senate. The vice-principal considered that there were no new grounds for appeal, because Mr C had not provided any evidence of bias or prejudice at the faculty appeal stage, and there was no evidence of a breach of the appeals procedure. We found that this judgement was made in line with the appeals procedure and, overall we considered that the university had given Mr C's appeal reasonable consideration.