

SPSO decision report

Case: 201400964, University of Edinburgh
Sector: further and higher education
Subject: academic appeal/exam results/degree classification
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C was very ill during the third year of his honours degree and, after being admitted to hospital, was diagnosed with a significant illness. He submitted a special circumstances application for the exams he was about to take.

When some six months later, at the end of his third year, Mr C received a fail mark for a second semester subject he said he was disadvantaged because he had missed foundation knowledge due to his absence through illness. He asked for his special circumstances to be taken into account for that subject. Mr C said he was given advice and reassurances that his submission of special circumstances for that subject would be considered at the end of his fourth year. He said the advice he was given was poor and that the reassurances given at the end of his third year were misleading.

When he received his final honours degree award he submitted an appeal to the university about his grading because he felt the low mark awarded in third year had impacted upon his overall grade at the end of his degree. He said the university had not properly considered the impact of his special circumstances, which he had been told they would do at the end of his final year. He complained that proper procedures had not been followed in dealing with his special circumstances and appeal.

Our investigation found that the university had fully considered the impact of his special circumstances and had followed their policy and procedures in dealing with his case, so we did not uphold Mr C's complaints.