

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201700720, University of the West of Scotland  
**Sector:** universities  
**Subject:** academic appeal/exam results/degree classification  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained that she had been unreasonably withdrawn from her university course due to lack of attendance at classes. She also complained that communication before and after her withdrawal was unreasonable in that it was confusing and unclear.

We found that the university's procedure for withdrawing students for non-engagement was not sufficiently robust. We found that evidence to support their decision to remove Ms C from the course was unsatisfactory. We also found that, when she appealed the decision, Ms C was disadvantaged by the poor explanation for their decision to withdraw her. We upheld both of Ms C's complaints.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Reconsider Ms C's appeal of the decision to withdraw her.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- The university should have a robust process which gives students clear information about their attendance requirements and warnings when their attendance falls below an acceptable level. Responses from students should be followed up and support and advice should be offered.
- Decisions to withdraw a student for non-engagement should be noted and key evidence should be retained.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.