

Show Cause Appeal Against Exclusion

*Have you received a letter from QUT telling you that you are eligible for exclusion?
Don't stress – your student union is here to help!*

What does exclusion mean?

“Exclusion” is when the University withdraws you from your course (or like courses). This is for a minimum period of 12 months. Other Universities may honour this and may not allow you to enrol with them either. **Please note that you are not excluded from your course yet.** The letter you received is informing you that you are eligible for exclusion should you fail to appeal, or your appeal is dismissed.

You may be eligible for exclusion if:

- your GPA is less than 3 in consecutive teaching periods other than in the first 96 credit points of your course; or
- you have failed a unit three (3) or more times; or
- you have failed a designated unit two (2) times; or
- you have exceeded the maximum time limit for your course; or
- you have failed to meet the requirements of your higher research degree candidature.

Can I appeal this exclusion so I can continue studying?

Yes, of course! You have the right to appeal a decision to exclude you from your course. If you can successfully show (or “Show Cause”) why you should remain enrolled, you can continue your studies. You must write a letter to the University justifying why you should remain enrolled in your degree and provide relevant supporting documentation.

If you've withdrawn from a unit or failed but believe you should not be liable for the costs or academic penalties due to special circumstances, it is recommended you apply to withdraw without penalty. Approval to withdraw without penalty may remove your eligibility for exclusion. **It is still recommended you appeal your exclusion as the withdrawal process can take time.**

What do I write in my Appeal?

We recommend addressing the following points in your Show Cause letter:

Extenuating Circumstances

Explain what extenuating circumstances impacted your ability to perform well in your studies for every period of poor performance throughout your degree, not just the most recent semester of poor performance.

The University are looking for circumstances beyond your control that prevented you from performing to your full potential. This could include illness, a death in the family, psychiatric conditions, etc. Be as detailed as you can. If you have had more than one semester of poor academic performance, you will need to address every semester of unsatisfactory academic performance, not just the most recent.

You will need to provide independent supporting documentation, such as from a doctor and/or counsellor, as evidence of these circumstances. Do not falsify or forge documentation. Doing so is a form of student misconduct that may lead to severe penalties (ie. exclusion from QUT and failure in relevant units).

Negative Impact on Studies

Explain how these circumstances negatively impacted your study.

QUT cannot assume that special circumstances during your studies had an impact on your assessment. You will need to explain and demonstrate (using independent supporting documentation) that your extenuating circumstances negatively impacted your ability to perform academically.

You will need to be detailed. For example, you may have been so ill that you were forced to miss classes. Don't stop there! Write about how that disadvantaged you; for instance, it might have meant you couldn't ask your tutors questions when you were confused about course content.

Strategies to Redress the Situation

Explain what strategies you have implemented to improve your circumstances – QUT need to know that things will improve if they allow you to continue studying your course.

What can you do to make sure your grades don't fall next semester? Maybe you need to seek medical treatment, reduce your work hours, seek regular consultations with a counsellor. If you have been sent this letter for failing a unit three times, emphasise what strategies you will put in place to maximise your chances of passing it the next time you enrol in it. For example, you may want to invest in tutoring for this specific unit next semester.

Do I need evidence to support my appeal?

Yes, you must provide supporting documentation to confirm your extenuating circumstances, their impact on your studies and the strategies you have implemented to redress your situation. Make sure you connect any evidence provided to your appeal. Documentation in a language other than English needs to include an official translation. Your application will be rejected if you do not provide evidence in your appeal.

What are common mistakes I should avoid making when writing my Appeal?

Many students commonly make the following errors when writing their Show Cause application:

- An application that is too short. You need to be thorough and convincing. Show your passion for learning!
- Merely explaining the last semester. If you have had a long history of poor academic performance, explain any circumstances from the whole period. Tell the Committee everything or they will question whether you have the capacity to do well in the future.
- Glossing over your good performance. If you've done well in the past, point it out! Show the Committee that you're capable of getting good grades.
- Leaving out important things. Within reason, no circumstances are too trivial to write about. If you believe that it impacted on your studies, the Committee should know about it.
- Forgetting to proofread. You're trying to show the Committee that you're a competent student – try not to make mistakes in your appeal.
- Giving contact details for referees without any documentation. Committees cannot chase up information on your behalf. Please supply a signed letter from any referees.
- Stating 'evidence of this can be provided on request'. Committees cannot request further evidence and can only consider what has been provided at the time of your appeal. Please supply all relevant evidence when submitting your appeal.

Where do I submit my Appeal?

Your Show Cause letter (and other documentation) must be submitted electronically via the 'Appeal against exclusion form' (AP Form). You can access the AP Form and information about the appeals process from the HiQ article, '[Appeal against unsatisfactory academic performance](#)'. Upon completion, you will receive a receipt via email confirming the submission of this form. **Please keep a copy of this submission receipt just in case an error occurs during submission and processing.**

I missed the appeal deadline for round 1/2. Can I still submit my Appeal after the deadline?

If you missed the deadline to apply for round 1, you can still apply for round 2 (mid-year). If you miss the round 2 deadline, then you have no more opportunities to submit an appeal. **Note if you are applying to appeal during the end-year period there is only ONE round for appeal.** For this reason, we cannot stress enough how important it is for you submit your appeal on time!

If any extreme circumstances have made it impossible for you to submit your application before the deadline, we recommend contacting uap@qut.edu.au as soon as possible. An extension in such circumstances cannot be guaranteed.

My Show Cause Appeal was dismissed. What do I do?

The decision is final within the University, but you may appeal the decision on procedural grounds only via the QUT Student Ombudsman. After 12 months have passed, you have the right to apply for readmission back to your course. See our article on [Return to Study After Exclusion](#) for more on this.

Can I speak to someone from QUT Guild for further assistance?

You can book a free and confidential 30-minute appointment to speak to one of our Academic Advocacy Officers. Bring your draft appeal with you so we can discuss and review it during your meeting. Appointments can be made via our [online booking page](#). You can also email us a draft of your Show Cause Appeal to advocacy@qutguild.com and we will do our best to get back to you.

Due to the large volume of students who access our service this time of year, please be aware that:

- we cannot guarantee that you will be able to get an appointment before the deadline for the first round of appeals;
- We cannot guarantee that we will be able to check your draft before the deadline for the first round; and
- Appointments are essential. We are unable to meet students who have not made an appointment with us. If you drop by our office without booking in to see us and we are not in a meeting with a student, this does not mean we have time to see you. We are reviewing student submissions and will not make any exceptions for students.

Are there other resource that can help me?

Yes there are! Check out:

- [QUT's Appeal Against Exclusion Guide](#)
- [QUT's Manual Policy and Procedure \(MOPP\) E/6.7 Academic Progress](#)