



## NUI Code of Practice on Award Appeals

*Updated: February 2025*

### 1. Principles

- 1.1** This Code of Practice applies to all applicants appealing a decision in regard to funding for the following National University of Ireland (NUI) Awards:
- NUI Travelling Doctoral Studentships
  - NUI Grant Scheme for Early Career Academics
  - NUI Post-Doctoral Fellowships
- 1.2** This Code of Practice applies to all appeals against:
- Decisions taken in the NUI Awards Selection Process in the above-mentioned awards.
- 1.3** The scope of this Awards Appeals Process is to ensure that NUI has acted fairly and reasonably in the selection process as outlined in the regulations of the relevant award for the year in which an individual application was made.
- 1.4** The appeals process is not a method of circumventing or setting aside the professional or academic judgement of selection panel members on the performance of applicants; it is a way of ensuring that decisions are made in accordance with relevant regulations.
- 1.5** The appeals process is evidence-based. Circumstances cited in an appeal must be corroborated by evidence. Independent supporting evidence should be provided with the appeal submission to substantiate any circumstances and the impact they had on the applicant.
- 1.6** In considering appeals, NUI will observe the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.
- 1.7** The appeal procedure is divided into two stages that must be followed sequentially: the Initial Appeal stage and the Senate Review stage.
- 1.8** NUI aims to resolve appeals within 60 working days from the date of submission of the initial appeal to the conclusion of the Senate Review stage.

### 2. Initial Appeal Stage

#### Right to Appeal

- 2.1** An applicant may appeal a decision taken in the Awards selection process.

## **Grounds for Appeal**

**2.2** Appeals against decisions may be submitted on the following ground:

- That there was, on the part of NUI, an administrative or procedural irregularity, or a failure in the relevant assessment process, which gives rise to a reasonable doubt as to whether the decision would have been different if it had not occurred.

## **Applicant Submissions and Eligibility**

**2.3** Initial appeals must be submitted within 10 working days of the date of the notification of the outcome of the award application. Appeals received after 10 working days will only be considered by NUI in exceptional circumstances. Appeals must be submitted using the Appeal Form, which must be completed in full. Appeals that are not submitted using the Appeal Form will not normally be processed. Appeals must be submitted with corroborating evidence.

**2.4** The Appeal Form is available at: [NUI Appeals Process Initial Appeal Form](#).

**2.5** The appeal will be acknowledged on receipt. NUI Awards will assess the eligibility of the appeal, normally within 10 working days.

**2.6** The NUI Awards team will declare an appeal ineligible if it is:

- not submitted on the specified ground
- not submitted within the specified timeframe or which are submitted outside that timeframe but are not sufficiently exceptional circumstanced to justify considering the late submission
- on the basis of the professional or academic judgement of assessors
- submitted without corroborating evidence.

## **Award Appeal**

**2.7** Eligible appeals will be reviewed by the Registrar, or their delegated authority. This is a paper-based review.

**2.8** The Registrar, or their delegated authority, shall base their deliberations on the information and evidence submitted.

**2.9** After consideration of the submission, the Registrar, or their delegated authority, shall reach one of the following decisions, which will be communicated in writing:

- reject the appeal (with reason given) and confirm the original decision against which the appeal is being made;
- uphold the appeal in part or in full;
- refer the matter back to the selection process.

**2.10** The Registrar, or their delegated authority, may attach conditions to any of these decisions. Where conditions are attached, the Registrar, or their delegated authority, shall specify the consequences of failure to comply with the condition which may include rejection of the appeal.

## **3. Senate Review Stage**

**3.1** Following completion of the Initial Appeal stage, the applicant can undertake a Senate Review. Eligible cases will be reviewed by the Senate-appointed Review Panel. This is a paper-based review.

### **Right to Senate Review**

**3.2** An applicant may request a review of the decision from the Initial Appeal stage.

### **Grounds for Review**

**3.3** Requests for reviews of decisions made at the Initial Appeal stage may be submitted on the following ground:

- that there is evidence of a material procedural irregularity that has occurred in the handling of the appeal at the Initial Appeal stage

### **Submissions and Eligibility**

**3.4** The request for a Senate Review must be submitted within 15 working days of the date of the notification of the decision of the Registrar, or their delegated authority. Requests received after 15 working days will only be considered as eligible by NUI Awards in the most exceptional circumstances. Requests must be submitted using the Senate Review Form, which must be completed in full, with accompanying evidence. Requests that are not submitted using the Senate Review Form will not normally be processed.

**3.5** The Senate Review Form is available at: [NUI Appeals Process Senate Review Form](#).

**3.6** The appeal will be acknowledged on receipt. The NUI Awards team will assess the eligibility of the appeal, normally within 10 working days.

**3.7** The NUI Awards team will declare a Senate Review request ineligible if it is:

- not submitted on the specified grounds
- not submitted within the specified timeframe or which are submitted outside that timeframe but there are not sufficiently exceptional circumstances to justify considering the late submission
- on the basis of the professional or academic judgement of assessors
- submitted without corroborating evidence.

### **Senate Review Panel Membership**

**3.8** Each Senate Review Panel shall comprise no fewer than three and no more than four members of Senate. The quoracy of three must comprise a Chair and two members of Senate. The Chair will be a senior member of the federation, normally a Registrar, or their nominee.

**3.9** No person shall serve in respect of a case in which they have a personal interest, or when they have personal knowledge of the applicant arising out of an academic or pastoral connection with the individual concerned.

**3.10** No person shall serve in respect of a case where they are a member of the same NUI constituent university or other NUI member institution as the applicant.

**3.11** Each Senate Review Panel shall be supported by a Secretary who shall be a member of the NUI Awards team. The Secretary will not act as a deliberating member of the panel but will provide the panel with guidance on procedure and precedent, where appropriate.

### **Senate Review Panel Process and Outcomes**

**3.12** A Senate Review Panel shall consider all eligible review submissions.

**3.13** The Senate Review Panel will carry out a paper-based review and shall base its deliberations on the information submitted by the applicant.

**3.14** The applicant will normally not be permitted to introduce further new material at

the Senate Review stage unless the material was not reasonably known to the applicant while submitting the Initial Appeal, and the Chair deems the material admissible.

**3.15** After consideration of the review submission, the Senate Review Panel shall reach one of the following decisions, which will be communicated in writing:

- reject the appeal (with reason given), and confirm the original decision against which the appeal is being made
- uphold the appeal in part or in full
- refer the matter back to the selection process.

**3.16** The Senate Review Panel may attach conditions to any of these decisions. Where conditions are attached the Panel shall specify the consequences of failure to comply with the condition which may include rejection of the appeal.

**3.17** Any decisions made by the Senate Review Panel will be final and binding, and communicated to the applicant and the NUI Senate via the NUI Awards Team.

*NUI will review this policy on an on-going basis and may update it from time to time. Policy updates are effective from the date they are posted on the NUI website. You may wish to check the website regularly for updates.*