

Information on challenge procedures

The following procedures allow for the challenging of an EPFL decision regarding studies:

1. Request for reassessment (DNA)

- The request for reassessment (DNA) is an internal EPFL challenge procedure. Its aim is to achieve the correction of an EPFL decision by the School itself. In the case of studies, the decision most frequently challenged regards the transcript of records (the challenger's request may concern one or several recorded grades in particular).
- The DNA must include a **motive for challenge**.
- The DNA must be submitted within **10 days** of receiving the decision to be challenged, either directly at the Registrar's Office, or by post to the following address:

**EPFL
Service académique
BP 1229 (Bâtiment BP)
Station 16
1015 Lausanne**

Warning: the submission of a DNA to EPFL bears no effect on the 30-day time limit for submitting an appeal to the ETH Appeals Commission (see chapter 2 below). These two time limits run concurrently.

- The DNA must be submitted in the form of an **explanatory letter**. EPFL does not require the request to be formulated in a particular manner, provided that it is comprehensible. Where necessary, the School may request further details from the person who has submitted the request. Nonetheless, in order to facilitate understanding of the file by the School, the letter should include all of the following elements, if possible: the decision to be challenged, basic information on the situation – for example, the course ID and the identity of the member of teaching staff in charge – a brief summary of relevant facts, the motive(s) for challenge, a conclusion (what the challenger hopes to achieve), potential means of supporting the request (emails, screen shots, statements, certificates, written instructions provided in class, etc.) as well as the challenger's signature.
- As a rule, a contribution towards expenses will be requested from the person who has submitted the request. Save in exceptional circumstances, the requested contribution amount is **CHF 100.00** per challenge, payable in advance following the instructions from the Registrar's Office. Should the challenger win their challenge, the financial contribution is refunded.
- The duration of the procedure varies from a few days to several weeks, depending on the period in which the request is handled and the complexity of the affair.

➔ **Regarding the motive for challenge**, the following information must be taken into account:

- An EPFL decision is corrected when it is found to break a rule of law or when it is based on the incorrect recording of relevant facts.

Examples: a test may be annulled if it has been undertaken orally despite set regulations providing for a written format (breaking of a rule of law); a grade could be modified if it is based on the incorrect sum of the points attributed for each answer according to the scale (facts incorrectly recorded).

(Additional information: where an EPFL decision has no bearing on exam results or study offers – which is rare in the context of studies – its inadvisability may be invoked.)

- If no motive for challenge is provided, the request will be deemed inadmissible.
- Furthermore, the following motives are generally considered invalid:
 - Severity of marking (inadvisability), in the case where no aspect of the dossier in question indicates abuse in terms of the marker's discretion (e.g. extreme case with arbitrary grading).
 - Difficult personal circumstances (family, financial, medical, etc.).

It is to be remembered that any person who finds themselves unable to attend an exam must formally assert this inability and waive their presence at the exam. If a candidate sits an exam, it is considered that the exam has been attempted and the resulting grade will be included in the grade average.

- Borderline grades

Promotion of a candidate graded below the pass level would constitute a violation of law (legality, equality of treatment between students, prohibition on acting arbitrarily). Such favouritism must be systematically refused.

It is to be remembered that teaching staff verify the results of students who are close to grade boundaries for the conference for ratification of examination results.

Time permitting, where the motive for challenge is related to the marking of a paper, it is recommended to consult the paper in question before acting.

2. Appeal

- An appeal is a challenge procedure external to EPFL. Its aim is to achieve the correction of an EPFL decision by the ETH Appeals Committee (CRIEPF). In the case of studies, the decision most frequently challenged regards the transcript of records (the challenger's request may concern one or several recorded grades in particular).
- An appeal must include a **motive for challenge**. (See chapter 1 above).
- An appeal must be submitted within **30 days** of receiving the decision to be challenged to the following address:

Commission de recours interne des EPF
Effingerstrasse 6a
Case postale
3001 Bern¹

Warning: the submission of a DNA to EPFL bears no effect on the 30-day time limit for submitting an appeal to the ETH Appeals Commission (see chapter 1 above). These two time limits run concurrently.

- The appeal may be submitted in the form of an **explanatory letter**, including the motive(s) for challenge, a summary of the relevant facts and a conclusion (what the appellant hopes to achieve). The appeal letter must be accompanied by a copy of the decision challenged and all potential means

¹ Updated on 31 October 2018

of supporting the request (emails, screen shots, statements, certificates, written instructions provided in class, etc.). The letter must be signed by the appellant or his/her representative. It must be written in one of the official Swiss languages (preferably French); it is to be noted that English is not accepted for this procedure. A Swiss postal address is also required.

- As a rule, a contribution towards expenses will be requested from the appellant. Save in exceptional circumstances, the requested contribution amount is **CHF 500.00**, payable in advance by following the instructions from the ETH Appeals Commission. Should the appellant win their appeal, the financial contribution will be refunded. A fee waiver request may be submitted for those in considerable financial difficulty.
- The duration of the procedure varies depending on the period in which the request is handled and the complexity of the affair but it will generally last for at least six months. Depending on the situation, it is possible to request provisional measures from the ETH Appeals Commission.

Further information regarding these procedures can be acquired from the Legal services of the Vice Presidency for Academic Affairs (juriste.daf@epfl.ch).