

Mandatory Withdrawal Appeal Letter Guidelines

The appeal process always involves writing a letter to explain your situation. To ensure that you write a good letter, follow the guidelines below – but keep in mind that these are only guidelines and that the content of each letter will vary depending on your case.

Please remember that many students consult the Student Rights Centre – if you only copy the example provided your letter will be unoriginal and unconvincing.

Once you have drafted your letter, you may send it to the Student Rights Centre (cde-src@uosu-seuo.com) to get some feedback.

The Essentials

Make sure the following appears at the beginning of your letter:

- Your name
- Your student number
- The date
- The recipient's contact information (Not sure? Ask the Student Rights Centre)

The Content

Here is how your letter can be constructed:

- Paragraph 1: Reasons for your letter
The very first sentence should answer the following questions: *Why are you writing and what are you asking for?*
- Paragraph 2: Facts
Explain what happened. *Be clear and write chronologically!*
Keep in mind that a total stranger should be able to understand your situation by reading your letter.
State which supporting documentation you are providing (medical documents, death certificates, etc.)
- Paragraph 3: Action Plan
Explain how your circumstances have changed since the events that lead to your withdrawal.
Outline how you will organize your time and seek means to ensure your academic success (make a time table, drop certain engagements, get a tutor etc.).
Be specific
- Paragraph 4: Arguments
Argue your case! Why do you deserve to have your appeal granted?
Explain the consequences that a negative decision would have on you academic career and personal life. *Why should the Faculty make an exception for you?*

Closing

Make sure the following appears at the end of your letter:

- End with a formality (i.e.: Sincerely)
- Your name must be written at the bottom
- State the number of documents enclosed

*See Back for a Letter Example
(facts are completely fictional)*

Appeal Letter Example for Students Facing Withdrawal from a Faculty

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June 5, 2019

Committee on Academic Standing
bacinfo@genie.uottawa.ca
Faculty of Engineering
University of Ottawa

Re: Appeal of Mandatory Withdrawal

Dear Members of the Committee,

(Reasons for Letter) I am writing this letter to ask for reconsideration of the decision to withdraw me from the Faculty of Engineering.

(Facts) On May 31, 2019 I received an email indicating that I was to withdraw from the Faculty of Engineering for having failed to achieve a CPGA of 5.0 during my third year of study. Following a meeting with my academic advisor it became clear to me that many factors beyond my control have impacted my ability to be successful in my studies and I believe the Faculty should be aware of my circumstances in order to hopefully grant an exception to the academic regulation regarding withdrawal.

(Facts) It should be noted that as a third-year student I was in good standing until the Fall semester 2018. Unfortunately my uncle, who is my father's twin, was diagnosed with cancer in our home country of Somalia. Not only was my uncle very close to me and my family, but he played a great part in my upbringing. The news of his illness came as a shock and I travelled to Somalia, unfortunately not in time to see him before his death on November 15, 2018. Once back on campus my focus was heavily clouded and my concentration affected by my grief. Unfortunately I was unable to obtain a death certificate because that is not of custom in my country. My grief continued to affect me during the period of final examination and deteriorated to a point where I had to seek medical attention.

(Facts) On January 25, 2019, right around the time that I was informed that I failed two out of my five attempted Fall courses, I met with my family doctor who referred me to a psychiatrist. I was on a waitlist for a long time, and it was finally at the end of April 2019 that I was diagnosed with a medical condition, and started receiving proper care. The psychiatrist has provided me with a note that attests that my medical condition affected my ability to succeed in my studies. (Medical note included). At that point it was too late for me to abandon my Winter courses, and my treatment was not yet truly effective in managing the symptoms of my illness.

(Action Plan) Now that I have the medical care I require, I hope the Faculty will give me a second chance. If granted, I would take a reduced course load and follow my treatment protocol carefully, participate more actively in study groups and most importantly, ensure to be present to each lecture, a downfall of mine in the past.

(Arguments) Following the treatment protocol recommended by my doctor and I am happy to report that my health is now starting to improve. In short, I have found healthy ways to deal with my grief and I am more attentive to my medical condition and the care it requires. For this reason, I can say that the problems faced during the past academic year will most likely not resurface in the future. Furthermore, seeing as this is my first time with such low grades, I believe that the Faculty should give me a chance to pursue my studies, especially considering the fact that I suffered from extenuating circumstances that were completely beyond my control.

(Closing) I will be happy to answer any questions you might have. Thank you for taking time to review my request.

Sincerely,

Mohammed Abdelkarim
Encl: -Medical note from Dr. Gary Louis