

KEELE UNIVERSITY

ADMISSIONS COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY

At Keele University we are committed to the provision of high quality, fair and transparent admissions policies and procedures for **all**¹ our applicants. If applicants have cause for concern about the way their application has been handled and is not satisfied with the initial feedback received, they may use the Complaints procedure to inform the University of their concerns through a formal channel.

The purpose of the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy is to enable applicants to raise matters of concern regarding the admissions process without risk of being disadvantaged and for the University to resolve these concerns quickly and fairly.

1. Scope

1.1. An applicant may complain or appeal against the handling of his/her own application if there is reason to believe that:

- The decision made contradicts the published entry criteria or the University's Equal Opportunities Policy.
- There was an administrative or procedural error in the handling of the application.
- There was concern regarding a member of staff's behaviour during the application process.
- The emergence of substantial new information which may have affected the decision and which could not have been available at the time the original decision was made.

1.2. Complaints or Appeals will not be considered:

- If the dispute is against a decision made on academic grounds. Due to the level of competition particularly for selective programmes of study, there will inevitably be occasions when an applicant is disappointed with a selection decision.
- About an applicant's failure to satisfy professional body or non-academic requirements as specified by an external agency for a particular programme of study.
- If a complaint or appeal is submitted anonymously or through a third party.
- If the dispute concerns a decision from a previous admissions cycle or one that has already been accepted by the applicant.

2. Principles

2.1. The principles which support the Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy are that:

- All complaints and appeals are treated seriously and constructively. It will also seek to ensure that complaints and appeals are dealt with quickly, with fairness and consistency.
- If it found that an incorrect decision has been made the University will make every effort to either reverse or rectify the error and will do so promptly.
- Applicants lodging a complaint or an appeal and those against whom the complaint or appeal are made may expect the matter to be dealt with confidentially and with respect for their privacy. However, it may be necessary to disclose information to others in order to deal with the complaint or appeal—and in these circumstances the parties concerned will be informed of such a disclosure.

¹ This policy covers both Undergraduate, Postgraduate (Taught and Research), full and part time applications

3. Complaints Procedure

- 3.1. Keele University shall attempt, wherever possible, to resolve application queries quickly and informally. In the first instance, applicants should go through the Admissions Feedback Procedure and contact the relevant Admissions Office to ask for feedback and an explanation as to why their application was unsuccessful. If this course of action proves unsatisfactory, then the formal complaints and appeals policy should be followed.
- 3.2. Where an applicant remains dissatisfied with the outcome of their application and the feedback received or there is substantial new information, s/he may complain in writing to the University Admissions Manager. An applicant must provide the following information:
- Name and Address
 - UCAS number or Student number
 - Grounds for the Complaint
 - An indication of the outcome being sought
- 3.3. The Admissions Manager shall investigate the complaint and shall respond to the applicant within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint (if it should prove impossible to respond fully within 15 working days, the complainant shall be informed in writing of the revised timescale).

4. Appeals Procedure

- 4.1. Where an applicant remains dissatisfied with the written response received regarding their complaint, or there is substantial new information, s/he may appeal in writing by completing the Keele University Applicant Appeal Form (Appendix 1). The completed form together with any supporting documentation should be sent to the Head of Planning and Admissions within 15 working days following receipt of their formal feedback.
- 4.2. The Head of Planning and Admissions shall investigate the appeal and shall respond to the appellant within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal (if it should prove impossible to respond fully within 15 working days, the complainant shall be informed in writing of the revised timescale).
- 4.3. The Head of Planning and Admissions may request additional information from either the applicant or relevant staff and may, in some cases, convene a meeting to discuss the appeal. The Head of Planning and Admissions will find either:
- That the appeal is upheld and the University will take appropriate action.
OR
 - That the appeal is not upheld and will communicate the reasons for this decision and confirm that no action will be taken.
- 4.4. The decision reached by the Head of Planning and Admissions is final and will be communicated to the appellant and relevant staff within 15 working days of considering the appeal.

5. Retention of Records

- 5.1. The case file will be retained in Admissions until the start of the academic year following conclusion of the complaint or appeal.
- 5.2. The Admissions Manager will be responsible for ensuring the case file held in Admissions is destroyed within 30 days of that date.
- 5.3. No other copies of the case files should be retained once a formal appeal has concluded.

**Appendix 1
Applicant Appeal Form**

This form is only for the purpose of submitting a formal appeal in accordance with the University's Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy. Please read this information prior to submitting the form as we may be unable to consider an inappropriate or incomplete submission.

If you have any queries concerning the completion or submission of this form, please contact the Head of Planning and Admissions Jo Ladwa, at j.l.ladwa@keele.ac.uk

Applicant Name:	
Application Number/UCAS Personal ID:	
Course(s) applied to:	

Please provide details of your appeal below (*please provide copies of any communications regarding your application or feedback received*)

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continue on separate sheets if necessary

Please explain why you are not satisfied with the feedback or communications you have received.

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Have you already discussed your appeal informally with a member of University/College staff?	Y/N
<i>If yes, please provide details</i>	

Your declaration and signature

I confirm that the information given on the form is accurate and a true reflection of events to the best of my knowledge and that it does not contain any false or fraudulent information. I agree to the investigating officer on behalf of Keele University sharing details of this case, including information from my application, with other persons as part of any investigation.

Signed		Date	
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Please send the completed form and any additional documentation to:

Head of Planning and Admissions
Tawney Building
Keele University
Keele
Staffordshire
ST5 5BG