

Admissions Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Procedure for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes

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Introduction

Purpose

1. This document provides information to all applicants applying to undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes at Northeastern University London (the University) regarding the procedure followed when requesting feedback, making a complaint and appealing a decision made by the University as part of the admissions process.

Scope

2. This procedure covers students applying to undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes at the University. Currently enrolled students and learners should consult the [Complaints Procedure for Students](#) or the [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedures](#), as appropriate. The monitoring of the Admissions Feedback, Complaints and Appeals Procedure and summary of outcomes is the responsibility of Academic Board.

Definitions

3. **Complaint:** A complaint, in this context, is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction about the way in which the University's admissions policies and procedures have been used to reach a selection decision; or the means by which a decision has been reached; or the actions, or lack of actions, by the University or its staff.
4. **Appeal:** An appeal in this context is defined as 'a request for a review of a decision made by the Admissions team on whether a student is offered a place on a programme', at initial offer stage or after results have been released.

General Principles

5. Applicants should note that they have no right to challenge or complain about decisions that are based on academic grounds. Applicants have no right of appeal against a decision not to offer them a place at the University, unless it can be shown that the University's admissions procedures have been inconsistently or incorrectly applied.
6. Complaints may be made by individual applicants or by groups of applicants. Complaints may not be lodged by a representative, a parent, or any other third party unless it can be shown that there are exceptional grounds why the applicant cannot make a complaint.

7. In the first instance, applicants with a complaint should raise it informally with the relevant member of staff. If this course of action proves unsatisfactory, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.
8. At any informal or formal stage of the complaint, the member of staff to whom the complaint has been referred shall apply such remedy as within their authorisation. If they consider the remedy is beyond their remit, they will refer the matter to an appropriate member of staff.
9. All complaints will be dealt with confidentially. However, it may be necessary to disclose information to others so that the complaint can be dealt with. In these circumstances, all parties concerned will be informed of the disclosure.
10. The University will seek to ensure that all complaints are dealt with promptly. There will be no discrimination against any applicant who has made a complaint.
11. Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with.
12. The Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance will monitor, on an annual basis, formal complaints which have been referred, and will be responsible for implementing or recommending changes to systems or procedures suggested by the nature and pattern of the complaints received. Such records will contain name (anonymised), age, gender and ethnicity (if known) of complainant, programme of study applied for, summary of complaint and summary of outcome.

Feedback Procedure

13. Written requests for feedback should be received by the University within 21 working days of the date on which the decision was communicated to the applicant. The request should be addressed to the Admissions Office and EITHER be posted to: Northeastern University London, Devon House, 58 St Katharine's Way, London, E1W 1LP OR emailed to the [Admissions Team](#).
14. Requests for feedback should preferably be made by the applicant, but may also be made by a third party (a person other than the applicant) representing the applicant. If a third party makes the request, in order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) the University requires confirmation in writing from the applicant that they have given this person their express consent for them to act on their behalf before the University enters into communication with them.
15. The University aims to respond to requests for feedback within 10 working days of receipt of the written request. It will provide feedback in writing by

letter which will be sent via email to the applicant. The feedback will be based on the information provided by the admission tutors, as part of the University's standard decision-making procedures. If the University anticipates a significant delay (five or more days) in providing the required information, it will inform the applicant or their representative.

16. Following receipt of the University feedback, if applicants believe that they have grounds for a formal review of the admissions decision, they can make an appeal.

Complaints Procedure

Stage One: Informal Complaint

17. Most complaints can be resolved satisfactorily on an informal basis.
18. The applicant should, normally, raise their complaint in writing with the member of University staff that they have been in contact with, either electronically (via email) or with a hard copy, via post.
19. The complaint must normally be made within 14 days of the actions or lack of actions that prompted the complaint. The member of staff to whom the complaint has been submitted shall respond to the complainant within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint and shall keep a record of the correspondence and any action taken. If it will not be possible to respond within 10 working days, the complainant shall be informed of the intended timescale for a response.
20. If the complaint is about non-selection, the relevant staff member must be satisfied that the application was considered fairly and that the decision did comply with the University's Admissions Policy. If they are satisfied that this is the case, then an acceptable response at this stage is to explain the context of the decision and that the University's selection policy has been applied. The applicant's attention should be drawn to the Formal Complaints Procedure (stage 2), in case they wish to pursue the matter further. If the complaint is rejected, the relevant staff member must state the precise reasons.
21. If an informal complaint is of a general rather than specific nature, it may be more appropriately addressed in writing to the Admissions Manager or the Head of Admissions.
22. If the complaint is about the Head of Admissions, the written complaint should be addressed to the Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance.

Stage Two: Formal Complaint

23. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response received at Stage One, they should submit, within 10 working days of receiving the response, a written complaint to the Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance.
24. The written complaint should state: the nature of the complaint, the informal steps already taken, details of the response received, a statement as to why the complainant is dissatisfied, and, without prejudice to any formal remedy which might be determined, an indication of the outcome sought.
25. The Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance shall acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint within five working days; and normally within 15 working days of receiving the written complaint, investigate the complaint and submit a written response to the complainant. If it will not be possible to respond within 15 working days, the complainant shall be informed of the intended timescale for a response.

Appeals Procedure

Stage One: Informal Appeal

26. An applicant who wishes to appeal the feedback on the decision that has been made on their application, should normally do so within one month of the response.
27. The applicant should write to the member of University staff that they have been in contact with, either electronically (via email) or with a hard copy, via post. They should include the response to their feedback request and state the reason for the appeal.
28. If they are submitting any additional information that was not included at the application stage or extenuating circumstances, this should be included at this stage.
29. The relevant member of staff will seek to respond to the appeal within 10 working days and shall keep a record of the correspondence and any action taken. If it will not be possible to respond within 10 working days, the applicant shall be informed of the intended timescale for a response.
30. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the response and wishes to pursue the matter further, they are welcome to make a formal appeal.

Stage Two: Formal Appeal

31. A formal appeal will only be considered if the applicant is dissatisfied with the response received at Stage One.

32. The Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance will determine whether there are valid grounds for a formal appeal.
33. If the appeal is upheld the Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance will write to the applicant and inform them of the outcome of the appeal within 20 working days. If it will not be possible to respond within 20 working days, the applicant shall be informed of the intended timescale for a response.
34. Where there are no valid grounds for an appeal the Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance will send a written response to the applicant informing them that their appeal has been dismissed.
35. The decision of the Director of Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment & Visa Compliance is final.

Version History

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