

Admissions Complaints and Appeals Procedure

This paper outlines the process applicants should follow across undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes, should they want to:

- 1) Complain about the way in which their application was managed,
- 2) Appeal the decision on their application.

Recommended actions

Educational Quality Committee is asked to:

- i) **consider** the paper
- ii) **recommend to Senate** that this policy is approved.



University Admissions Policy: Complaints and Appeals Procedure

May 2018

1. Introduction

- 1.1. City, University of London welcomes applicants from a wide range of prospective students and is dedicated to consistent, fair and professional practices in order to safeguard the interests of those who apply to be students at City.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Procedure sets out how an applicant who has applied to study at City, University of London can bring a complaint against City's admissions service and admissions process (section 1) or appeal against an admissions decision (section 2).
- 2.2. This Procedure applies to all Full-time, Part-time and Distance Learning applicants across undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.
- 2.3. This Procedure should be read alongside:
 - i. [City's Admissions Policy](#)
 - ii. [City's Term and Conditions](#)
 - iii. [City's Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- 2.4. City, University of London does not routinely provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants. However, feedback can be provided to individuals upon request. This would normally be to the Department to which the applicant has applied.
- 2.5. This Procedure does not cover applications to partner institutions - except where the admissions decision itself was made by City, University of London. Applicants who wish to raise a concern with a partner institution should write directly to the institution concerned.
- 2.6. This Procedure cannot be used to determine concerns or complaints about matters of fees or fees status. Applicants who wish to request a review of City's decision related to fees – where applicants should refer to the Fees Policy, which can be [found here](#).
- 2.7. Students who are currently studying at City and wish to make a complaint about the University should refer to [Senate Regulation 26: Student Complaints Policy](#).

3. Definition

3.1. Compliant against the admissions process:

A complaint should be raised where an applicant has a specific concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration in the admissions procedures or policies.

3.2. Appeals against admissions decision:

An appeal should be brought if an applicant seeks a formal review of the University's decision on their application because they believe an incorrect decision has been made about their application.

4. General Principles

- 4.1.** In accordance with the City's Equality duty, City will not discriminate against any applicant who brings a complaint or appeal about an admissions decision. Applicants bringing a complaint or an appeal should expect any investigations and proceedings to be dealt with confidentially.
- 4.2.** Applicants who wish to bring a matter under this procedure are required to provide their full name and contact details. City is unable to investigate anonymous complaints as all investigations undertaken by the University will need to be evidence-based.
- 4.3.** When submitting a complaint or appeal, the applicant must include the grounds for requesting the investigation or review and any supporting evidence including, where available, copies of relevant documentation.
- 4.4.** City will only usually accept complaints or appeals from an applicant directly.
- 4.5.** Appeals or Complaints made on behalf of an applicant by a third party will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and the applicant must give their written consent authorising City to discuss the matter with a named third-party.
- 4.6.** Applicants who wish for the University to consider discussing their admission with a third party may use the [Third Party Consent Form](#).
- 4.7.** The process and outcomes of the review will be documented for the applicant and a record retained up to five years for reporting purposes.

5. Procedure for bringing a complaint against the admissions process:

City, University of London operates a three stage process for applicant complaints.

Stage 1:

In the first instance, applicants should raise concerns informally with City's staff at the point the concern arises. Applicants may informally contact their named admissions contact in the relevant Admissions Office or Academic School. Staff will take reasonable steps to explain any relevant procedures, resolve concerns and respond promptly to any issues raised.

Concerns should be raised as soon as possible after the incident being complained about. Informal concerns which are raised at Stage 1 more than one month the incident occurred may be deemed to be out of time and may not be considered.

- **For Undergraduates:**

Undergraduate applicants should contact [their relevant Admissions Officer](#).

- **For Postgraduates:**

Postgraduate applicants should contact the relevant Course Officer/Admissions Officer. The full details of the relevant contact [can be found here](#).

As this is an informal stage, applicants may wish to call or email.

Stage 2:

To submit to Stage 2, applicants must provide evidence to support their complaints and show steps they have taken to resolve the complaint informally in Stage 1.

- **For Undergraduates:**

Applicants who do not consider the response received to be satisfactory under Stage 1 should write to the Admissions Manager at ugadmissions@city.ac.uk; outlining the nature and details of the complaint.

- **For Postgraduates:**

Applicants who do not consider the response received under Stage 1 to be satisfactory should write to the relevant Course Operations Manager for the relevant School they are applying to,

outlining the nature and details of the complaint. They should do this through the named correspondent from stage 1.

Irrespective of level or mode of study, applicants should make their complaint within 14 days of the actions (or lack of actions) that prompted the complaint. Complaints will be investigated by the Institution in consultation with the relevant Admissions Staff.

City will endeavour to respond to the complaint formally and within 10 working days. If it proves impossible to respond fully within 10 working days, the applicant will be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

The formal written response will give reasons for the decision made and details regarding how to progress the complaint.

Stage 3:

If the applicant feels that the decision received in Stage 2 is unsatisfactory for whatever reason, the final line for approval is with the Head of Department for the relevant course.

Applicants to both undergraduate and postgraduate courses should ask the correspondent from Stage 2 to progress their communication for the attention of the Head of Department.

The Head of Department will then conduct an investigation and inform the applicant of the outcome within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint. If it proves impossible to respond fully within 10 working days, the applicant will be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

The decision of the Head of Department is final.

6. Procedure for bringing an appeals against admissions decision:

City, University of London operates a three stage process for applicant appeals.

Stage 1

In the first instance, applicants who wish to appeal a decision should raise it with the staff in the relevant Admissions Office by asking for feedback on why their application was unsuccessful. The request for feedback should be made within one month of the reject decision.

- **For Undergraduates:**

Undergraduate applicants should contact [their relevant Admissions Officer](#).

- **For Postgraduates:**

Postgraduate applicants should contact the relevant Course Officer/Admissions Officer. The full details of the relevant contact [can be found here](#).

The relevant Admissions Officer will provide a feedback to the applicant within ten working days of receiving the applicant's request.

Stage 2

If there is additional information to add to the application following the decision in Stage 1, or the applicant believes an error has been made following the feedback from City, the applicant should bring an appeal to the relevant Admissions Office with their reasons for having the decision reconsidered.

Applicants who wish to bring an appeal under Stage 2 should write to the relevant Admissions Office within 14 days of the date of receiving their Stage 1 feedback. Applicants should outline:

- i. the nature of the appeal including any additional information that could be added to the application;
- ii. any informal steps already taken by the applicant;
- iii. the details of the response received from City;
- iv. a statement as to why the applicant remains dissatisfied with City's decision and,
- v. without prejudice to any formal remedy which might be determined, the remedy which is sought.

- **For Undergraduates:**

Applicants should write to the Admissions Manager at ugadmissions@city.ac.uk; outlining the nature and details of the appeal.

- **For Postgraduates:**

Applicants who do not consider the response received under Stage 1 to be satisfactory should write to the relevant Course Operations Manager in the relevant School they are applying to, outlining the nature and details of the appeal. They should do this through the named correspondent from stage 1.

The relevant Admissions Office will provide feedback to the applicant within ten days of receiving the applicant's request. City will endeavour to respond to the appeals formally and within fourteen working days. If it proves impossible to respond fully within ten working days, the applicant will be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

The formal written response will give reasons for the decision made and details regarding how to progress the appeal

Stage 3:

If the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 2 they may, under certain circumstances, request a review by the Head of Department. This must be within fourteen working days of the date of the letter of outcome to Stage 2.

The review should set out briefly:

- i. the nature of the appeal any additional information that could be added to the application;
- ii. the steps already taken to resolve the matter (if any);
- iii. the details of the response received;
- iv. a statement as to why the applicant remains dissatisfied; and
- v. without prejudice to any formal remedy which might be determined, the remedy which is sought.

Applicants to both undergraduate and postgraduate courses should ask the correspondent from stage 2 to progress their communication for the attention of the Head of Department.

The relevant Head of Department may consider the submission and make an initial determination as to whether the matter is eligible for review. If deemed eligible for review, all

available evidence will be taken into consideration and a response issued to the applicant within ten days.

If it proves impossible to respond fully within ten working days, the applicant will be informed of the timescale for the receipt of a full response.

The decision of the relevant Head of Department is final.

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