

APPLICANT COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS POLICY (TAUGHT COURSES)

1. Purpose and Context

The policy covers the following types of complaint/appeal:

- Complaints about the University's handling of a query or an application for admission for example, a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration;
- Allegations that admissions criteria were not applied correctly or even-handedly, resulting in a formal request for a review of the admission decision;
- Emergence of new material which may have affected the decision. In such cases the applicant must also provide details of why the new information was not made available at the time of application. If this information was available or known to the applicant at the time of application but not included for whatever reason, it will not normally be considered.

The policy does not cover strategic decisions relating to the overall size and delivery of courses, or to caps on student numbers in particular courses whether imposed by the University, government or professional bodies. Any correspondence on these matters should be directed to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) who has overall responsibility for admissions policy.

Timescales for complaints/appeals are stated within Section 3 below.

There is no right of appeal for applications where:

- the application is from a third party;
- the dispute concerns academic judgement;
- the dispute concerns a decision already accepted by the applicant;
- the request would contravene government regulations or any contract with external organisations, such as UCAS;
- the application was for a previous academic year.

2. Scope

This policy covers applicant complaints and appeals for all undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses, including courses based at partner institutions (e.g. PGCE courses). This policy covers applicant complaints and appeals for all modes of study, including full time, part time, distance learning and block delivery.

3. Submission and Investigation of Complaints/Appeals

3.1 First stage: Informal Resolution

Complaints/appeals against admissions decisions should normally be made by the applicant in question only after receiving feedback under the Feedback processes outlined in the Admission Policy <https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Admissions-Policy.pdf>

Written requests should be made to the Student Recruitment Manager, Student Recruitment Team (UK and EU applicants, email study@hud.ac.uk) or Head of International Operations, International Office (International applicants, email International.office@hud.ac.uk), University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, HD1 3DH within 10 working days of receiving formal feedback. If necessary, the Student Recruitment Manager/Head of International Operations will consult with relevant academic staff before responding to the query. A written response will be made to every complaint/appeal, (i.e. by letter or email) normally within 10 working days, and this written response will mark the completion of the informal stage of the procedure.

3.2 Second Stage: Formal Stage

An applicant who is dissatisfied with the written explanation at stage one should put his/her concerns in writing to the Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment using the form attached as Appendix A within 10 working days of the date of the stage one response. This should set out the grounds for dissatisfaction with the response from the Student Recruitment Manager, and include any previous correspondence.

The Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment (or nominee) shall then consult with the Student Recruitment Manager and staff within the University School as appropriate, and shall undertake such further enquiries as are deemed necessary before providing a written response; normally within 15 working days of receipt of the complaint. When a complaint is made about specific members of staff, those staff shall have the right to see copies of relevant documentation, to present evidence to the Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment or their nominee, and to be informed of the outcome of the complaint/appeal. The University reserves the right to maintain confidentiality in relation to staff disciplinary matters.

Should a complaint/appeal be upheld, the Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment may make recommendations to the Dean/Director or Head of the Academic or Service department. Recommendations may also be made to University committees in respect of quality assurance policies or procedures.

3.3 Third Stage: Appeal

An applicant who is still dissatisfied after the second stage may appeal in writing to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) within 10 working days of the date of the letter stating the decision of the Director of Marketing, Communications and Student Recruitment. Copies of previous correspondence and any supporting documentation should be included and should outline why the outcome of the second stage does not resolve the complaint/appeal. New evidence cannot be introduced at this point.

Taking into account the substance of the complaint/appeal, the Pro Vice-Chancellor will then review the case and a decision will be made about the appropriateness of the matter being referred to a hearing of a Review Panel. However, there would be no grounds for referral of an appeal to the Review Panel where, in the reasonable judgement of the Pro Vice-Chancellor, the relevant admissions decision has been made as a result of the correct and impartial application of the published admissions criteria and the appellant has not demonstrated evidence that a material irregularity has occurred. In such cases, the Pro Vice-Chancellor shall communicate this decision in writing to the appellant, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

Where a Review Panel is deemed necessary, the Panel shall normally comprise the Pro Vice Chancellor or Dean of the Graduate School (in the Chair), two Heads of Department or interviewers from a department other than the one(s) applied to. The Director of Marketing or her nominee will act as technical adviser and note-taker to the Panel. Panel members will not have had any prior involvement in the case. The Review Panel shall meet, normally, within 20 working days (although in University vacations this time period may be extended) of the date of receipt of the appeal letter and communicate its conclusions to the applicant and the department within 20 working days of meeting. The decision of the Review Panel is final and not subject to appeal.

Should a complaint/appeal be upheld, the Chair of the Review Panel may make recommendations to the Dean/Director or Head of the relevant Academic or Service department. Recommendations may also be made to University committees in respect of quality assurance policies or procedures.

If a complaint/appeal is not upheld, the applicant will be informed in writing with reasons for its rejection.

There is no further appeal permitted beyond the Third Stage.

Appendix A: Applicant Complaint/Appeal Form

General Information		
Surname/Family Name		
First Name		
UCAS Personal ID (if applicable)		
Course		
Have you read the Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy ?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Stage 1 Complaint/Appeal	
Please tell us who or what your complaint/appeal is about by explaining the events that have taken place in date order, including what action you have taken and who you have spoken with to resolve your complaint/appeal	
Date(s)	Details

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Please indicate what outcome or further action you are expecting to resolve your complaint/appeal

Evidence
Please also provide us with a list of your supporting evidence and explain why you think that this evidence is relevant. Please submit your evidence as separate documents.

Stage 1 Complaint/Appeal Submission and Declaration	
Please ensure that you have completed all sections of the form under General Information and Stage 1. By signing this form, you are declaring that the information you have sent to us is true and accurate.	
Signed:	Date:

We accept electronic signatures. You are not required to print, sign and scan your complaint/appeal form.

Please submit your form and evidence by email, as attachments, to:

UK and EU applicants: study@hud.ac.uk

International applicants: international.office@hud.ac.uk

Stage 2 Complaint/Appeal

You should only complete Stage 2 of the form if you have received a response at Stage 1 and you are unhappy with the outcome. Please explain why you are unhappy with the Stage 1 outcome:

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Stage 2 Complaint/Appeal Submission and Declaration

Please ensure that you have completed all relevant sections of this form under General Information, Stage 1 and Stage 2. Failure to complete this form correctly – and submit evidence promptly – may delay the processing of your complaint. By signing this form, you are declaring that the information that you have sent to us is true and accurate.

Signed:

Date:

We accept electronic signatures. You are not required to print, sign and scan your complaint form.

Please submit your form by email to:

UK and EU applicants: study@hud.ac.uk

International applicants: international.office@hud.ac.uk

POLICY SIGN-OFF AND OWNERSHIP DETAILS	
Document name:	Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy (Research Programmes)
Version Number:	1.1
Equality Impact Assessment:	May 2017
Approved by:	University Teaching and Learning Committee
Effective from:	25 September 2019
Date for Review:	Major review June 2020; annual updates as appropriate
Author	Student Recruitment Manager
Owner (if different from above):	Director of Marketing Recruitment and Communications
Document Location:	https://www.hud.ac.uk/media/policydocuments/Applicant-Complaints-and-Appeals-Policy.pdf
Compliance Checks:	Number of appeals/complaints received and investigated.
Related Policies/Procedures:	Admissions Policy (Taught Programmes); Interview Policy; Arrangements for the admission of applicants under the age of 18

REVISION HISTORY			
Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Author
V1.1	Sept 2019	Annual update, minor amendments	Student Recruitment Manager
V1.0	May 2017	First draft of new policy	ASIS Director