

Higher Education Admissions Appeals and Complaints: Code of Practice

This Code of Practice relates to appeals and complaints by:

- Prospective students who are applying for, but who are not yet enrolled upon, a place on a Higher Education programme of study at Wakefield College and who wish to complain about, or appeal against, an admissions decision or process.

Full account has been taken of the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access (2018), when preparing this Code of Practice.

In addition, the College has taken account of the OIA Good Practice Framework: handling student complaints and academic appeals.

This Code of Practice should be read alongside the Higher Education Complaints Procedure (v3.0, June 2019)

- 1.0 This Code of Practice ("The Code") provides procedural guidelines for an appeal or complaint against an unsuccessful application to study higher education at Wakefield College. Whilst most candidates accept the academic decisions that are made in relation to their applications, the College is committed to the principles of fair admission. We therefore offer all applicants the opportunity to make an appeal against the decision made or to complain about any experience relating to the admissions process.
- 2.0 This Code of Practice is available on the College's website: <http://www.wakefield.ac.uk/higher-education/he-policies>
- 3.0 College HE staff involved with admissions, interviews, decision making etc are professional and receive appropriate training and development in admissions and related areas.
- 4.0 There is an expectation that any appeal should be submitted within 15 working days of the original decision being made. However, it is recognised that under certain circumstances this may not be possible (due to appellant illness or the complexity of the appeal for example). In these circumstances, the appellant would be expected to submit authentic and reliable evidence alongside their appeal documentation which demonstrates why the application has fallen outside of the College's HE provision's normal timescales.
- 5.0 The appeal must be made by the applicant him/herself, however, they are not precluded from seeking third party advice, guidance or support if they so wish.
- 6.0 The Code shall not be applicable to any issue over which the College has no control. This would include, for example, any financial decision made by the Student Loans Company, or an issue arising with UCAS.
- 7.0 The College offers any appellant the assurance that they will not suffer any discrimination or victimisation as a result of their decision to submit an appeal. All appeals will be handled as efficiently as possible and investigated in a manner which is most appropriate to the nature of the appeal. The College will provide an appellant with timely feedback to any appropriate query raised regarding their admissions decision prior to a formal appeal or complaint. This feedback to be provided to the appellant within 10 working days of their request (subject to the caveat contained in point 11.0).
- 8.0 The appellant is entitled to provide new information that was not included in their original application as part of their appeal. They are also permitted to provide additional supporting documentation such as letters of support from employers or current/former tutors. This documentation could relate to academic, personal or experiential attributes.

- 9.0 If the College requires additional information in order to properly and fairly investigate the appeal and the appellant fails to provide this information, or a valid reason why it is not available, this may result in the investigation process being terminated.
- 10.0 All appeals, complaints or requests for additional information, in the first instance, shall be submitted to the HE Administrator, Room WU006, Advanced Skills and Innovation Centre, Wakefield College, Wakefield City Campus, Margaret Street, Wakefield, WF1 2DH (headadmin@wakefield.ac.uk). Acknowledgement of receipt will be provided within 5 working days (subject to the caveat contained in point 9.0).
- 11.0 It should be noted that any appeal, complaint or request for additional information which is submitted during periods of Wakefield College closure or at a time when key staff are unavailable due to Assessment or Examinations Boards, the time periods provided elsewhere in this Code may be extended. If this becomes necessary, appellants will be provided with a full explanation as to why the investigation has been delayed.
- 12.0 Any appeal or complaint made under this Code of Practice will be investigated by a staff member nominated by the Director of Higher Education, or by the Director of Higher Education themselves. An appellant may be invited to a meeting with the Officer, the Director of Higher Education or with the relevant Head of Curriculum as part of the investigation process. The appellant may, if required to attend any such meeting, be accompanied by a friend. This friend may not be a lawyer acting in a professional capacity and may not speak on behalf of the appellant unless invited by the Panel to do so.
- 13.0 On conclusion of the investigation, the appellant will be provided with a clear statement, in writing, which confirms that the investigation has been concluded, that a decision has been reached, and the nature of that decision. The issue of this letter completes the procedures. If, at this stage, the appellant is of the opinion that the investigation has not been handled in a reasonable and appropriate manner, they may have the right to make use of the complaints procedures of the College or the relevant partner organisation, details of which can be provided by the HE Department.
- 14.0 The document which must be completed for an appeal or complaint is contained in Appendix 1. Requests for further information relating to an admissions decision can be made via email or letter, but do not have to be made on specific pro-forma.
- 15.0 The process and timescales for appeals and complaints are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 16.0 Valuable feedback is obtained through the consideration and resolution of complaints and appeals. Both procedures allow the College to identify opportunities to improve provision of services and

admissions decision making. All admissions complaints and appeals are recorded at the formal and review stages as a minimum so that the data can be used for analysis and management reporting.

- 17.0 The Panel will produce a semesterly report for HEQS detailing the appeals/complaints made and their outcomes. The data contained therein will inform the production of the College's annual Higher Education Self-Assessment Report which will be presented to the Executive Team.

Supporting documentation attached:	
Signed:	
Date:	

Appendix 2: Process and Timescales

(NB All timescales subject to the provision of points 2.0 and 9.0 of the Code)

