

Policy on

Higher Education Admissions Appeals

Approved on
October 2019

Approved by
Academic Policy Review Group

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored annually and reviewed every five years in light of experience and best practice. This mechanism recognises that changes to legislation may prompt a review of the policy before the five years stipulated.

New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This Policy applies to all activity undertaken by the College in pursuing its purpose as an educational institution whilst serving its students, community and wider stakeholder interests.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact records@newdur.ac.uk

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments, which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Policy Author

Head of Higher Education

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Curriculum and Quality Directorate

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Equality Impact Assessment

A statement confirming that the policy has been subjected to a rigorous assessment for any potential impact on the full range of stakeholders with those impacts being assessed and considered and, where appropriate, suitable adjustments to the policy have been included prior to the adoption of the policy.

Footnote

In an effort to keep costs to a minimum, a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant appendices available on the intranet.

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1. Rationale

The reason for the development of this policy is derived from the College's commitment to demonstrating sound practice in recruitment, selection and admission of students but recognises the need to have a transparent and fair admission appeals policy and procedure in place for use by prospective students. The term prospective student refers to anyone applying or considering applying for admission to any course provided by the College.

This policy and the associated procedure have been developed with regard to the regulatory objectives of the Office for Students (OfS), the quality agenda and the requirements of all awarding/validation bodies associated with the College.

In relation to higher education, the policy is underpinned by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code Advice and Guidance: 'Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access' and 'Concerns, Complaints and Appeals'. In addition, guidance provided by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) has been used to inform the development of the policy and its associated procedure.

This policy and procedure will be for use by prospective students/applicants who wish to appeal an admissions decision that has been made in respect of them. An appeal can be made where there is a specific concern related to a procedural irregularity, evidence of bias or prejudice or new material information becoming available which may have affected the decision. An appeal is defined as:

'a request for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision'.

2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure the College provides a robust and transparent framework, which enables any admissions appeal to be fully and rigorously investigated. This will be carried out in accordance with the appropriate regulatory framework and with all appropriate safeguards in place to ensure the student and the College interests are protected at all times and stages of the process.

In order to fulfil the stated aim of the policy the College has established the following objectives, which are to:

- a. ensure that course applicants are provided with information about the regulations that are in use for the admissions process;
- b. ensure that the College provides information to applicants about the grounds for an admissions appeal;
- c. ensure that an open and transparent process is in place which provides applicants with the opportunity to initiate an admissions appeal;

- d. ensure that any investigation held in relation to an admissions appeal will be conducted in full compliance with the regulations and associated procedure;
- e. ensure that throughout all stages of an investigation communication will be maintained between the College and the appellant.

3. Applicant Entitlements

Under the terms of this policy and with alignment to the first primary regulatory objective of the OfS, all students from all backgrounds, and with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in and progress from, higher education, all applicants to the College are entitled to:

- a. have access to the most up to date information about the admissions process related to education courses that is detailed and accurate (at the time of publication);
- b. have access to College policies and procedures related to the initiation of an admissions appeal;
- c. receive appropriate advice and support from the College in cases where they are considering whether to bring an admissions appeal;
- d. expect that any admissions appeal they submit will be dealt with in accordance with the published policy and procedures of the College.

4. Applicant Responsibilities

This policy requires applicants to fully acknowledge and actively engage in fulfilling their responsibilities by:

- a. ensuring they are familiar with the admissions process relevant to the course they are applying for;
- b. ensuring they adhere to the College HE Admissions Policy and procedures associated with the admissions process relevant to the course they are applying for;
- c. ensuring that at each stage of the application and appeal process, they provide honest and accurate information and communicate timely any changes to circumstances which could have a bearing on admission decisions;

- d. ensuring, if required, they request feedback from the admissions tutor on reasons for an unsuccessful application;
- e. ensuring they, at the earliest reasonable opportunity, bring to the attention of the admissions tutor or Curriculum Manager matters of concern in order that, where possible they can be resolved without recourse to the formal procedure;
- f. ensuring that at each stage of the application and appeal process, they provide honest and accurate information and communicate timely any changes to circumstances which could have a bearing on admission decisions.

5. Teaching Staff Responsibilities

The policy requires teaching and support staff to ensure that:

- a. they provide accurate and detailed information to prospective applicants about the admissions procedure for their course;
- b. they follow the College HE Admissions Policy and procedures associated with their course;
- c. if requested, they provide feedback to applicants on the reasons for an unsuccessful application and where appropriate advice on possible courses of action which may include alternative study options;
- d. questions raised by applicants relating to the procedure and outcome for selection are responded to in a timely manner.

6. College Management Responsibilities

College Management should ensure that:

- a. all staff involved in the admissions procedure are fully conversant with this policy and the demands it places upon them;
- b. staff development is made available to staff to support them in implementing this policy and to understand the procedures which underpin the policy;
- c. the policy is implemented consistently.

7. Standards by which the Success of this Policy can be Evaluated

The following standards/measures will be considered when evaluating the success of this policy:

- a. positive feedback from appellants on the effectiveness of the policy and procedure;
- b. feedback received from external audits and reviews.

8. Responsibility for Implementing this Policy

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy resides at all levels of the College specifically:

- a. the Vice Principals and Heads of School are responsible for overseeing the implementation of sections 6 & 7;
- b. Curriculum Managers & Course Leaders are responsible for ensuring that course teams collaboratively address the requirements of this policy;
- c. teaching staff are responsible for meeting their responsibilities as described in section 4 & 6.

9. Associated Documentation

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following supporting/related documentation:

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment;

Appendix C – Policy Development Request.

Appendices



New College Durham

Equality Impact Assessment Record

New College Durham actively promotes the basic British values of democracy, the rules of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

1. Department/School:	HEDQU
2. People carrying out the assessment:	Lesley Collinson
3. Policy/procedure being assessed:	Admissions Appeals Policy (HE)
4. Main aims of the policy/procedure: The specific aim of the policy is to ensure accurate, fit for purpose and trustworthy information about the College and the higher education it provides, is available to identified stakeholders. Stakeholders include prospective and current higher/further education students, external organisations, partner organisations and government agencies.	
5. What examples of current good practice are there relating to the protected characteristics? a. Information presented in a variety of durable, accessible formats cognisant of the needs of people with protected characteristics. b. On-going scrutiny of published materials to ensure that all salient information is accessible to all stakeholders. c. Producers of information will take account of the need to communicate unambiguously and clearly to all.	

Cont'd...

6. For which of the protected characteristics could there be a negative impact?

Please Tick

✓

Age

☐

Disability

☐

Gender Re-assignment

☐

Marriage and Civil Partnership

☐

Pregnancy and Maternity

☐

Race

☐

Religion or Belief

☐

Sex

☐

Sexual Orientation

☐

7. Describe that impact

There would be no impact to the applicant. The policy ensures transparency, fairness and reliability and is concordant with the QAA Revised Quality Code.

8. What action needs to be taken to remove the impact?

N/A

9. Who will implement the action plan?

N/A

10. By when?

N/A

11. Monitoring Process

This will be reviewed when the policy is reviewed.

Completed by: Lesley Collinson	Endorsed by: Emma Crosskey
Signature: <i>Lesley Collinson</i>	Signature: <i>ECrosskey</i>
Printed Name: Lesley Collinson	Printed Name: Emma Crosskey
Role: HE Quality Manager	Role: Deputy ASC Manager
Date: 29 April 2019	Date: 2 October 2019
Date for Review: 2 October 2024	

Cont'd...

Equality Impact Assessment Action Plan

Please complete the following Action Plan, based on the actions you have identified above, particularly in Section 8.

Department/School:	
Policy Assessed:	

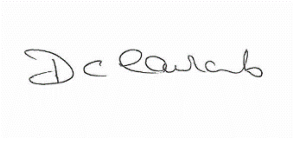
Issues identified	Changes Required Mark with an asterisk (*) any changes that may be generic to other functions	Resource Implications	Responsibility for Implementation	Timescale	Progress Update

Once completed, this should be e-mailed to Christine Padgett (christine.padgett@newdur.ac.uk) and a copy retained by the author.

Please note the policy author is responsible for completion of this action plan.

Appendix C

Policy Review/Development Request		Date of Request:	29.04.19
Proposed or current title of Policy: HE Admissions Appeal Policy			
Is this a proposed new policy or a review of an existing policy: <i>(please tick whichever is appropriate)</i>	Proposed new Policy:		Review of an existing Policy:
			✓
	Due date for Submission:		Due date for Review:
			April 2019
Rationale: <i>Please identify the drivers of the review/development of the stated policy</i> Review date is due, update owing to the UK Revised Quality Code			
Consultation (Where appropriate)			
Forum/Meeting/Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 		Date of Meeting(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	Key points emerging from the consultation exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none">
Review/Development undertaken by:	Name: L Collinson	Signed: <i>Lesley Collinson</i>	
			Date submitted to APRG 29.04.19

Approval Body Use only, <i>(once completed in full please return to the APRG Chair)</i>				
Approval Body Title: Academic Policy Review Group				
Policy Approved – <i>(Please delete appropriately)</i>	If no please specify the nature of the issue(s):		Chair: Dawn Fairlamb	Date: 2 October 2019
Yes			Signature: 	
APRG Chair's Actions:				
Date notifying Policy/Procedure Author of approval:	Date sent to IT Services for upload to Intranet:	Date Intranet checked to ensure correct and timely upload:	Final sign off by Chair of APRG <i>(is fully satisfied that the policy, any accompanying procedure and EIA are fully completed)</i>	
7 October 2019	7 October 2019	8 October 2019	Date: 7 October 2019	Signature: 