

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY  
Document Administration**

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## BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

### Admissions Complaints Procedure

#### 1. Scope and Definition

- 1.1. We are committed to providing fair, transparent and consistent admissions procedures for all of our applicants. However we recognise that there may be occasions when applicants will wish to ask why their applications have been rejected or will feel dissatisfied with the conduct of the admissions process. This procedure sets out the steps that should be followed should an applicant consider there has been a failure to maintain those standards of a kind rendering it appropriate for the applicant to make a complaint. The procedure also sets out the steps that should be followed in order to investigate complaints.
- 1.2. The Admissions Complaint Procedure is restricted to complaints about:
  - interview conduct;
  - the handling of an application, including processing of Disclosure and Barring Service; (DBS) checks and Health & Physical Capacity to Teach ~~Occupational Health~~ procedures;
  - the admissions process; and /or
  - where it is alleged that an action or decision was inconsistent with the University position on equal opportunity, particularly with regard to the University's Diversity and Equality Policy.
- 1.3. The Admissions Complaints Procedure may be followed by all applicants, whether submitting their application via UCAS, School Direct, DfE Apply, UTT, directly to the University or as a request for an internal transfer from within the University.
- 1.4. A complaint should be distinguished from an appeal against a decision by the University. An applicant has no right to complain about the University's decision not to offer them a place at the University, nor regarding matters of academic judgement about an applicant's suitability to study on a programme. Complaints will also not be considered regarding an applicant's failure to meet the non-academic requirements of study specified by particular agencies (e.g. DBS or occupational health checks).
- 1.5. The Procedure should be read in conjunction with Bishop Grosseteste University's Code of Practice for the Admission of Students which outlines the University's processes for assessing applicants.

## **2. Principles and Protocols**

- 2.1. In dealing with admissions complaints, the following principles and procedures will be followed:
- i. The University will ensure that the investigation of complaints under the terms of these procedures is conducted transparently and promptly and in a way which is fair to all parties concerned.
  - ii. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained in so far as that is compatible with the effective investigation of the complaint. The complainant will be informed in advance if any disclosure to a third party (outside the University) is required in order to progress the investigation of a complaint.
  - iii. Any person named as the subject of a complaint will be informed of the substance of the complaint and will be offered the right to reply.
  - iv. Anonymous complaints will not be investigated, nor will complaints submitted by a third party.
  - v. No applicant bringing a complaint under this procedure, regardless of the outcome, will be treated less favourably than if they had not brought the complaint.
  - vi. Complaints must be pursued in a timely way. The University will refuse to investigate a complaint if this has not been initiated within 14 days of the incident which is the subject of the complaint.
  - vii. All complaints will be considered on their merits and in accordance with the University's values and ethos and relevant policies, e.g. the Diversity and Equality Policy.
- 2.2. The Admissions Manager will report information on formal complaints to the Registrar on an annual basis and will be responsible for implementing or recommending to the appropriate authorities/committees, changes to systems of procedures suggested by the nature and pattern of the complaints received.

## **3. Admissions Complaints Procedure**

- 3.1. The procedure for dealing with complaints by applicants is split into two stages. The first is to attempt to deal with complaints quickly and effectively, closest to the point at which the complaint arose. The second stage is to review the action taken to resolve the complaint.



#### 4. Procedure

##### Informal Stage

- 4.1. Most complaints can be resolved informally with the member of staff most directly concerned. If an applicant has a complaint, he or she should raise this informally in the first instance with the relevant staff member from the Admissions office.
- 4.2. If this initial attempt at resolution is unsuccessful, then the applicant may escalate their complaint to the Formal Stage of this procedure.

##### Formal Stage

- 4.3. Formal complaints should be made in writing to the Admissions Manager, using the form provided (Appendix 1). Copies of all previous correspondence related to the complaint should be included, along with an outline of the complaint and the desired outcome.
- 4.4. The Admissions Manager<sup>1</sup> will write to the applicant, normally within 5 working days, to acknowledge receipt.
- 4.5. The Admissions Manager will then conduct an investigation into the matters raised; this may include requesting additional evidence from the applicant or department and meeting with any staff concerned with the complaint. The Admissions Manager will then provide a response to the applicant, normally within 15 working days. If, because of the nature of investigation required, the timescale needs to be extended, the Admissions Manager will write to the applicant informing him/her of the reason for the delay and proposing a new deadline.
- 4.6. The response provided by the Admissions Manager to the applicant will outline whether the complaint is justified, not justified or partially justified. The response will also include details of the implementation of any proposed remedies arising from the finding.

#### 5. Appeal

- 5.1. If the applicant remains dissatisfied with this response then they may appeal to the Registrar and University Secretary using the form provided, within 10 working days of receiving the response from the Admissions Manager.
- 5.2. An applicant may appeal on the following grounds:
  - there has been a procedural irregularity in the investigation of the complaint;

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this procedure, the Admissions Manager may nominate another member of staff (not connected to the complaint) to act on their behalf should they be unavailable to deal with the matter.

- new evidence is now available which was not available upon reasonable enquiry at the time of the investigation; and /or
  - the decision taken by the Admissions Manager was of such nature that no reasonable person could have reached it on the available evidence.
- 5.3. The Registrar and University Secretary <sup>2</sup> will write to the applicant, normally within 5 days, to confirm receipt of the appeal.
- 5.4. If the Registrar and University Secretary believes there are grounds for appeal, they will conduct a review of the investigation.
- 5.5. Once the review has been completed, the reviewer will write to the applicant, normally within 10 working days of receiving the appeal, to communicate the outcome of the review. If the timescale needs to be extended then the reviewer will write to the applicant, informing them of the reason for the delay and proposing a new deadline. The applicant will be informed whether there are grounds for appeal and if so, whether the complaint itself is justified, not justified or partially justified and will also be informed of any actions, if and as necessary, which will be taken in light of the finding and how these will be implemented.
- 5.6. The decision reached by the Registrar and University Secretary or their nominee is considered to be final and once the applicant has received this response, they have exhausted all procedures for handling complaints by applicants.

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this procedure, the Registrar and University Secretary may nominate another senior member of staff to act on their behalf should they be unavailable to deal with the matter.

**Admissions Complaint Form**Guidance

If you are an applicant to Bishop Grosseteste University and you wish to make a complaint to the University in accordance with the Admissions Complaints Procedure then you should do so within 14 days in order for your complaint to be considered. If you submit a request for investigation after 14 days then this generally will not be considered. There may be an occasion where the Admissions Manager feels that there is a compelling reason to consider a complaint outside the time limit and if so, they will use their own discretion on whether or not to conduct an investigation.

You should address your complaint to the Admissions Manager either by post (Admissions Manager, Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln, LN1 3DY), or by email ([admissions@bishopg.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@bishopg.ac.uk)).

Please use the template on the following page to help structure your complaint. Please also attach any additional evidence you would like to be considered during the investigation.

### **Applicant Complaint Form**

**Applicant's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Programme Applied for:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred method of contact:** ☐ email ☐ post

**Grounds for complaint:**

- ☐ Interview conduct
- ☐ The handling of an application, including processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and Occupational Health procedures
- ☐ The admissions process
- ☐ An action or decision which was inconsistent with the University's position on equal opportunity, particularly with regard to the University's Diversity and Equality Policy.

**Have you attempted to resolve your complaint with a member of the Admissions Team?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**Member of staff you have initially communicated with in an attempt to resolve your complaint informally:**

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**Outline of complaint:**



**Initial attempt at resolution and why this was unsatisfactory:**

**Additional Information:**

*Please list any evidence which you have submitted along with this form in order to support your complaint:*

**Desired outcome of investigation:**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**University Admissions Complaints Procedure – Request for Review**

If you are an applicant to Bishop Grosseteste University and you wish to appeal against a decision taken by the Admissions Manager under the University Admissions Complaints Procedure then you should do so within 10 working days of receiving the decision. Any appeal which is received by the University after this point will not generally be considered.

You should address your request to the University Registrar either by post (Registrar, Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln, LN1 3DY), or by email [admissions@bishopg.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@bishopg.ac.uk).

You should use the appeal template on the following page to help structure your appeal. Please attach any additional evidence with you review form if this has not been considered during the investigation.

You may only request a review of a decision by the Admissions Manager in relation to the applicant complaint procedures on the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity
- New evidence is now available which was not available upon reasonable enquiry or application at the time of investigation
- The decision reached was of such nature that no reasonable person could have reached it on the available evidence

It will be for the Registrar to decide whether or not, on the face of it, there is a case for review. If the Registrar feels that there is a need to review the decision then they will conduct a review of the investigation.

Once the review has been completed and you have been informed of the final outcome, you will have exhausted all of the University's procedures for handling complaints by applicant.

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY****Appeal against a Decision under the University Admissions Complaints Procedure**

**Applicant name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Programme applied for:**

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone number:**

**Email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred method of contact:** ☐ email ☐ post

**Grounds for appeal:**

☐ Procedural Irregularity

☐ New Evidence

☐ Unreasonable Decision

**Grounds for complaint:**

☐ Interview

☐ The handling of an application, including processing of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and Occupational Health procedures

☐ The admissions process

☐ An action or decision was inconsistent with the University position on equal opportunity, particularly with regard to the University's Diversity and Equality Policy.

**Brief outline of Complaint:**

**Outcome of investigation:**

**Why the outcome is unsatisfactory:**

**Grounds to request a review:**

**Desired outcome:**

**Additional Evidence:**

*Please list any additional evidence attached to this form which was not considered during the investigation and outline the reason why this was not considered:*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_