

## Appeals and Complaints Procedure for Applicants

### General Principles

Loughborough University is committed to upholding the principles of fairness and transparency within its admissions process. However, we acknowledge that occasionally, applicants may have reason to question or express an opinion to the University, about its decision, or the way in which their application has been handled.

As such, the University aims to operate a fair and transparent Admissions Appeals and Complaints procedure which:

- encourages informal resolution;
- does not disadvantage applicants.

Appeals and complaints should be made directly by the applicant. Due to Data Protection legislation we are only able to consider appeals and complaints made by third parties if an applicant has provided written authorisation, including the name and contact details of the relevant third party.

We advise all applicants to note the section on Feedback within the Admissions Policy (see section 7) in conjunction with the below.

### Definitions

A **request for feedback** is an informal request for further information or clarification regarding an admissions related matter. You should also use this route if you believe that an administrative error may have occurred in the handling of your application.

An **appeal** is a request for a formal review of a specific admissions decision (e.g. the decision to reject an application, the level of the academic offer made, the fee category assigned) under the following grounds for appeal:

- i. procedural irregularity;
- ii. emergence of new information which may have affected the initial decision had it been available at the time the decision was made;
- iii. that there has been prejudice or bias in the decision-making

Please note that appeals cannot be based on challenges to academic judgments made on your application. If you appeal on grounds (ii) above, you will need to explain why you have not been able to bring the information to the University attention before the admissions decision was made.

If an appeal is successful the original decision may be changed.

A **complaint** is a statement of dissatisfaction concerning:

- the University's admissions procedures or policies which have been used to reach an admissions decision;
- the actions, lack of actions, or behaviour of a member of staff involved in the admissions decision.

A complaint cannot be considered if it solely constitutes a challenge to the academic criteria used to consider applications for a programme of study. If a complaint is successful, the University may offer an apology and/or a commitment to revise policy or procedures.

## Procedure

### Stage 1

In the first instance, an informal request for feedback should be submitted via email to the relevant Admissions Office (Foundation, UG, PGT, PGCE or PGR), usually within **10 working days** of the original admissions decision, outlining the reason for the appeal or complaint (for email addresses, see Appendix 1).

The University will endeavour to provide a reply within **15 working days** either in writing or over the telephone.

### Stage 2

If you are unhappy with the outcome of Stage 1, a formal Appeal or Complaint may be submitted using the Appeals and Complaints form (see Appendix 2). This should be sent via email within **10 working days** of receiving Stage 1 feedback (for email address, see Appendix 1).

If the grounds for appeal fall within those defined above, the case for appeal will be evaluated by the relevant Assistant Head of Future Students and Marketing Operations or Senior Assistant Registrar, Doctoral College or appropriate nominee, who will review all relevant information relating to the case and may contact relevant parties for further information, including those involved in the initial decision and the applicant, before they reach a conclusion on the case.

A similar procedure will be followed for complaints, where the matters raised fit the criteria for an appeal against an admissions decision. The outcome of the appeal or complaint review will be communicated to the appellant in writing and reasons will be provided.

If an **appeal** is upheld, the action the University proposes to take to remedy the situation, which may include a change to the original admissions decision, will be outlined at the same time to the appellant.

If a **complaint** is upheld, the University's proposed action to resolve the complaint will also be outlined to the appellant when they are notified of the outcome.

The relevant Assistant Head of Future Students and Marketing Operations or Senior Assistant Registrar, Doctoral College will endeavour to respond to both appeals and complaints within **15 working days** of receipt. If, at this point, the case is unresolved, we will inform the applicant of the progress of their case.

If the appeal or complaint specifically regards the actions of the relevant Assistant Head of Future Students and Marketing Operations, or Senior Assistant Registrar, Doctoral College, the case will be reviewed by a colleague of appropriate seniority.

### Stage 3

Following Stage 2, if you are still not satisfied with the outcome of your appeal or complaint, you may request that your case (as submitted to the relevant Assistant Head of Future Students and Marketing Operations, or Senior Assistant Registrar, Doctoral College together with any response you have to the outcome) be formally reviewed by the University's Academic Registrar (a correspondence address will be provided if necessary following Stage 2).

Any such request must be made in writing within three months of receiving the Stage 2 response.

The request will be considered by the Academic Registrar who will review all previous documentation relating to the case and may seek additional information from the applicant and/or the other parties involved, and may take advice from other colleagues with relevant experience. Having investigated the issues raised, the Academic Registrar may decide:

- i. to confirm the original decision made on the case by the Admissions Manager
- ii. to uphold the appeal or complaint and propose a resolution of the matter to the appellant
- iii. to refer the matter for consideration in line with another University procedure.

The University will aim to notify you of the Academic Registrar's decision within 20 working days of receipt. If this is not possible, you will be informed in writing of the progress being made to review your appeal or complaint.

The Academic Registrar's decision on an admissions appeal or complaint is final and there is no further procedure within the University for such cases to be reviewed.

## Appendix 1 – Useful Correspondence and Email Addresses

Email Addresses for requesting **initial feedback** (Stage 1) or submitting a **formal appeal** or **complaint** (Stage 2):

Art and Design Foundation Studies: [artsadmissions@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:artsadmissions@lboro.ac.uk)

Undergraduate admissions: [admissions@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@lboro.ac.uk)

Postgraduate taught admissions: [pgtaught@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:pgtaught@lboro.ac.uk)

Postgraduate research admissions: [pgrstudentappeals@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:pgrstudentappeals@lboro.ac.uk)

PGCE (Teacher Education): [pgce@mailbox.lboro.ac.uk](mailto:pgce@mailbox.lboro.ac.uk)

## Appendix 2 – Appeals and Complaints online form

[Link to form](#)

*Date: 23 October 2023*