

Admissions Appeals Procedure

Date approved: 23 March 2023
Approved by: AMT/CCMT
Responsible Manager: Admissions and CC Manager
Executive Lead: Vice Principal – Engagement

Applicable to staff: Yes
Applicable to students: Yes
Accessible to students: Yes
Accessible to general public:
(including clients) Yes

Consultation

Consultation undertaken with:

Date:

- | | | |
|------------|-----|------------|
| • AMT | Yes | 08/03/2023 |
| • Students | Yes | 06/02/2023 |

Policy review frequency: 2 years

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1. Scope and purpose of the procedure

This procedure applies to all applications made by prospective learners in respect of our full and part time further education courses, higher education courses and apprenticeships at Blackpool and The Fylde College.

2. Introduction

B&FC is committed to delivering a fair, inclusive, transparent and professional admissions service for all applicants at all points of the application process.

Key underpinning principles:

- All applicants will be treated with respect and fairness during all stages of the admissions process.
- Applicants will be kept informed throughout the process and all decisions will be clearly articulated in a transparent and timely manner.
- B&FC will always aim to provide the right support so that applicants can ultimately benefit from, and succeed in, their programme or apprenticeship.
- Relevant regulations and legislation will be complied with at all times.
- Lodging an appeal will not affect any future applications or decisions in relation to the applicant however there may be circumstances where the Appropriateness to Study Policy and Procedure and Student Debt Policy and Procedure will take precedence.

3. Definition of an appeal

An appeal is defined as a challenge to an admissions decision.

An appeal is not:

- general feedback
- an expression of dissatisfaction with a service you have received from B&FC

In these circumstances the Compliments, Complaints and Feedback procedure should be followed. Further information may be found on our website at www.blackpool.ac.uk/feedback

Academic appeals for current students are covered under separate procedures which may be found on our website:

- Higher Education: <https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/he-regulations>
- Further Education and Apprenticeships: <https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/college-policies>

4. The Admissions Appeals Procedure

4.1 Initial admissions rejections

All applicants whose applications are rejected will be provided with clear feedback in

writing on the reasons why this decision was made and where appropriate, given advice and guidance on other options that may be available.

If further clarification is required at this stage applicants should contact the Admissions Team at admissions@blackpool.ac.uk or via 01253 504 322.

4.2 Reasons for rejecting an application

Reasons for rejecting an application include - but are not limited to - the following

- Failure to complete the application form correctly
- Knowingly providing false or fraudulent information at any point of the application process
- Failure to attend an audition, workshop or interview or provide a portfolio (electronically or in person)
- Failure to fulfil academic or non-academic entry requirements (for example: a school leaver not having the required entry requirements, a satisfactory Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) disclosure, medical clearance before starting a course or providing evidence of securing relevant employment or placement)
- Where reasonable adjustments are required and have been applied within the Equality Act 2010, but the criteria for entry to the course/programme is not met.
- Failure to provide evidence of qualifications you have achieved within a reasonable timeframe as requested by B&FC
- Failure to engage with the Admissions process
- Having outstanding tuition fee debt owing to B&FC from a previous enrolment

4.2.1 Right to refuse application/admission for students with an Educational Health and Care Plan/High Needs

A refusal will only be exercised where the College has considered the necessary adjustments in consultation with the home Local Authority, and these are considered beyond reasonable. This decision may be as a result of, but not limited to:

- B&FC is unable to guarantee the safety of the individual or others
- The high levels of support required for success are not sufficiently supported and funded by the applicant's Local Authority
- B&FC needs reasonable time to plan and implement physical adjustments beyond the anticipatory duty
- B&FC is unable to meet the statutory provision on the EHCP/HN

4.2.2 Refusal of an applicant with a disability

- B&FC is unable to guarantee the safety of the individual or others
- B&FC requires reasonable time to plan and implement physical adjustments beyond the anticipatory duty

4.3 Stage 1 appeal

Where an applicant believes an admissions decision is unfair or unsubstantiated, they may lodge a formal appeal.

If the complainant wishes for someone else to raise an appeal with us on their behalf, B&FC has a legal obligation under the Data Protection Act 2018; with regard to sharing information with third parties. Therefore, B&FC will require written permissions to share this information with them.

Before permission is given to share the information with others, the complainant must consider whether our response will include any sensitive information about them. The complainant is required to contact us in advance to tell us which sensitive information we can and cannot share.

4.3.1 A formal appeal may be lodged when:

The applicant wants to challenge an admissions decision for one of the following reasons:

The applicant believes they have received discriminatory treatment compared to other applicants for the same course with the same entry requirements.

and/or

The applicant believes that B&FC has not adhered to its own stated policy and/or procedures for the processing of applications.

and/or

The applicant has mitigating circumstances which were not made known at the point of application.

4.3.2 Appeals may not be based on:

- Failure to complete the application form correctly;
- Failure to attend an audition, workshop or interview or provide a portfolio (electronically or in person);
- Knowingly providing false or fraudulent information at any point of the application process;
- Failure to fulfil academic or non-academic entry requirements (for example, a satisfactory DBS disclosure or medical clearance or providing evidence of securing relevant employment);
- Failure to provide evidence of qualifications you have achieved within a reasonable timeframe as requested by B&FC;
- Generally questioning the academic or professional judgement of the admissions selectors.

4.3.3 Lodging a Stage 1 appeal

To lodge a formal appeal it should be made in writing clearly stating the nature of the issue, what has been done to resolve this issue so far, an indication of the outcome you are seeking and supporting documents wherever possible. This should be sent to

admissions@blackpool.ac.uk within 10 days of the initial rejection decision. Stage 1 appeals will be reviewed as follows:

- Further Education – Director for Students
- Higher Education – Director of Higher Education
- Apprenticeships – Head of Apprenticeships

We will send a written acknowledgement within 5 working days.

We aim to provide you with a formal response within 10 working days. If we are unable to do this you will be kept informed of our progress.

4.3.4 Possible outcomes

Possible outcomes of a Stage 1 appeal are:

1. Uphold the appeal and take appropriate actions to correct the error
2. Reject the appeal on one or more of the following grounds:
 - The appeal did not qualify under one of the reasons outlined in 4.3.1;
 - The appeal was submitted after the deadline without good reason
 - No basis for supporting the appeal could be established based on the information available.

4.4 Stage 2 appeal

Where you remain dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, you may choose to progress your complaint to Stage 2 which is the final stage of the B&FC Admissions Appeals Procedure. This should be made in writing within 10 working days of when you received the Stage 1 response. Again, you should explain why the outcome of the Stage 1 process is not satisfactory and what you would like us to do next. Correspondence for Stage 2 should be addressed as follows:

- Further Education and Apprenticeships – Vice Principal, Quality and Curriculum
- Higher Education – Vice Principal, Higher Education and Student Enhancement

All correspondence to be sent to the following email address:

vpsupport@blackpool.ac.uk

We will send you an acknowledgement within 5 working days following receipt and we aim to provide you with a response to your Stage 2 within 20 working days.

4.4.1 Possible Outcomes

Possible outcomes of a Stage 2 appeal are:

1. To uphold the appeal based upon the evidence presented and confirm the final admission decision.

2. To partially uphold the appeal based upon the evidence presented and confirm the final admission decision.
3. To dismiss the appeal.

The outcome of the Stage 2 appeal decision is final.

5. Linked Policies

Home Office UK Visas and Immigration (UKVA) International Student Policy

6. Equality Impact Assessment

Impact Assessment for the 4 strands of Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Sustainability	
Initial Form to be completed with Risk Assessments or as part of a proposal or change to a policy, plan or new way of working	
<p>Title of Activity: Admissions Appeal Procedure</p> <p>Author and Date: Admissions and Contact Centre Manager January 2023</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> New or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revision Please tick as appropriate</p> <p>Expected Implementation Date: April 2023</p> <p>What is the review date? April 2025</p>
<p>Equality and Diversity. Which of the characteristics maybe impacted upon? And, if yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?</p>	
<p>Safeguarding: Are there any aspects of this proposal which could cause a learner/member of staff/visitor to feel unsafe? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Health and Safety: Have any risks been identified? If yes, how has this been considered? What are the risks? What are the benefits?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Sustainability: Are there expected benefits or impacts on sustainability issues? If yes, how have these been considered?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Evidence: What evidence do you have for your conclusions and expectations for these conclusions? How will this impact be monitored for all these considerations?</p>	<p>The Admissions Appeals procedure and activities are reviewed regularly in line with legal and sector guidance.</p>
<p>Is this policy of a high/medium or low risk?</p>	<p>High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>