



Stratford College London

Admissions Complaints Policy and Procedure

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Purpose

This policy is designed to offer a window of opportunity to prospective students who feel dissatisfied with the College Admissions procedure and may wish to lodge a complaint against the process. Much as the College Admissions Policy and Procedure has been designed to be inclusive, fair and transparent, an applicant may have grounds to be dissatisfied with the process and may therefore wish to seek redress on the matter. All prospective students will be made aware of the College Admissions Complainant's Policy and Procedure as available to those who may wish to complain against the process.

Scope

This policy defines a complaint as related to matters on procedural irregularity, the conduct and manner of the interview and where the admission decision is perceived as having disregard for the College policies on equality and diversity or a clear case of staff malpractice or maladministration in the processes leading to an admissions decision.

This policy provides an opportunity for an applicant to lodge an admissions complaint in relation to:

- Administrative or procedural error in the handling of admissions applications;
- Concerns regarding staff behaviour in handling the admission application;

On the following grounds, an admissions complaint may not be considered:

- If the complaint is made in bad faith
- If the complaint is without any foundation;
- If the matter is already sub-judice and therefore prohibited from public discussion

Key Principles

In order to provide opportunity for fair handling of complaints, this policy rests on the following principles:

- Treating all complaints with respect and dignity
- Treating all complainants and staff who are the subject of complaints with respect and dignity
- Ensure that no applicant is treated unfairly or discriminated against in any future admissions process
- In all aspects of the complaints procedure, the College will ensure that the principles of procedural fairness and impartiality are strictly adhered to.
- The process will be carried out in a transparent and timely manner
- Staff must ensure confidentiality of the process to the extent that it is compatible with the College investigation and the need to share information with College members of staff internally. The complainant must be informed where it is found necessary to share information on the matter with any third parties.
- A named member in a complaint and from who a response is expected for handling the complaint effectively must be informed about the complaint and requested to reply.
- The College will not accept anonymous complaints or the complaints from 3rd parties;
- The College will process all admissions complaints in accordance with set deadlines in this policy.
- When processing admissions complaints, the College will adhere to procedures outlined in this policy and heed any College policies related to fairness, equality and diversity, College ethos and values.

Stratford College London

The Admissions Complaints Procedure

In line with College principles, the timeliness of the process will be ensured in order that complainants get to know of the outcomes as quickly as possible so they may seek other opportunities if need be.

- In the first place an applicant who has cause to complain against the College admissions process must approach the Admissions Officer to discuss the point of concern. This is the informal stage of the process.
- Should the first stage fail to yield satisfactory outcomes for the complainant, there is an opportunity to lodge a formal complaint.
- In the case where the complainant is not satisfied with the response from the Admissions Officer then within 7 days of hearing from the Admissions Officer, a formal complaint can be lodged by completing the admissions complaints form (**Appendix 1**).

In completing the admissions complaints form, the applicant must furnish the College with the following information:

- Fully complete the College Admission complaints form
- Adherence to the stipulated timescale provided herein this policy
- The applicant's full name address
- Date of admission application
- Date of admissions outcomes communicated to applicant
- The grounds for the complaint (in detail with any evidence provided)
- An indication of the outcome being sought

Admissions Complaints Panel

This would be comprised of the Principal and the Programme Leader. The panel will acknowledge receipt of the formal complaint within 5 working days.

The Admissions Complaints Panel will investigate the complaint and respond in writing within 15 working days of the receipt of the formal complaint barring any complexities of the complaint. In the case where the matter is perceived as a complex one, the applicant shall be informed that the consideration of the case will exceed the stipulated 15 working days and furnish the applicant with the adjusted timescale for completion of the case.

The Panel in considering all the evidence provided shall in a fair manner arrive at a conclusion and inform the applicant accordingly within the 15 days' timescale or within the revised timescale whichever is applicable. This concludes the complaints procedure.

Stratford College London

FORMAL COMPLAINT FORM

Personal Details	
Name:	Student ID:
Programme:	Year:
Address:	Tel. No:
	Email:
Complaint Details	
<p>Please state the nature of your complaint and give further details (use separate sheet, if necessary). Please give exact date(s), time(s) and location(s) of incident(s) wherever possible. Retrospective complaints (three calendar months after the informal complaint) will not be considered.</p>	
<p>Do you have any documentary evidence to support your complaint? Please give details and attach copies wherever possible.</p>	
<p>From your point of view, what would be the desired outcome of your complaint?</p>	
<p>What prevented the complaint from being resolved informally?</p>	
<p>Who else have you discussed this complaint with (e.g. Welfare & Student Services)? Has advice been given and have you acted on this advice?</p>	

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Stratford College London

For Office Use Only

Date Received: _____ Received by: _____

Action Taken: _____

Appeal Result: _____

Referred to DOS: **Yes / No:** _____ Date: _____

Date Replied to Student: _____ Programme Leader's Signature: _____