

Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure

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Summary description	
Process for applicant admission appeals and student complaints on admission experience.	

1. Introduction and Context

1.1 Oxford International (OIEG) are committed to ensure that all decisions concerning admissions are clear, transparent, and consistent. But we understand that there may be reasons why a student may wish to challenge a decision that has been made in relation to an application or are unhappy with how an application has been managed or processed. OIEG welcomes complaints as an invaluable source of student feedback and a mechanism to remedy student dissatisfaction at the earliest possible opportunity. OIEG supports the rights of students to raise complaints without disadvantage, and undertakes to deal with them in a thorough, transparent, timely and impartial manner.

2. Definition and Scope

2.1 The following procedure relates solely to how an applicant can make a complaint against an aspect or a decision regarding their application to study on an OIEG International College programme.

2.2 This procedure covers admissions complaints for all types of study programmes provided by OIEG including undergraduate, postgraduate programmes.

2.3 This procedure covers all modes of study, including full-time, part-time and distance learning.

2.4 Anonymous complaints will not normally be dealt with under this procedure. This is because complaints require investigation to enable resolution. Where a complaint is made anonymously, it is unlikely to be possible to undertake a thorough investigation.

3. General Principles

3.1 Appeals

3.1.1 If you are **an applicant** and are dissatisfied with the application decision made:

Appeal - Stage 1: Feedback

3.1.3. An appeal can be made to request a reconsideration of an application decision, this is usually where the decision means a place on a programme of study has not been offered.

3.1.4. If an applicant wishes to appeal an admissions decision in relation to a University place at an International College, they should request feedback from the Admissions Team by sending an email via the OIEG Quality Office: academicquality@oxfordinternational.com

3.1.5 The request for feedback is not a request for a review of the decision.

Appeal - Stage 2: Formal Appeal

3.1.6 If the applicant, after receiving feedback, remains unsatisfied then they can submit a **formal appeal** to the University and according to their Admissions Appeal and Complaint Process – see OIEG Admissions Policy for the links to the right university

4. Complaints

4.1 The following details the procedure for **students or applicants** who are dissatisfied with their admission experience.

4.2 The procedure aims to be simple, clear and fair to all parties involved, complying with the principles of natural justice, namely:

- The case will be dealt with in good faith and in an impartial and fair manner.
- No one will be the judge of an issue which concerns their own cause.
- Staff investigating the case will be impartial.

4.3 Where necessary, appropriate adjustments will be made to the process to accommodate the needs of disabled applicants, including those with mental health issues. This includes the provision of these procedures in a format accessible to the applicant concerned.

4.4 Applicants/students making a complaint will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination as a result of doing so.

4.5 Complaints will be handled sensitively, courteously and confidentially. Mediation and informal resolution will be an option at any point and cases will be dealt with as quickly as possible to avoid issues becoming protracted.

4.6 Complaints will not be permitted from parents, sponsors or employers of applicants. However, in cases where an applicant is under the age of 18 or has a mental health issue or disability which might impinge on their ability to make an appeal or complaint, a third party may be nominated to progress the appeal for them. The applicant/student must confirm in writing that they authorise a third party to represent them.

5. Submission of Complaints

5.1 The complaints procedure is intended to enable applicants/students to bring matters of concern to the attention of the OIEG, and to facilitate the investigation of those concerns with the aim of ensuring a satisfactory resolution.

5.2 The complaint procedure should be followed if an applicant/student is dissatisfied with:

- The admissions process.
- The services offered.
- The information provided by agents or OIEG.

5.3 Grounds for a complaint may include (but are not limited to):

- Issues relating to a fee waiver, bursary or scholarship scheme.
- A procedural irregularity in the conduct of the admissions process.
- Prejudice or bias on the part of a staff member, for example during an interview.

5.4 Complaints on the following grounds will not be considered:

- A complaint about a selection decision which disputes the academic or professional judgement of admissions staff.
- Where the decision not to offer a place arises from a failure on the part of an applicant to fulfil any academic or non-academic requirements for admission.

5.5 There are two stages to the complaint procedure:

Stage 1: Early Resolution, which emphasises a resolution at a local level where the issue arose.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint, in which the complaint will be formally investigated, and a formal response issued.

Stage 1: Early Resolution

5.6 It is anticipated that most complaints can be resolved informally, through early resolution. Applicants should raise their concern by email to Director of Global Admissions via the AcademicQuality@oxfordinternational.com Applicants should identify the reasons for their dissatisfaction and the outcome they are seeking.

5.7 Applicants must submit their complaint within one calendar month of the issue being complained about. Late complaints will not normally be considered, and if submitted must include a detailed explanation of the reason for late submission, supported by relevant evidence (for example, where the applicant was too unwell to be able to submit the complaint on time).

5.8 Complaints will be acknowledged within one week of receipt and will be passed to an Investigating Officer, who will be a member of the Admissions Team, who is either directly involved (if this is appropriate) or who can best resolve it. This will ensure that the complaint has the best chance of being resolved quickly.

5.9 The member of staff investigating the complaint may need to seek information from other staff or undertake routine investigations. However, it is intended that the matter be resolved at this point and prompt action is expected of OIEG staff.

5.10 Any staff member named in a complaint will be informed of the complaint and will have the right of reply as part of the process. We will share all documents and evidence with the member of staff. The member of staff has the right to be supported by a friend, trade union representative, colleague, or other member of the University, throughout the process.

5.11 Information contained within the complaint will only be made available to those members of staff involved in its resolution.

5.12 Examples of potential outcomes at the Early Resolution stage include:

- Providing more information or an explanation to the applicant.
- Giving an apology where it seems appropriate to do so.
- Make a recommendation to improve procedures or processes.
- Offer the applicant a practical remedy to put things right.
- Being empathetic and understanding where there is no apparent solution.
- Engaging mediation.

5.13 It is expected that consideration of complaints raised at the Early Resolution Stage will be completed within one calendar month of the issue being raised. Applicants/students will receive a response by email. In exceptional circumstances this time period may need to be extended. In such cases the applicant will be notified that their case will take longer than the normal timescales to investigate and an expected timescale to conclude the case will be provided.

5.14 At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigating Officer will provide a written report to the OIEG Quality Office, detailing the scope, outcomes and reasons for the outcomes.

5.15 The Investigating Officer may find the complaint successful, partially successful or unsuccessful. Where a complaint is found to be successful or partially successful, the Investigating Officer will identify an appropriate course of action as a remedy in their report.

5.16 The OIEG Quality Office is responsible for the communication of the outcome of the investigation to the applicant/student. The applicant will be provided with a written response outlining the outcome, which will include a copy of the Investigating Officer's report.

5.17 If applicants/students remain dissatisfied after they receive the outcome, they can escalate their case to Stage 2: Formal Complaint.

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

5.18 If an applicant remains dissatisfied following completion of Stage 1: Early Resolution, they can submit a Stage 2: Formal Complaint, by completing the Formal Complaint Form.

5.19 Applicants must submit their formal complaint to the Head of Quality Assurance (academicquality@oxfordinternational.com), setting out why they are dissatisfied with the earlier decision and what outcome or further action they are expecting (template available appendix B). **All sections of the form must be completed, or it will be returned to the complainant.** No additional

grounds may be cited, nor additional substantive points made at any later time in the consideration of the complaint.

5.20 Formal complaints must be submitted within one calendar month of being notified of the Stage 1 decision. Late complaints will not normally be considered, and if submitted must include a detailed explanation of the reason for late submission, supported by relevant evidence (for example, where the applicant was too unwell to be able to submit the complaint on time).

5.21 Formal complaints will be investigated by an Investigating Officer, who will be a member of staff from the Academic Affairs Office.

5.22 Whilst investigating complaints, the investigator may seek guidance from those with appropriate expertise.

5.23 The investigation will normally be completed within one calendar month after receipt of the complaint, however in exceptional circumstances this time period may need to be extended. In such cases the applicant will be notified that their case will take longer than the normal timescales to investigate and an expected timescale to conclude the case will be provided.

If you are an applicant:

5.24 On conclusion of the process OIEG Quality Office will issue an outcome letter to the applicant. This letter will detail why the applicant's complaint has been successful / unsuccessful. This outcome represents OIEG's final decision. There is no right of further appeal.

5.25 The remit of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) does not apply to applicants. Therefore, there is no recourse to the OIA following this process.

5.26 Applicants who have exhausted the complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with their complaint outcome, may be able to contact the Consumer and Markets Authority for independent advice and information - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students>. You may be able to refer your complaint to an independent complaint scheme.

If you are a student at the International College or Partner University

5.27 On conclusion of the process OIEG will issue a completion outcome letter to the applicant. This letter will detail why the student's complaint has been successful / unsuccessful. This outcome represents OIEG's final decision.

5.28 The student can take their unresolved complaint to the complaint process in place at the University, or to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). NB Please be aware that the OIA does not have a remit to deal with complaints from applicants.

6. Monitoring

6.1 OIEG regularly monitors the number and outcome of Appeals and Complaints and provides an annual report to OIEG Board of Governors

6.2 The annual report will make appropriate recommendations and changes to systems or procedures.

6.3 Trends and patterns identified by monitoring may also be used to inform other OIEG processes, policies or activities.

6.4 Monitoring reports do not contain any personally identifiable information.

7. Document retention and disposal

7.1 All notes of meetings, documents, evidence and agreed outcomes, regarding appeals or complaints, must be stored securely and in line with the OIEG Document Retention and Disposal Policy.

8. Related policies and standards

8.1 This procedure has been developed in accordance with the following policies and standards:

- OIEG and partner universities' policies:
- Ordinances and Regulations
- Admissions Policy
- Applicant and Student Criminal Conviction Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policies

8.2 UK Quality Code - Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access
Concerns, Complaints and Feedback
Learning and Teaching

8.3 AdvanceHE – Equitable Admissions for Underrepresented Groups

8.4 UK Higher Education Providers – Advice on Consumer Protection Law (May 2023)

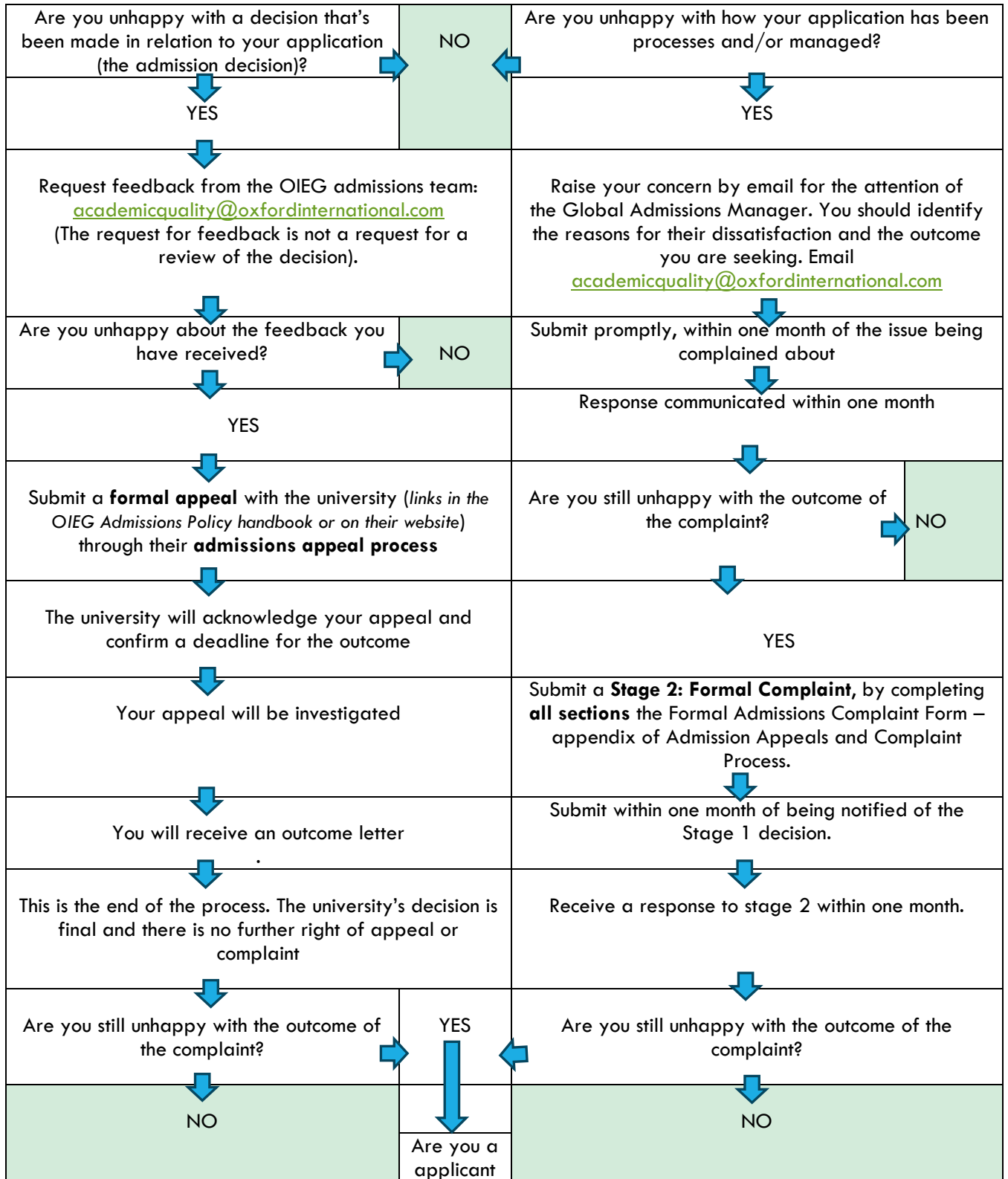
Appendices

- A. Appendix A: Admissions and complaints procedure – applicant process flowchart
- B. Appendix B: Stage 2 Formal stage form

Appendix A

Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure

Flow Chart



		or student?			
Applicant		←	→	Student	
↓				↓	
<p>The remit of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) does not apply to applicants. Therefore, there is no recourse to the OIA following this process.</p>				<p>You can take your unresolved complaint to the complaint process that is place at the University, or to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA).</p>	
<p>Applicants who have exhausted the complaints procedure and remain dissatisfied with their complaint outcome, may be able to contact the Consumer and Markets Authority for independent advice and information - https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers-and-students. You may be able to refer your complaint to an independent complaint scheme.</p>					

Appendix B

Oxford International Education Group

Student Admission Complaints Procedure – Formal Stage 2

<p>You must submit this Form to academicquality@oxfordinternational.com together with a detailed letter of complaint and supporting evidence.</p> <p>Advice on completion of the form can be obtained from International College Student Support Services</p> <p style="background-color: yellow; text-align: center;"><i>Please make sure you have read fully the student Appeals and Admissions Procedure before completing this form.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>NB – ALL sections of this form must be completed for it to be considered in our complaints process.</i></p> <p>PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS OR TYPE.</p>	
Personal Details	
Full Name:	
Student Number:	
College:	
Programme:	
Address for correspondence in connection with the complaint:	
Postcode:	
Telephone number:	
Email address	
Specify your preferred means of communication:	

<p>Outline of Complaint, including dates of actions (please use additional sheets if necessary):</p>
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Have you tried to resolve the complaint within the College (via the Early Resolution Stage)? If so, who did you contact? Please explain why you were not satisfied with the response you received?

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Please indicate, without prejudice, what outcome or further action you are expecting:

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Please Note:

As part of the investigation of your complaint, any member of staff mentioned will be made aware of the complaint, as will the Head of Department involved.

If you have written a formal letter of complaint to anyone else please indicate names and / or let us know whether you intend to copy this to anyone else.

If you are a disabled student and require support or assistance in making this complaint or support during the progress of this complaint, please contact the Disabilities Service.

Declaration	
I declare that the information given in this form is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am willing to answer further questions relating to this matter if required.	
Signed:	
Date:	

You should submit your Formal Stage Complaint to academicquality@oxfordinternational.com

Incomplete forms will be returned for completion