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| <b>Document Title</b>   |   |                    |
| Policy: Appeals by Student Applicants   |   |                    |
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| <b>Approving Body:</b>  | <b>Date of Approval:</b>                                |                    |
| Senate  | 24 July 2017 (Chair's action)                           |                    |
| <b>Date coming into force:</b>  | <b>Review Date:</b>                                     | <b>Edition No:</b> |
| May 2013<br>Updated May 2017  | Next Review<br>May 2019                                 | 3                  |
| <b>EITHER</b>   | <b>OR</b>   |                    |
| <b>For public access?</b><br>Tick as appropriate  | <b>For internal access only?</b><br>Tick as appropriate |                    |
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| <b>Applicable to collaborative provision?</b><br>Tick as appropriate  |   |                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | <input type="checkbox"/>                                |                    |
| <b>Summary/Description:</b>   |   |                    |
| Minor revision May 2017 to reflect changes in structure at the University and to include email as "in writing". |   |                    |

## APPEALS BY STUDENT APPLICANTS

### Appeal against the outcome of a selection decision

#### 1. Aim

The aim of the recruitment and selection process is to select students who have the ability and motivation to benefit from the programmes they wish to follow and who will make a positive contribution to the life of the University.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all prospective students are given a selection decision that has been reached fairly and in accordance with the University selection criteria. As such, an applicant for study on any of the University of Winchester programmes has the right to appeal against the outcome of the University selection process where the decision is to reject his or her application.

#### 2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 Senate shall appoint an Admissions Appeals Panel with delegated power in the matter of appeals by applicants against a decision to reject their application.
- 2.2 The Admissions Appeals Panel may only consider a request from an appellant that the decision to reject their application be reviewed on the grounds that:
  - a) There exists new evidence, which can be corroborated, and could not have been brought to the attention of the University prior to the selection process.
  - b) There is evidence of a procedural irregularity connected directly with the selection process undertaken by the University
  - c) That the decision of the University is, on the basis of the information available, unreasonable.
  - d) There is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of those involved in the selection process.

Due to the level of competition for places there will inevitably be occasions when an applicant disagrees with a selection decision. Appellants must therefore ensure that their appeal is

covered by the grounds set out above. Appellants are encouraged to raise any issues in the first instance with the relevant Admissions Administrator of the University (see under Section 5.1).

### **3. Composition of Admissions Appeals Panel**

3.1 The Admissions Appeals Panel will have the following membership:

Chair: Appointed by Senate

Dean of relevant Faculty or nominee

One member of academic staff from a different Faculty.

In attendance: Dean of Admissions or, in the case of a postgraduate research applicant, the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange.

3.2 The members of the Panel shall not include any person who was involved in the selection or interview process which came to the decision against which an appeal has been made, or who has a close personal or academic connection with the appellant.

### **4. Timing of Appeals**

Appeals which are referred to the Admissions Appeals Panel shall normally be held within two weeks from the submission of the appeal.

### **5. Submission of Appeals**

5.1 In the first instance applicants who wish to query the decision of the University should raise it directly with the relevant applications administrator. If this proves to be unsatisfactory then the procedures set out below should be followed.

5.2 The appeal must be lodged in writing [or email] with the Dean of Admissions or, in the case of postgraduate research applicants, with the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange within twenty working days of the date of the letter from the University or UCAS, (or other recognized applications and communications systems eg Law Cabs) notifying the applicant of the decision.

5.3 The appeal must comprise a properly completed copy of the Appeal Form and a Statement of Appeal setting out, in writing and in full, the grounds for and the nature of the appeal; no additional grounds may be cited, nor substantive points made, at any later time in the consideration of the appeal.

5.4 In the case of an appeal based on 2.2 (a) above, the applicant must submit with the Statement of Appeal written corroborating evidence.

5.5 In the case of an appeal based on 2.2 (b-d) above, a student must submit with the Statement of Appeal evidence to support their appeal.

## **6. Consideration of Appeals**

- 6.1 Appeals shall be considered in the first instance by the Dean of Admissions or the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange as appropriate and one other member of staff who was not a member of the selection or interview process where the decision was made. They shall decide whether there is a *prima facie* case for consideration.
- 6.2 The Dean of Admissions or Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange shall be permitted to request further information from the appellant and/or anyone within the University in order to assist in the determination of the *prima facie* case. The appellant and/or staff shall normally be required to produce such further information within 10 working days of the issue of the request.
- 6.3 If the Dean of Admissions or the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange and the other member of staff decide that there is not a *prima facie* case for consideration, the appeal is dismissed.
- 6.4 Appeals that are not dismissed shall be referred for consideration to the Admissions Appeals Panel.
- 6.5 Where an appeal is referred to an Admissions Appeals Panel, the Dean of Admissions or the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange shall obtain written statements from members of the University staff and all other persons as appropriate. Any additional substantive points not included in the written statements from University staff will not normally be considered by the Admissions Appeals Panel.
- 6.6 The Dean of Admissions or the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange shall proceed to convene a meeting of the Admissions Appeals Panel at the earliest possible opportunity, normally giving five working days notice in writing of the date, time and place of the meeting, together with copies of the documents listed in 6.7 below.
- 6.7 Information available to the Admissions Appeals Panel will be as follows:
- a) A copy of the appellant's Appeal Form, Statement of Appeal and supporting documentation.
  - b) A copy of the written statements provided by members of University staff or other persons.
  - c) A copy of the University's admissions regulations and appropriate programme admissions regulations, where relevant.
  - d) A copy of the Admissions Appeals Regulations.
  - e) A copy of any other relevant documents.

## **7. Procedure at the Meeting**

7.1 The Panel shall make every attempt to conclude its proceedings at the one meeting and must be quorate.

7.2 The Panel may invite representations, oral or in writing, from any person it thinks fit and may, if necessary, adjourn the meeting for this purpose.

## **8. Decision of the Panel**

8.1 The Panel may either dismiss the case or require reconsideration of the original decision.

8.2 The appellant will be informed of the decision of the Admissions Appeals Panel in writing by the Secretary to the Admissions Appeals Panel.

## **9. After the Decision**

9.1 Where the Admissions Appeals Panel has recommended reconsideration of the original decision, the Dean of Admissions or the Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange will take one of the two following courses of action:

- a) Offer the candidate a first or repeat interview.
- b) Offer the candidate a conditional or unconditional place in line with the admissions policy.

## **10. General Points**

10.1 An application may lodge only one appeal (possibly on several grounds) per application with the Admissions Appeals Panel.

10.2 All written communication to an appellant should, unless agreed otherwise, be sent by first class post or airmail to the last known residential address of the applicant.

10.3 The University will not normally correspond with a 'friend' or any other third party acting on behalf of the appellant.

10.4 The appeal procedure is concerned only with the decisions of interview panels and the operational processes linked to the workings of the selection process. It may not be used to address perceived problems in the handling of an application by UCAS, or any other external process connected to, but not directly part of, the University selection and admissions procedures. Appeals against the academic and professional judgment of the interview panellists and/or academic staff otherwise involved in the selection process will not be considered.

10.5 Should a prospective student wish to raise issues which lie outside this policy then the University Complaints Procedure may be a more appropriate route to have their concerns addressed.