

Procedure for Admissions Feedback and Appeals

STU 28

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1	Admissions Feedback and Appeals Procedure	Sept 2023	--	Sept 2025	Head of Student Experience

This document may be produced in alternative formats upon request.

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1. Purpose of this Document

To clarify the arrangements for applicants who wish to:

- 1.1. obtain feedback about an unsuccessful application, or
- 1.2. appeal an admissions decision, or
- 1.3. complain about the admission process.

2. Scope

The procedures in this document apply College-wide and to all applicants: Further Education, Higher Education, Work Based Learning, Higher Level Apprentices, Trainees, regardless of funding stream.

3. Definitions

3.1. Feedback

The College is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices, and believes that providing constructive feedback about an unsuccessful application will help an applicant to achieve a successful outcome in the future. The College will therefore provide feedback, when requested, to anyone whose application to study at the College has been unsuccessful. The procedure for requesting feedback is in Section 5 of this document.

3.2. Appeals

Following the provision of feedback, an applicant will have the right to appeal the Admissions decision, providing that there are sufficient grounds for an appeal. The procedure for appealing a selection decision is in Section 6 of this document.

3.3. Complaints

An applicant who wishes to make a complaint about the admissions process may do so using the College Complaints Policy stating how the Admissions Policy has not been adhered to. Please note that the Complaints Policy cannot be used to challenge an academic decision to refuse an application. The procedure for making a complaint is accessible on the College website at <https://www.nrc.ac.uk/college-life/policies-and-procedures>

4. Data Protection

- 4.1. The College prefers to deal directly with applicants, and where possible, a request for feedback or the submission of an appeal should be made by the applicant, not by a third party.
- 4.2. In cases where a request is submitted by a third party, data protection legislation may prevent the College from releasing information relating to an individual's

application unless the College receives specific written permission from the applicant allowing them to deal with the third party. Should an applicant wish a third party to act on their behalf, for example because the applicant is under 16, or has disabilities which would make it difficult for them to submit a request directly, the applicant must provide written authorisation, including the name and contact details of the relevant third party. Consent may be requested by the College where permission is not explicit.

5. Admissions Feedback

- 5.1. Feedback in this context is defined as information about why an application to a qualification or programme of study was unsuccessful. Any unsuccessful applicant to the College may request feedback on an admissions decision.
- 5.2. Each College curriculum area is responsible for making selection decisions on all applications to its qualifications and programmes. Each curriculum area provides information on the College website (www.nrc.ac.uk) relating to its selection criteria and procedures, and this information, together with the information given in the decision notice sent to the applicant, will be helpful to many applicants in explaining why their application has been unsuccessful. Applicants are therefore advised to read this information prior to approaching the College with a formal request for Admissions Feedback.
- 5.3. Procedure for Requesting Admissions Feedback

The following procedure should be used to request feedback regarding an unsuccessful application to the College.

 1. Requests for feedback should be made by e-mail to admissions@nrc.ac.uk within 20 working days following notification of the original admissions decision.
 - a. "Feedback request" should be included in the subject line of the e-mail.
 - b. Applicants should include their full name, and the name of the programme of study they have applied to.
 2. The Admissions team will respond in writing to each request for feedback. Feedback will normally be provided within 20 working days of receipt of the request.

Please note: it may not be possible to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants as quickly as we would like between 20th August and 10th September, due to the volume of admissions work being carried out. However, we will communicate with you as quickly as possible, and let you know who the feedback will be from, and when they are likely to get that to you.

6. Admissions Appeal

- 6.1. An Admissions Appeal is defined as a formal request for an admissions decision to be reviewed.
- 6.2. Ideally an applicant should seek Admissions Feedback (see section 5 of this document) from the Admissions team before deciding whether they have grounds to appeal the admissions decision. Admissions Feedback often provides sufficient explanation of the admissions decision and applicants may find they do not wish to appeal once this has been received. However, an applicant can appeal a decision without necessarily requesting Feedback.
- 6.3. Admissions Appeals must be submitted within 20 working days of receiving an Admissions decision. This will not disadvantage the applicant in any way to getting a place on a course within the College.
- 6.4. An Admissions Appeal will only be considered where there are adequate grounds, as set out below:
 - a. where there is **substantial new information** which, for exceptional circumstances, was not made available either on the original application or during the selection procedure, and where that new information is significant and directly relevant to the original decision. Please note that the new information must relate directly to the original application and cannot include activities or achievements which have taken place or been ratified subsequently.
 - b. where there is evidence that the College's published **Admissions Policy has not been followed**.

Admissions Appeals put forward on any other grounds will not be considered.

- 6.5. Please note that the College will not consider Admissions Appeals that are based on errors made by external organisations, agencies or individuals. For example, inaccurate predictions of future grades; disputes about the grading of formal examinations; comments made by referees or agents.
- 6.6. Procedure for Submitting an Admissions Appeal
 - 6.6.1. Applicants who wish to make an Admissions Appeal should use the College's Complaints Policy outlining their appeal as stated above. The procedure for making a complaint is accessible at <https://www.nrc.ac.uk/college-life/policies-and-procedures> .
 - 6.6.2. Admissions Appeals will be initially received by the College's Quality Department who will forward the Appeal to the College's Admissions team.

The Admissions team will determine if there are sufficient grounds for appeal, as set out above (see 6.4).

- 6.6.3. If Admissions Feedback has not been sought prior to the Appeal, or there are no grounds for appeal, the applicant will be informed of this by an e-mail. The e-mail will be sent from the College's Admissions team.
 - 6.6.4. If there are sufficient grounds for Appeal, the Admissions team will liaise with the relevant Curriculum Area Manager to investigate the Appeal, make a decision and develop a response to the applicant.
 - 6.6.5. The applicant will be informed in writing (e.g. e-mail) of the outcome of their Admissions Appeal and will be given an explanation for the decision which has been reached. This e-mail will be sent from the College's Quality Department.
- 6.7. No applicant will be discriminated against in any future application on the basis of appealing a previous admissions decision.
 - 6.8. The College's Quality Department will collate annual statistics relating to the number of Admissions Appeals received and the outcome.

7. Special Circumstances

- 7.1. The College is not best placed to fairly and consistently take account of any special circumstance affecting an applicant's performance in pre-entry qualifications, and will not consider appeals based on such circumstances. Examples of special circumstances include personal or family illness during or shortly before exams take place. The College expects applicants to have taken appropriate action to ensure that the relevant examination bodies have allowed for such circumstances prior to the announcement of results or following an appeal to the examination body.
- 7.2. The College will consider the impact that longer term difficulties such as illness, disability, mental health challenges or caring responsibilities have had on an applicant's application. Please note that information about challenging circumstances must be provided by the relevant application deadline, and cannot subsequently be taken into account as grounds for an appeal. Cognisance should also be given to the Fitness to Practice policy.
- 7.3. The College is also obliged to consider criminal convictions in their decision making process should they put either the applicant or other students of the College at risk. Decisions made referencing a criminal conviction can be discussed with the Safeguarding Designated Officer.

8. Quality Assurance

- 8.1. Comments and complaints regarding this document will be handled through the College's comments and complaints mechanisms. If you have a comment or complaint, or require further information regarding the process, please e-mail quality.improvement@nrc.ac.uk
- 8.2. The following processes must be followed to monitor and review this document:
 - a. It will be monitored on an ongoing basis and subject to a full review at least every two years.
 - b. It may also be updated if changes or improvements in processes or procedures are identified.
 - c. In monitoring and reviewing the document, the following will be taken into consideration:
 - feedback regarding the content and format of the document;
 - uptake and usage;
 - comments or complaints regarding the document;
 - Equality information and monitoring data.