



LUTHER KING HOUSE EDUCATIONAL TRUST POLICY AND PROCEDURES: ADMISSIONS COMPLAINTS

Purpose of the Policy and Procedure

Luther King House is committed to providing a high quality admissions service which is fair and transparent. We recognise, however, that there may be occasions when an applicant feels dissatisfied with the way the admissions process has been conducted. To safeguard the interests of prospective students, Luther King House has established an Admissions Complaints Procedure in accordance with Durham University policies and procedures, as outlined below.

Every reasonable effort will be made to deal promptly and efficiently with all admissions complaints, to investigate them thoroughly and objectively and to seek to resolve them satisfactorily, and with due regard to LKH's Equality and Diversity Policy. Complaints will be dealt with positively and constructively. If a complaint is upheld, LKH will seek to provide an appropriate response and will correct any mistakes or misunderstandings and will take any other action as appropriate. If a complaint is not upheld then reasons for that decision will be given. Applicants will not be disadvantaged in any way if they use the Admissions Complaints Procedure.

In processing a complaint, all reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that this procedure is accessible to all applicants, taking into consideration diversity issues and potential barriers to access. However, applicants should alert the person responsible for handling their complaint if they wish to make any specific request for particular adjustments to be made to the procedures outlined here, on grounds of disability or other protected characteristics.

The time limits set out in this Procedure will normally be followed. However, where, for good reason, this is not possible, the complainant will be kept informed of progress.

Data Protection

Due to Data Protection legislation any complaint must be submitted by the applicant or from someone who the applicant has given consent, in writing, to act on their behalf.

Definitions

An admissions *appeal* is a request by an unsuccessful applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision. This process is not possible under the Durham University regulations.

An admissions *complaint* is the expression of a specific concern regarding a procedural error, irregularity or mal-administration in admissions policies or procedures, where an applicant believes that LKH has not adhered to its own stated procedures. This policy outlines the procedure for making and responding to admissions complaints at LKH.

Procedure for Making a Complaint

There are three stages to the Admissions Complaints Procedure.

Stage 1: Informal Complaint

Applicants who have a complaint to make should raise it as soon as possible, and not more than 28 days after the event unless there is good reason for the delay. An informal complaint can be submitted by email or by letter to the relevant Programme Leader (or if it concerns the Programme Leader, to the LKH President). LKH will seek to resolve any complaint through informal mechanisms in the first instance, where appropriate.

At the conclusion of any informal resolution attempts, the applicant will be reminded of the formal complaints procedure and the deadline for submitting a formal complaint (20 working days from receipt of this response to their informal complaint).

Stage 2: Formal Complaint

If an applicant is not satisfied with the response from LKH at Stage 1, they may make a formal complaint. To do so, the applicant should complete the Stage 2 Admissions Complaints Form and send it to the Academic Registrar, within 20 working days (4 weeks) of receiving an informal response to their initial complaint. LKH will not normally consider complaints made after this period, unless there is good reason for the delay. Applicants should ensure that the form is fully completed to allow the complaint to be processed.

Upon receipt of the form, the Registrar will log the formal complaint and forward it to the Programme Leader (or to the President if a complaint concerns the actions of the Programme Leader), who will investigate the concerns raised by the applicant. The Registrar or Programme Leader will normally respond in writing to the applicant within 20 working days of receipt of the complaint.

LKH will keep a careful record of all Stage 2 complaints, and these will be reviewed in relation to the administration of LKH's admissions policies and procedures.

Stage 3: Review by the University

If a complainant remains dissatisfied once LKH's internal procedures outlined above have been exhausted, the complainant has the right to request a review by the University, and will be notified in writing of this right. If any procedural irregularities are identified by the University which have not already been addressed by LKH, and a complaint is referred back to LKH for further review, LKH will re-examine and review its decisions and responses in the light of any University feedback.

This completes the Admissions Complaints process. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator does not consider complaints concerning admissions.

Storage and Processing of Admissions Complaints Information

By submitting a Complaint form an applicant agrees that Luther King House can process the disclosed information for all purposes relating to the Admissions Complaint Procedure, and to their application to LKH. The information will be stored and processed in accordance with Luther King House's registration under the Data Protection Act (1998). It may be disclosed to those members of LKH who have a need to see it, and will be stored as part of LKH's record of the application.

Admissions Complaints Policy Monitoring and Review

LKH's Admissions Complaints Policy is reviewed annually. An ongoing anonymised record will be kept by LKH of any formal appeals or complaints made, their general nature and their outcomes. This information will be considered by the Programme Committees and Management Team as appropriate, identifying any general issues that may have arisen and considering any potential changes to be made to LKH provision, policies or procedures in the light of the complaints process and outcome in each case. Anonymised information may also be passed on to other appropriate bodies upon request.

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