

Complaints and Appeals Procedures for Applicants

Introduction

At Al-Maktoum College we are committed to the provision of high quality and fair admissions procedures for all our applicants. We recognise, however, that there may be occasions when an applicant will feel dissatisfied with the outcome.

To safeguard the interests of applicants, the College has a Complaints and Appeals Procedure for Applicants. The College seeks to ensure that all complaints and appeals submitted by applicants are investigated, dealt with promptly. If a complaint or appeal is upheld, the College will take such action or provide such remedy as may be appropriate. If a complaint or appeal is not upheld, the reasons for the decision will be communicated to the applicant. Applicants will not be disadvantaged in any way because they have used the Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

Feedback

Before initiating the Complaints and Appeals Procedure, applicants who are unclear about why they have been unsuccessful should request formal feedback. If applicants have additional information to submit in support of their application, this can be provided as part of the request for feedback. Requests for feedback should be submitted within 28 days of the applicant receiving the admissions decision. In the vast majority of cases the College would expect to receive the request for feedback/complaint/appeal directly from the applicant, however the applicant may also give express and voluntary consent in writing for someone to act on their behalf. Anonymous communication will not be investigated.

Please email feedback@almcollege.ac.uk with feedback requests.

Applicants are asked to note that the most common reason for an application to be declined is that the applicant either does not meet a specific entry requirement or does not have (or is not likely to achieve) the required grades and/or level of qualification for admission.

The applicant will be sent a letter or email containing written feedback, normally within 14 working days.

Definitions

An appeal is defined as a request for the review of a selection decision and/or the outcome of an application. The outcome of a successful appeal would be to reconsider the candidate's application with a view to either changing or upholding the original decision.

A complaint is a specific concern about the conduct of the College's admission process.

Valid Grounds for complaints/appeals

The procedure may be used only where there are adequate grounds as for doing so and may not be used simply because a candidate has been unsuccessful with their application.

The College will not consider appeals based on challenges to the judgement of its selectors in relation to the academic and non-academic selection criteria for its programmes. However, if

following receipt of feedback, an applicant feels that an error has occurred, they have the right to request a formal review of the selection decision on one of the following grounds:

- pertinent information was missing, for good reason, from the original application
- there has been a misinterpretation of information or data contained within the original application
- there was a procedural anomaly in the handling of the application

This review can only be requested after an applicant has received feedback on the reason for their original rejection. The request for a review must then be placed (in writing) within 14 working days of the feedback being sent to the applicant, stating clearly on what grounds the request for a review is being made.

In submitting complaints, complainants must identify where the College's processing of their application has deviated from the admissions procedures.

This process also applies to the entry tests for Arabic Language programmes.

Complaints/appeals procedure

An appeal will not be considered until after the applicant has received formal feedback. Applicants who have valid grounds on which to appeal against a selection decision or who wish to register a complaint should raise the matter promptly and, in all cases, within the admissions cycle in which the applicant is seeking entry. Where a complaint or appeal arises from a communication of the College's decision, this must be submitted within 28 days following receipt by the applicant of the formal feedback. A complaint or appeal should be submitted in writing to the Student Administrator, providing the following information:

- applicant name and address;
- the programme of study applied for;
- specific details of the ground(s) for the appeal or complaint;
- any other information which the applicant feels is relevant: please note that all relevant information should be submitted at one time and that the College will not consider information which is submitted later in the process without good reason;
- an indication of the outcome being sought (without prejudice to the final outcome).

Appeals and complaints will be investigated by the College and the outcomes will be communicated promptly to the applicant. The College aims to thoroughly and fairly investigate all appeals and resolve such matters during this initial investigation. As such, the decisions taken following completion of this process will be considered as final and the College does not operate a further appeal system. The College will aim to respond to the appeal/complaint within 28 days of receipt.

When an appeal is upheld and the outcome reviewed, the College may not be able to guarantee admission in the academic session initially requested; in such circumstances, admission at an alternative point of entry may be offered by the College.

Storage and Processing of Complaints and Appeals Information

Applicants lodging a complaint and those against whom complaints are made can expect complaints to be dealt with confidentially and with due regard for their privacy. It may be disclosed to those members of the College who have a need to see it in order to investigate the complaint. This disclosure will be undertaken solely to expedite the thorough investigation of the complaint and will not be undertaken to disadvantage any party.

The personalised record of the complaint/appeal and any supporting papers will be destroyed one year following resolution of the case. Anonymised data may be kept longer in order to facilitate monitoring and review of the College's admissions process.

Further advice

For further advice on what applicants can do to improve their chances of submitting a successful application, applicants should seek guidance from HE advisors at their school, College or careers service, as such staff are likely to be best placed to provide the impartial advice and guidance that applicants need.

Contact Details

Feedback requests, complaints and appeals should be submitted to:

SQA Coordinator
Al-Maktoum College
124 Blackness Road
Dundee
Tayside
DD1 5PE