

Request for a Review of an Admissions Decision

POLICY SCHEDULE	
Policy Title	Request for a Review of an Admissions Decision
Policy Owner	Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar
Policy Lead Contact	Head of Admissions
Approving Body	Academic Board
Version	2 (Updated June 2026)
Review Interval	Biannual
Next Review	November 2027
Related Documents	Admissions Policy & Procedures Student Disclosure of Criminal Background (DBS) Policy Safeguarding Policy QAA UK Quality Code Chapter B2
Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to explain how applicants can request a review of an admissions decision made by the University of Cumbria. It outlines the circumstances under which a review may be considered, the process that will be followed, and the timescales involved. The University is committed to ensuring that all admissions decisions are made fairly, consistently and in accordance with its published procedures. This policy provides applicants with a transparent mechanism to raise concerns where they believe an error has occurred, they have been treated unfairly, or they are dissatisfied with the service received during the admissions process.

This policy is published on the University of Cumbria website. Printed copies are uncontrolled. Always refer to the online version at [Policies \(cumbria.ac.uk\)](https://policies.cumbria.ac.uk).

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1. Introduction

The University of Cumbria is dedicated to operating a fair and consistent admissions process that safeguards the interests of all applicants. Where concerns arise about admissions decisions, it is anticipated that most can be successfully resolved informally through discussion with the relevant Admissions Team.

Where informal resolution is not possible, this Policy provides a formal procedure for applicants to seek reconsideration of an admissions decision. Applicants can be assured that submitting a formal request for review will not prejudice any opinion of the applicant, nor be used to adversely affect any later dealings with the applicant, including future applications to the University.

2. Purpose

This Policy sets out the process and procedure for applicants to request reconsideration of an admissions decision. It seeks to:

- Make clear the grounds on which a request can be made
- Protect the interests of applicants
- Ensure procedural parity between all applicants
- Enable staff to manage requests effectively and within clear timescales

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all applicants to the University of Cumbria credit-bearing modules or awards. It covers decisions made during the admissions process, including decisions not to invite to interview, the wording and conditions of an offer, and decisions to reject an application.

A request for review must normally be made by the applicant themselves. A third party may act on behalf of an applicant only where the University has received written, signed authorisation from the applicant. Where the applicant is under 18, a parent or legal guardian may act as representative without further authorisation.

All written correspondence must include the applicant's full name, address, contact details and University of Cumbria Student ID number.

4. Grounds for Review

4.1 Valid Grounds

A request for reconsideration may be made on the following grounds:

- Material administrative error, regulatory irregularity (where applicable) or procedural irregularity which has affected the outcome of an application - this may include a decision not to invite to interview, the wording or conditions of an offer, or a decision to reject an application
- New/additional evidence that is now available and where there is a valid reason it was not available earlier
- Unfair treatment, bias, or perception of bias as part of the admissions process
- Dissatisfaction with the service delivered by staff involved with Admissions

4.2 Invalid Grounds

The following are not valid grounds for a review:

- Disagreement with an admissions decision that was made appropriately in accordance with this Policy - a request cannot be made simply because an application has been unsuccessful at any stage of the process
- Disagreement with the appropriately exercised academic or professional judgement of those making admissions decisions - there is no right of appeal against academic or professional judgement

Supporting evidence should be included at the time of submission. It may not be possible to accept additional information at a later stage unless there is a strong rationale for its not being available when the request was first made.

5. Three-Stage Review Process

Overview of the Three-Stage Process

Stage 1	Informal Resolution: discussion with Admissions staff. Most concerns are resolved here.
Stage 2	Formal Review: written request assessed and determined by the Head of Admissions.
Stage 3	Final Review: Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar considers reviews against Stage 2 outcome. Formal Appeals against a DBS Panel decision will only be considered at Stage 3. The decision is final.

Formal submission of a review request will not prejudice any future dealings with the applicant.

6. Stage 1 - Informal Resolution

Wherever possible, applicants should seek informal resolution of any concerns through discussion with the relevant Admissions Administrator or Officer. It is expected that most concerns can be resolved at this stage without the need for formal proceedings.

The review will consider whether the correct procedures were following, whether the decision was reasonable and proportionate and whether relevant information was properly considered.

Who to Contact	Method	Timescale
Admissions Administrator or Officer	Verbal or written discussion. No formal form required at this stage.	Within 10 working days of the concern being raised. Requests for a review of an Admissions decision that are submitted more than 3 months after the decision was made will not be considered.

7. Stage 2 - Formal Review

Where it has not been possible to resolve a concern informally, the applicant may submit a formal written request for review to the Head of Admissions. The request must be submitted on the Applicant Request for Review of an Admissions Decision Form (at the end of this document) and sent to uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk.

The review will consider whether the correct procedures were following, whether the decision was reasonable and proportionate and whether relevant information was properly considered

Step	Action	Timescale
Submission deadline	Applicant must submit the completed request form, including all supporting evidence, to uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk	Within 10 working days of the date of the decision being reviewed. Late requests will not normally be accepted unless good reason is provided.
Eligibility assessment	The Head of Admissions assesses whether the stated grounds are valid. Applicant notified of the eligibility outcome in writing.	Within 10 working days of receipt of the request form
If ineligible	Request not progressed further. Applicant notified in writing with explanation.	Included in the 10-working-day eligibility response
If eligible — formal response	The Head of Admissions investigates and issues a formal written response. Outcome will be one of: (a) decision unchanged (with rationale); (b) decision amended (with rationale); or (c) notification of service improvement where unsatisfactory service has been identified.	Within 20 working days of receipt of the eligibility acknowledgement

8. Stage 3 - Final Review and DBS Panel Appeal by Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar

The applicant may request a Stage 3 review of the formal Stage 2 outcome on the following grounds only:

- Evidence that the University failed to follow procedure as set out in Stage 2
- New additional information that has the potential to materially impact on the Stage 2 outcome, and which for good reason was not presented earlier in the process
- The outcome was unreasonable or not proportionate based on the evidence”

Applicants appealing a DBS Panel outcome will be considered under stage 3.

Applicants whose request was terminated at any stage may also request reconsideration of the termination decision through Stage 3.

Step	Action	Timescale
Submission deadline	Admissions - Written request submitted to Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar (via uoadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk). DBS Panel - Written request submitted to Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar (via DBS@cumbria.ac.uk). Must clearly state grounds for Stage 3 review and include all relevant evidence.	Within 10 working days of the date of dispatch of the Stage 2 formal response or outcome of DBS Panel
Validity assessment and outcome	Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar assesses the validity of the request and, if valid, investigates and issues a final written decision.	Within 10 working days of receipt of the Stage 3 request
Final decision	The decision at Stage 3 is FINAL. The applicant will be deemed to have exhausted the procedure. No further review is available.	Included in the 10-working-day Stage 3 response

9. Complete Timescales - At a Glance

Stage	Who	Timescale	Counted from
Stage 1: Informal	Admissions Administrator / Officer	10 working days	Date concern raised. Please note this must be within 3 months of the issue taking place
Stage 2: Submission	Applicant	10 working days to submit form	Date of the decision being reviewed
Stage 2: Eligibility	Head of Admissions	10 working days to assess eligibility	Date request received
Stage 2: Outcome	Head of Admissions	20 working days to issue response	Date eligibility acknowledged
Stage 3: Submission	Applicant	10 working days to submit request	Date Stage 2 response dispatched. Date DBS Panel outcome dispatched
Stage 3: Outcome	Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar	10 working days — FINAL decision	Date Stage 3 request received

All timescales are stated in working days. In exceptional circumstances, timescales may need to be extended; where this occurs, the applicant will be notified promptly in writing. During formal stages (Stage 2 and Stage 3), applicants should not make contact other than to provide directly relevant new information - this avoids duplication and keeps the process moving.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities within this Procedure
Applicant	To familiarise themselves with this Policy before submitting a request. To submit requests within the stated timescales. To include all supporting evidence at the point of submission. To request any reasonable adjustments needed to support you throughout the review process.
Admissions Administrator / Officer	To handle verbal queries and concerns through Stage 1 informal resolution. To direct applicants to the formal procedure where informal resolution is not possible.
Head of Admissions	To assess the eligibility of a Stage 2 formal request. To investigate valid requests with appropriate input from relevant admissions tutors. To issue a written formal response at Stage 2.
Pro Vice Chancellor Student Journey and Academic Registrar	To assess the validity of a Stage 3 review request. To investigate valid Stage 3 requests. To issue the final written decision at Stage 3.

11. Termination of a Review Request

The University reserves the right to terminate consideration of a review request if any member of staff is subjected to abusive, threatening or harassing behaviour - whether in person, in writing, by email or verbally - or if the request becomes clear that it is vexatious or frivolous. In such cases, the applicant will be notified in writing, with an explanation of why the request has been terminated, and will be informed of their right to escalate to Stage 3 of this process.

12. DBS-Related Reviews

For Appeals relating specifically to the outcome of a DBS clearance panel, applicants should refer to the separate Student Disclosure of Criminal Background (DBS) Policy. The Student Disclosure of Criminal Background (DBS) Policy contains specific grounds for DBS-related appeals, which differ from those in this Policy and take precedence for those matters.

13. Collaborative Provision

Where a review request relates to a decision made in collaborative provision, the collaborative partner institution is responsible for managing the review through their own procedures. The University of Cumbria will provide appropriate support to partners in ensuring their procedures are consistent with this Policy.

14. Data Protection and Storage

By submitting the Request for Review of an Admissions Decision Form, the applicant agrees that the University may process the information contained within it for all purposes relating to the review procedure and to their application to the University. Information will be stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR and will be disclosed only to those University staff who need to see it for the purposes of this procedure.

Information relating to review requests will be stored as part of the applicant's application record. Monitoring data (without personally identifiable information) is reported to Academic Board. DBS Appeals are held discreetly within the DBS team.

15. Monitoring and Review

The University regularly monitors the numbers and outcomes of review requests and reports this to Academic Board with a view to improving service quality. Monitoring reports will not contain any personally identifiable information.

This Policy is approved by the University's Academic Board and is reviewed biannually.

APPLICANT REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF AN ADMISSIONS DECISION FORM

Before you complete this form

Submit this form to uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk (dbs@cumbria.ac.uk for DBS Panel Appeals) within 10 working days of the date of the decision you are seeking to review.

You must include all supporting evidence with this form at the time of submission.

Your request will be assessed for eligibility and you will be updated on the outcome within 10 working days.

If you have any difficulty completing this form, contact uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk or provide the information as a Word document or in the body of an email.

If you require this form in an alternative format, please contact uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk.

Full Name		Student ID	
Programme Applied For		Year of Intended Entry	
Email Address			
Date of Decision Being Reviewed		Date of This Form	

Grounds for review (delete those that do not apply):

- Material administrative error, regulatory or procedural irregularity which has affected the outcome of my application (including a decision not to invite me to interview / the wording or conditions of an offer / a decision to reject my application)
- Unfair treatment, bias or perception of bias as part of the admissions process
- Dissatisfaction with the service delivered by staff involved with Admissions
- Other — please state:

Disability or specific learning difficulty (if any) — please give details of any adjustments that would assist you during the review procedure:

Have you attempted informal resolution (Stage 1)? If yes, provide details below:

Details of your review request — explain your concern, when it happened, and how it has affected you. NB You must list and include any documents in support of your request with this form:

Outcome you are seeking (note: requested outcome will be considered where the review is upheld, but cannot be guaranteed):

Signed (Applicant)

Date

Submission

Send your completed form to: uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk

Deadline: within 10 working days of the date of the decision being reviewed. You must include all supporting evidence at the time of submission.

Contact for assistance: uocadmissions@cumbria.ac.uk

Policy available at: [Policies \(cumbria.ac.uk\)](https://www.cumbria.ac.uk/policies)