
LIPA

THE LIVERPOOL INSTITUTE FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1. We are committed to providing a high quality admissions service which is fair, efficient and transparent. This document outlines our procedure for any applicant who has a concern about the way in which their application has been handled or how the decision has been made on their application.

1.2. This procedure is administered by the Admissions Manager, Howard Ashton (h.ashton@lipa.ac.uk) on behalf of the Director or Marketing and Student Recruitment, Corinne Lewis (c.lewis@lipa.ac.uk).

1.3. This procedure applies to all applicants to LIPA's Higher Education programmes, which are currently:

Foundation Certificate Acting and Musical Theatre

Foundation Certificate Commercial Dance

Foundation Certificate Popular Music and Sound Technology

BA (Honours) Acting

BA (Honours) Community Drama

BA (Honours) Dance

BA (Honours) Music

BA (Honours) Music, Theatre and Entertainment Management

BA (Honours) Sound Technology

BA (Honours) Theatre and Performance Design

BA (Honours) Theatre and Performance Technology

1.4. This procedure does **not** cover complaints relating to outside agencies or service providers.

2. Informal Complaints Resolution

2.1. The majority of complaints are resolved satisfactorily on an informal basis and close to their point of origin.

2.2. Informal complaints should be raised via email, telephone or in person as soon as possible with the person directly responsible for the service or behaviour which has caused dissatisfaction. This may be a member of teaching staff that is conducting the audition/interview or it may be a member of Admissions staff that is communicating about the outcome of the audition/interview. It is helpful if the complainant has already considered what a reasonable satisfactory resolution to the informal complaint might be.

2.3. In circumstances, where the nature of the informal complaint (e.g. sensitivity, confidentiality or its personal nature) makes raising the issue as described under point 2.2. difficult, the Admissions Manager can be approached. If the informal complaint relates to the Admissions Manager, the Director or Marketing and Student Recruitment can be approached.

2.4 Where the outcome of the informal complaints resolution process is perceived by the complainant to be unsatisfactory, resolution through the formal complaints procedure may be considered.

3. Formal Appeal or Complaint

To make a formal appeal or complaint, a formal 'Admissions Appeals and Complaints' form must be completed by the applicant. Applicants may only submit a formal appeal or complaint form if they have followed the informal appeals and complaints procedure as stated in section 2. The form is available on request from the Admissions Manager.

- An **appeal** is a request for a formal review of an admissions decision or the wording/terms/conditions of an offer.
- A **complaint** is a specific concern related to a procedural error, irregularity or maladministration in the admissions procedures or policies.

The grounds on which appeals and complaints can be made are set out in the Procedure, but please note that appeals/complaints cannot be made against academic or professional judgments.

4 General Principles

- 4.1 We are committed to operating a high quality admissions service which is fair, efficient and transparent.
- 4.2 We aim to handle appeals and complaints in a way that:
- encourages informal resolution;
 - is fair and efficient;
 - is sensitive to, and understanding of, the concerns of applicants;
 - allows for the greatest degree of confidentiality, involving only those who need to be part of the resolution process.
- 4.3 Appeals and complaints are handled separately from the application for entry. An appeal or complaint made in good faith will not prejudice current or future applications. It is important to note that most appeals and complaints are resolved amicably and without recourse to the formal stage of the procedure.
- 4.4 Appeals and complaints may be submitted by an individual applicant but not by a third party (school, parent or other representative), unless the third party has the explicit consent from the applicant to act on their behalf.

5 Scope of the Procedure

- 5.1 This procedure is relevant to applicants applying for entry to our Foundation Certificate and Degree courses where the admissions criteria and selection procedures are the sole responsibility of the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Appeals

- 5.2 For the purposes of this procedure, an **appeal** is defined (by the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions group - www.spa.ac.uk) as a request by an applicant for a formal review of the outcome of an admissions decision.
- 5.3 You may appeal a decision made by us if you feel that we did not appropriately

consider your application in accordance with the Admissions Policy and other published procedures, or that we did not take account of all the information provided in the application.

- 5.4 You may not appeal against an admissions decision based on the academic judgement of our staff about your suitability for entry to a particular course.

Complaints

- 5.5 For the purposes of this procedure, a **complaint** is defined (by the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions group - www.spa.ac.uk) as an expression of dissatisfaction about:

- the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts and/or our Admissions Policies and procedures which have been used to reach a selection decision;
- the actions, or the lack of actions, by the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts or its staff.

A complaint will not result in the amendment of an admissions decision (see Appeals).

- 5.6 The Appeals and Complaints Procedure cannot be used where our decision resulted from a failure on your part to fulfil academic or non-academic requirements for admission (for example, satisfactory DBS or medical clearance).

6 The Procedure

6.1 Stage 1 - Informal Appeal/Complaint

If you are unhappy with an Admissions decision, or with the way your application has been handled, in the first instance you should contact the Admissions Team to discuss your issue(s).

6.2 Stage 2 - Formal Appeal/Complaint

- 6.2.1 If you are not satisfied with the information provided by the Admissions Team, you may be asked to formalise your appeal/complaint using our Admissions Appeals and Complaints form.

Appeals

- 6.2.2 If you request a review of an Admissions decision through an appeal, the process will be led by the Admissions Manager, who will review the available application and decision-making information with the relevant academic department.
- 6.2.3 We will aim to respond within **15 working days** of receipt of the appeal. If a delay is anticipated in responding within the above timescale, we will inform you in writing of the progress being made towards the consideration of your appeal.
- 6.2.4 If your appeal is upheld, we will take such reasonable action as is appropriate and you will be informed of the outcome. If your appeal is not upheld, we will communicate the reasons for the decision to you in writing.

Complaints

- 6.2.5 If you submit a complaint, the Admissions Manager will investigate it, seeking relevant information from the academic department and from yourself if necessary.
- 6.2.6 In making a complaint, you should make us clear of the nature of, and reasons for your complaint giving as much detail as possible. This should include;

- any steps you have already taken to resolve the matter, if appropriate;
- details of any response you have received to date and a statement as to why the response(s) is not satisfactory;
- an indication of the outcome you are seeking.

6.2.7 We will aim to respond within **15 working days** of receipt of the complaint. If a delay is anticipated in responding within the above timescale, we will inform you in writing of the progress being made towards the consideration of your complaint.

6.2.8 If your complaint is upheld, we will take such reasonable action as is appropriate and you will be informed of the outcome. If your complaint is not upheld, we will communicate the reasons for the decision to you in writing.

7 Monitoring, Review and Approval of the Admissions Appeals and Complaints procedure

7.1 Without breaching confidentiality, all formal appeals and complaints submitted under our Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure for Applicants are monitored, as is the action taken to rectify any practice deemed inappropriate.

7.2 The Admissions Appeals and Complaints Procedure for Applicants is reviewed and approved annually by our Teaching and Learning Board.

8 Contact Information

Admissions Manager
 Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
 Mount Street
 Liverpool
 L1 9HF