

Applicant Complaints Policy (Trainee Admissions)

Policy Category: Academic

Subject: This policy outlines how applicants to NELTA can make a complaint regarding NELTA's admissions process and/or service.

Approving Authority: Academic Board

Responsible Officer: Director and Strategic Director

Delegated Authority: NELTA SCITT

Effective Date: October 2023

Next review: October 2025

PURPOSE & SCOPE

NELTA SCITT is an outstanding teacher training provision, attracting applications from highly qualified applicants every year. It is committed to providing a high-quality admissions process for all applicants. However, NELTA recognises that there may be occasions when applicants to the ITT provider may have cause for complaint.

This policy outlines how applicants can submit a complaint and in what circumstances these will be investigated. The policy applies to those who have made a formal application to study at NELTA through DfE Apply and applies to all programmes of study.

POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy explains how applicants to NELTA can seek to have a complaint addressed by the admissions team. It outlines the circumstances in which a complaint will be investigated.

2. Responsibilities

2.1 Applicants are permitted to make a complaint at any stage in the application process.

2.4 Anonymous complaints will not be considered.

2.5 Applicants will not suffer any disadvantage or recrimination in the admissions process as the result of making a complaint in good faith. This will not have any ramifications to any existing or future applications.

2.6 NELTA will endeavour to respond in the timeframes outlined below. However, during busy times of the year, there may be delays in the response.

3. Informal complaints

3.1 At any stage in the admissions process, applicants can express a dissatisfaction with an aspect of the admissions process. Applicants should email admin@nelta.co.uk to inform the admissions team of their complaint. These complaints will be investigated by NELTA and a response will be provided within 15 working days of receipt.

3.2 Where a mistake or error in process has been identified, the NELTA admissions office will seek to provide a remedy. Where a remedy is not possible, an explanation will be provided in writing to the applicant via admin@nelta.co.uk.

4. Formal, Stage One Complaint

4.1 Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of an informal complaint or wishes to formalise their grievance with the ITT provider, the applicant can complete and submit a Stage One Complaint form accessible via request to admin@nelta.co.uk. This form must be submitted no later than 5 working days after either receipt of a response to the formal complaint or the date on which a Complaint form is requested, whichever is the later.

4.2 Once an application has been made unsuccessful, the applicant has 10 days to make their

complaint to NELTA. After this time, the submission of a complaint will not be permitted nor investigated.

4.3 Once the complaint form is received, the NELTA admissions office will examine the evidence that the applicant has submitted and investigate the grievance in line with NELTA's admissions policies. The NELTA admissions office has 10 working days to complete its investigation and provide a response, though a more complex case may take longer in which instance this will be communicated to the complainant.

4.4 Where a mistake or error in process has been identified, NELTA will seek to provide a remedy. If a remedy is not possible, an explanation will be provided in writing to the applicant via admin@nelta.co.uk.

4.5 The following complaints will not be considered and will be rebuked:

- i. Vexatious
- ii. Complaints made without foundation or in bad faith will not be considered. These include but are not limited to:
 - i. complaints which are obsessive, harassing, or repetitive;
 - ii. insistence on pursuing complaints without merit and/or unrealistic, unreasonable outcomes;
 - iii. complaints which are designed to cause disruption or annoyance;
- iii. Reconsideration of an unsuccessful decision
This may include but is not limited the request to review an unsuccessful decision based on competition or failure to demonstrate the meeting entry criteria.

Unless substantive evidence is provided by the applicant that demonstrates there were irregularities in the admissions procedure, these complaints will be revoked. There is no provision for appeal against the academic or professional judgement of the NELTA admissions office and admissions selectors.

5. Formal, Stage Two Complaint

5.1 Applicants can only make a Stage Two complaint via admin@nelta.co.uk once a response has been received from the completion of a Stage One complaint investigation. There will be a window of 5 working days in which an applicant can submit a Stage Two Complaint once the outcome of Stage One has been received. Complaints made after 5 working days of receiving a stage one outcome will not be considered.

5.2 The Stage Two complaint process is triggered by the completion and submission of a Stage Two complaint form. The form is available through and must be submitted via admin@nelta.co.uk. Upon receipt, the NELTA admissions office has 10 working days to consider the evidence submitted by the applicant, review the Stage One complaint process/outcome and consider the complaint in line with its admissions policies. If this is a more complex case, it may take longer in which instance this will be communicated to the complainant.

5.3 The Stage Two Complaint process can be used in the following circumstances:

- i. To express dissatisfaction regarding a significant administrative or procedural error in the processing of the Stage One complaint investigation.
- ii. Where there is substantive new evidence which the applicant was unable to provide as part of the

Stage One complaint, and sufficient evidence remains that the Stage One complaint warrants reconsideration.

5.4 Where a mistake or error in process has been identified, NELTA will seek to provide a remedy. Where a remedy is not possible, an explanation will be provided in writing to the applicant via admin@nelta.co.uk.

5.5 Using the Stage Two process to express unsubstantiated disagreement or dissatisfaction with the outcome of Stage One will not be investigated and will be rebuked.

6. Enrolled trainees

6.1 Once an applicant completes enrolment and attends the first day of the programme, they will be considered as a trainee at NELTA. At this stage, trainees must follow the Trainee Complaints Policy and Procedure.

7. Policy Implementation, Review and Reporting

7.1. Heads of Admissions and Admissions Managers will have responsibility for ensuring that expected response times are met.

7.2. Directors will have overview of response times and outcomes of the complaints process. They will review this information to ensure consistency in the application of the policy and to develop and implement improvements in the admissions process for future cycles.

7.3. Directors will have responsibility for updating this policy and will review this once every three years, unless there are governmental, legal or regulatory changes that will mean a review will be required at an earlier date.