Admission Appeals Procedure

Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Penrith

A parent whose child has not been offered a place at the school has the right of appeal to an appeals panel (appointed by the Governing Body under the provision of the School Standards and Framework Act 1988). The appeals panel must act in accordance with the mandatory provisions of the School Admission Appeals Code issued by the Secretary of State for Education.

Parents/Guardians wishing to exercise their right of appeal should write to the Clerk to the Appeals Panel (c/o the school) to request an appeal form. The appeal form is also available on the school website: www.qegs.cumbria.sch.uk under the admissions section. Appellants should return the completed form and a letter setting out the grounds of their appeal. To help decide whether the admissions authority applied the admissions criteria correctly in the case of their child, appellants should check the school's admissions policy.

Appellants are invited to provide any documents, information or evidence they wish in support of their case by the date set out at the end of this document. Additional information may be submitted any time up to the hearing, with the proviso that late submission of highly relevant material could necessitate adjournment and delay the decision making process.

The admissions authority (ie. the school) has a statutory duty to comply with reasonable requests from parents for information which they need to help them prepare their case for appeal. Appellants are invited to contact the Headteacher in writing for further information if needed.

Notice

Having received the appeal form, the Clerk to the panel will give notice in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing to the appellant, the admissions authority and the appeals panel members. For the main secondary admissions round the dates are set out at the end of this document. For in-year admissions the appeal will be heard within thirty school days of the appeal being lodged. At the same time appellants will be informed of the names of the panel members so that any potential conflict of interest can be avoided.

Appeal Hearings

The appeal panel will have three members, appointed by, but independent of, the school's Governing Body. By law, at least one must have had professional experience of education (but not in any school involved), and at least one must be 'lay', ie. must have had no direct involvement in education. Appellants usually prefer to present the grounds of their appeal personally, and to take the opportunity of questioning the school's representative, but appellants are not obliged to attend the hearing. Appellants may be accompanied by a friend or can be represented. If there are multiple appeals for Year 7 the appeal panel present to all parents if the reason for refusal are the same. If the hearings go to Stage 2 then this will be in private with the appellant and the panel only.

The Proceedings

The Chair of the appeals panel will introduce those present, explain their connection with the appeal, and outline the procedure. (Members of the panel will have copies of all relevant documents, including the grounds for the appeal sent by the appellants to the Clerk). The hearing then proceeds as follows:

- The case for the admissions authority.
- Questioning of the admissions authority by the appellants and by panel members.

  All parties withdraw for the panel to consider whether:
  a. the admission arrangements have been correctly applied
  b. prejudice would arise if the student were admitted.

- The case for the appellants.
- Questioning of the appellants by the admissions authority and panel members.
- Summing-up by the admissions authority.
- Summing-up by the appellants.
- Parties withdraw for panel to consider. The panel's decision will be notified to the appellants in writing within five working days.

Panel members may ask questions at any time if they need clarification or information in order to reach a decision.

Decisions

Decisions are made by the appeals panel after all the hearings have taken place. The appellants will be informed in writing; the Headteacher and the Governing Body will be informed at the same time. The decisions of the appeals panel are binding on all concerned.

In the event of maladministration on the part of an appeal panel, appellants may complain to the Secretary of State in respect of appeal panels for Academies. The School Admission Appeals Code states: "An appeal panel's decision can only be overturned by the courts where the appellant or admission authority is successful in applying for a judicial review of that decision". More information is available from the official government website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/academy-independent-admission-appealpanel-complaints

NOTE: Please address all correspondence to: The Clerk to the Independent Admission Appeals Panel, c/o Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Ullswater Road, Penrith CA11 7EG