

	Approved by: <b>Academic Coordinating Committee</b>
	Authorizer: <b>Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar</b>
	Effective Date <b>September 1 2010</b>
<b>Procedure Title: Admission Decision Dispute Resolution and Appeal Procedure – Post Secondary</b>	

**Procedure Statement:**

Conestoga recognizes that disputes regarding an admission decision may occur between applicants and the Conestoga community. Conestoga has established procedures to deal with student disputes in an effective, timely, fair and impartial manner.

This procedure defines how applicants can appeal an admission decision in the event that the dispute is not resolved informally.

**Scope:**

This procedure applies to all post secondary program applicants, office of the registrar and academic teams<sup>1</sup> of Conestoga.

Applicants may dispute a decision to deny admission.

**Definitions:**

**Non- Direct Applicant** - an applicant not currently enrolled in a high school credit course through day school, night school, summer school, adult education, continuing education or correspondence.

**Secondary School Applicant**- an applicant taking one or more high school level course(s) through day school, night school, summer school, adult education, continuing education or correspondence.

**Academic Strength** – is an average of grades in the required subjects.

**Advanced Standing** – is placement of a student in a program (usually but not always beyond semester one) on the basis of previous documented educational studies. Advanced standing can be accomplished in any of 3 ways: Exemptions, Qualification Recognition, or Prior Learning Assessment.

**Prior Learning Assessment (PLA)**- is a process that involves the recognition and evaluation of informal and non-formal learning acquired through employment, volunteer work, military training, hobbies, reading and other significant life experiences. PLA is used when the life and work experience of the student have resulted in the student knowing the information/skill that the course would teach. It is a systematic process which uses a variety of tools to help learners reflect on, identify, articulate, and

demonstrate past learning acquired through formal and informal study, work or other life experiences. It allows for the evaluation of past learning against established academic standards for conversion or recognition into college credits.

**Academic Team** – includes the heads of schools, program heads, and program co-ordinators and faculty members who are responsible for the academic content.

**Schools** – Conestoga is organized into a number of schools eg. School of Business.

**Responsibilities:**

Applicants will:

- retain and provide, in the event of an appeal, all relevant documentation that has been returned to him/her;
- initiate informal process in accordance with Step 1;
- in the event of a formal appeal, provide required documentation in accordance with Step 2.1 of this procedure.

**Academic Team will:**

- provide the Registrar's Office with the tool and scoring template that will be used to calculate the ranking based on academic strength and the supplementary criteria in advance of the admission cycle;
- score all questionnaires, portfolios, and other forms of evaluation and return evaluated materials where appropriate;
- participate in the inquiry conducted by the Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar in accordance with this procedure;
- discharge their respective responsibilities fairly and according to established time frames.

**Associate Registrar - Admissions will:**

- participate in the inquiry conducted by the Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar in accordance with Step 1 of this procedure;
- discharge his/her respective responsibilities fairly and according to established time frames.

**Office of Registrar will:**

- make Appeal Request Forms available to students;
- discharge his/her respective responsibilities fairly and according to established time frames;
- facilitate orientation for members of the appeal panel;
- ensure that the policy and procedures are published;
- administer pre-hearing matters in accordance with the guidelines;
- act in an advisory role to faculty members, chairs, vice-presidents, executive deans and members of the appeal panel;
- retain appeal documentation as required.

**Procedure**

**1.0 Informal Process – Step 1**

- 1.1 An applicant who is seeking a review of an admission decision is expected to discuss his/her concerns with the Associate Registrar – Admissions within 5 (five) working days of the date of the decision.
- 1.2 The applicant shall provide a well documented statement of the issues and the outcome he/she desires. Associate Registrar – Admissions shall respond to the student within five (5) working days of receipt of the concern unless an extension has been mutually agreed to by both parties.

## 2.0 Formal Appeal – Step 2

- 2.1 An applicant who is not satisfied with the outcome reached in Step 1, or a response was not provided may request a formal appeal by submitting an Appeal Request Form RO #421.

The criteria for a formal appeal are that the timelines for a response were not adhered to and/or new and significant evidence/information which was not considered or available during the informal process.

The applicant's submission of a request for a formal appeal must include a letter setting out the reason(s) why he/she disagrees with the decision by the Associate Registrar – Admissions in Step 1 of the process. All documentation provided and received by the applicant must be submitted with the appeal request to the registrar. No additional documentation will be accepted during the formal process.

- 2.2 The Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar review the request, and WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS of receipt of the applicant's request, inform the applicant in writing whether or not Conestoga intends to proceed with an appeal hearing. If the request is denied, written reasons are to be given.
- 2.3 The Registrar will convene an appeal hearing WITHIN 15 WORKING DAYS of notifying the applicant of the intent to proceed. The appeal will be heard by a panel and composed of three persons chosen by the registrar as follows:
  - faculty member of the program (not previously involved in the matter)
  - a faculty member (neither from the program or school) or counsellor;
  - academic administrator
    - The hearing will be chaired by the Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar
- 2.4 Submissions for the appeal hearing will be provided by the Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar to all parties at least ONE WORKING DAY prior to the meeting. If the applicant desires an external adviser to attend the appeal hearing, the Executive Director, Enrolment Services and Registrar must be notified at least THREE WORKING DAYS prior to the meeting. The external adviser will not have formal status nor be allowed to make any presentation. The applicant's attendance at the hearing in person is not required. However, he/she may make an oral presentation in addition to his/her written submission.

2.5 At the appeal hearing both the applicant and a representative of the program may present oral arguments in support of their respective positions. After the presentation of arguments the panel will meet *in camera* to consider the facts and to render a decision. The decision will include a written explanation of the reasons for the decision and will be given to the applicant, vice-president, executive dean, chair and Associate Registrar – Admissions.

The decision of the panel is final and binding.

Should the panel find in favour of the applicant, and the pertinent program no longer has seats available, alternatives will be investigated. Under no circumstances will the findings of the panel disadvantage a student already admitted to Conestoga.

2.6 Within FIVE WORKING DAYS of the hearing, the Chair will communicate the decision in writing to the applicant, vice-president, executive dean, and/or chair of the program and the Associate Registrar – Admissions.

2.7 All documents used by the panel will be delivered to the Office of the Registrar.

2.8 The panel may also make recommendations regarding changes to the policies and procedures of Conestoga/school/program.

### 3.0 Protection from Reprisals

Conestoga prohibits reprisals or threats of reprisal against applicants or Conestoga personnel who have raised matters of concern under this procedure. Individuals who violate these provisions shall be subject to discipline or other corrective action.

#### References:

Admission Policy  
 Recognition for Prior Learning Policy  
 Appeal Request Form RO #421

#### Revision Log:

Revision Date	Summary of Changes
12/7/2009	Academic Forum - Revised
4/1/2010	Policies and Procedures Committee
4/14/2010	Academic Coordinating Committee

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<sup>i</sup> Academic Team includes heads of schools, program chairs, program coordinators and faculty members who are responsible for the developing admission criteria.