

SUBJECT	IMPLEMENTATION OF A FEE FOR AN ADMISSION DECISION APPEAL
MEETING DATE	JUNE 14, 2017

Forwarded to the Board of Governors on the Recommendation of the President

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION



 Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor

For Information

Report Date	May 19, 2017
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Presented By Dr. Angela Redish, Provost and Vice-President Academic *pro tem*
 Dr. Deborah Buszard, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Principal
 Dr. Cynthia Mathieson, Provost and Vice-Principal Academic
 Dr. Pamela Ratner, Vice-Provost and AVP Enrolment & Academic Facilities

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A new Schedule C, Administration Fee, effective June 1 of the 2017/18 academic year for applicants who appeal their admission decision for the Winter and Summer Sessions, was approved by the President in May 2017.

This new fee will apply to applicants to both the UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan campuses. The proposal for the implementation of this fee has been reviewed by the Vancouver Senate Admissions Committee, the Okanagan Senate Admissions and Awards Committee, and the VP Students Office, and received their assent.

INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES SUPPORTED

- Learning
 Research
 Innovation
 Engagement
 International
 (Internal / External)
- or Operational

DESCRIPTION & RATIONALE Please refer to the attached memorandum approved by the President
 Attachment: Memo to the President – Admission Decision Appeal Fee

SCHEDULE Effective June 2017.
 Implementation
 Timeline

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Santa J. Ono, President and Vice-Chancellor

FROM: Dr. Angela Redish, Provost and Vice-President, Academic *pro tem*

CC: Dr. Cynthia Mathieson, Provost and Vice-Principal, Academic

DATE: April 24, 2017

RE: **Implementation of a Fee for an Admission Decision Appeal**

Your approval is requested for a new Schedule C, Administration Fee, commencing June 1 of the 2017/18 academic year for applicants who appeal their admission decision for the Winter and Summer Sessions, and applicable thereafter. This fee will apply to applicants to both the UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan campuses. The proposal for the implementation of this fee has been reviewed by the Vancouver Senate Admissions Committee, the Okanagan Senate Admissions and Awards Committee, and the VP Students Office, and received their assent. This fee, if approved by you, will be presented to the Board of Governors at the June 15, 2017 meeting for their information.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OF A FEE TO APPEAL AN ADMISSION DECISION

The Undergraduate Admissions Office and the Senate Admissions Committees (Vancouver and Okanagan) receive a great number of appeals from students who are dissatisfied with their initial admission decision or who have had their offer of admission revoked for failing to meet the stated conditions of their original offer of admission. For the 2016/17 Winter Session, of the 166 appeals that were adjudicated by the Vancouver Senate Admission Committee and Okanagan Senate Admissions and Awards Committee, only 17 (10%) were successful and the offer of admission reinstated.

Applicants may submit an appeal with one or both of the following grounds for appeal: (1) a perceived administrative error in processing or (2) mitigating circumstances relevant to the admission decision. The most common reasons for an unsuccessful appeal are:

- No grounds for appeal outlined in the appeal materials,

- Failure to provide a rationale in support of a ground(s) for appeal, and
- Lack of relevant supporting documentation or evidence.

Although some appellants believe that an error in process has occurred, which warrants review through the appeal process, or that their mitigating circumstance are sufficiently compelling that there is a reasonable likelihood of their appeal being successful, there seems to be a perception among some appellants that there is nothing to lose in “giving it a try,” even when there are no legitimate grounds for appeal.

The refundable nature of the proposed appeals fee is intended to encouraging appeals from those who believe there are substantial reasons for an appeal to be accepted, while minimizing the number of appeals that are presented with little or no valid grounds. The fee also serves to partially recoup the administrative costs associated with the processing and consideration of all appeals. Because a high proportion of the appeals received result from the revocation of an offer of admission, most must be managed within very short turn-around times and very near the commencement of classes. A substantial amount of work is required by the relevant Faculties, the Undergraduate Admissions Office, the Senate Secretariat, and the Senate Committees to consider the appeals, including the handling of supporting documentation, de-registration of students in a manner that preserves their timetables, review and adjudication of appeals, and communication of decisions to appellants and the Faculty. In many cases, because their timetables are preserved in case their appeals are successful, students with no clear grounds for appeal take up space in courses that are in high demand; and then, the seats are released at the last minute (once the appeals are deemed unsuccessful). And, appellants are unintentionally encouraged to hold on to the hope of attending UBC when their most prudent action would be to look for other educational opportunities.

The proposal aims to encourage potential appellants to make informed and realistic decisions regarding appealing UBC admissions decisions by introducing the following actions:

1. To implement a non-refundable fee for submission of an appeal of an admission decision. If the appeal is successful, the fee will be applied to the appellant’s tuition.
2. Information will be posted online to help students make good decisions about whether to submit an appeal. This will include historical success rates of appeals and the most common reasons why appeals fail.

Although the implementation of a fee raises the stakes for the submission of an appeal, applicants will be given relevant information with which to make informed decisions about whether to pursue the appeal process.

COST OF FEE:

The proposed fee for 2017/18 will be \$66.75 (the same as the domestic application fee). The same fee will be charged to both domestic and international applicants. The fee will increase, each year, at the same rate as the application fee increases (typically by 2% each year).

RATIONALE:

The value of the appeal fee is tied to the application fee. Applicants pay for an admission decision. In principle, if applicants do not agree with the admission decision, they have the option to pay for a “second opinion.”

The appeal fee is non-refundable, but if the appeal is successful, it will be applied to the student's tuition. The appeal fee is non-refundable and non-applicable to future enrolment if the appeal is unsuccessful. This is a similar philosophy and practice to how UBC students may request a re-assessment of an examination or course grade via the *Review of Assigned Standing* process. The intent of implementing a fee is to encourage appellants to be deliberate and thoughtful when initiating the appeal process and to think critically about the grounds for appeal and the appropriate supporting documentation.

PROPOSED SYSTEMS SOLUTION:

- E-Payment System will be used to collect the appeal fee.
- Students will access a web form that is fillable online.
- Students will provide their first name, last name, and student number.
- Students will be asked to indicate the program choice admission decision that they are appealing.
- Students will be prompted to pay the appeal fee.
- Students will receive a confirmation email with instructions on how to submit an appeal package.
- When the Admissions Office receives an appeal package, the Advisors can log onto the E-Payment database to confirm that the student has paid the fee and therefore initiated the appeal process.
- The Admissions Office will inform Student Financial Services when appeals are successful.
- Student Financial Services staff will be responsible for applying the appeal fee to the student's tuition account, if the appeal is successful.