

SPSO decision report

Case: 201305880, University of St Andrews
Sector: further and higher education
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C, who was a student, asked for a training placement near her home. She explained that she needed this on the grounds of mitigating circumstances, as she had to care for a family member. The university declined her request and placed her in another location. Ms C complained to us that the university unreasonably failed to adhere to their mitigating circumstances criteria in dealing with her request.

We looked at information from Ms C and the university. The university information included their policy for allocating student placements and taking into account mitigating circumstances. It was not, however, for us to say whether Ms C's mitigating circumstances were valid, which was a decision for the university. Our role was to look at whether they dealt with Ms C's mitigating circumstances claim in line with their policy and procedures.

The university explained how the relevant committee considered Ms C's claim, and the evidence showed they did so with empathy. The university also explained why the committee decided that the circumstances Ms C detailed, and the supporting evidence she provided to them, did not meet their mitigating circumstances criteria. We found that they had considered the placement request and Miss C's mitigating circumstances claim in line with their allocation policy.