

Dealing with enquiries Saying no

Without looking at the list below, listen to your teacher and raise the “Yes” card, “No” card or neither.

Label the sections below with Y, N and ? (for not sure/ not yet decided)

Not allowed/ Not permitted/ Not as far as I am aware.

That information is out of date

That is the case in many universities/ abroad, but...

Just a moment/ minute/ second.

Let me have a look./ Let me see./ Let me think.

People don't usually.../ We don't normally.../ The normal process is...

That decision needs to be made by.../ Only... has the authority to.../ The person in charge... / You need to send/ make your request to...

Here you are.

I can't see why not./ I don't think that would be a problem.

I guess/ I suppose so

I think I can see a way out of this

I'm not sure we can do that

I'm sorry to say/ to tell you that...

I'm sorry, but that point is not negotiable

Of course

That won't be a problem

That would be/ sounds/ seems acceptable./ That seems okay to me./ That's fine

It depends (on...)

It's quite complicated.

I'll ask my colleague to come over to speak to you

I'll get back to you on that/ I'll think about it

I'm expecting to hear something about that soon./ The policy will be updated soon./ We are expecting a decision soon.

There's no rule against it (as such).

Under these (exceptional) circumstances,.../ Usually it is not possible.../ We don't usually allow this, but.../ In this (particular) case,...

You can tell him/ her that I said...

You have my permission./ I can give you my permission to...

You'll be happy/ delighted to hear that...

Actually,.../ In fact,...

As you can see written here,/ If you look at this page you will see that in fact...

As you may be aware,.../ As you probably already know,.../ I'm sure I don't need to remind you that...

As you suspected,...

(Please) help yourself./ Go ahead./ Please do.
By a stroke of luck,.../ Luckily,.../ You're in luck.
Certainly.
Fortunately,...

Because of the deadline,...

I am asked this quite often and the answer is always...
I can see/ understand why you might/ would think that (but...)
I can't see any way out of this

I don't know what to suggest.
I don't have the authority to be able to...
I regret to tell you that...
I wish I could help you (really I do, but...)/ I'd like to be able to help you (but...)
Instead of that,.../ Rather than that,...

It's against university policy./ There's a rule against that.
It's not... enough/ It's too...
It's only available to.../ It's limited to...

I don't have that information to hand, (but...)
I really couldn't say (one way or the other)
I'll do my best/ I'll do what I can/ I'll see what I can do
If you give me your phone number/ email address, I'll ask the person in charge to contact you with a decision.

I think I could manage that.
I'll do it straightaway/ immediately.
I'm delighted to (be able to) tell/ inform you that.../ I'm happy to be able to tell you that...
No problem.

That used to be possible/ allowed/ permitted/ university policy (but...)
That's not really possible.
That's not quite true.
That's the best I can do.

The university is unable to/ not allowed to...
The university's code of conduct (clearly) states that.../ According to the university's code of conduct,...

This is a result of/ due to (the fact that)/ because of/ owing to
Unfortunately (it isn't possible to...)

University staff don't have permission to...
We always reject/ turn down such requests.
We can give you/ offer...
You need... 's permission to...
You should have.../ You were supposed to...

Responses

Maybe if I put my question/ request another way,...

Never mind.

No worries.

Oh well.

That doesn't make sense.

That's a pity/ a shame.

That's also what... told me.

Great.

I appreciate it.

That's a nice/ pleasant surprise.

That's a relief.

That's rather disappointing

That's strange.

What do you suggest I do?

You surprise me.

That's just/ exactly what I wanted to hear.

That's very helpful.

You're a lifesaver/ a star.

You've been a great help.

But (last time/ week/ year/ term).../ But I was told.../ (But) I understood that...

Can you check again?

Couldn't you manage... (instead)?

Do you know anyone else who can help?

Thanks for all your efforts.

You're kidding!

Thanks for your time.

How about if I was to ask you...?

I guess there's nothing I can do.

I had a feeling you were going to say that.

I see.

I was hoping for something considerably better

I'll try again later.

In my country,...

It was worth a try.

Thanks anyway

Thanks for trying.

That wasn't really what I was hoping to hear.



After enquirer's reaction

If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Glad to be of help.

That is what I am here for.

(It was) no problem.

You're (very) welcome.

Sorry I couldn't be more help.

We hope that this has not caused you (any/ too much) inconvenience.

Thanks for your understanding.

Hope that's okay.

Does that answer your question?

Is that what you wanted to know?

Thank you for your interest in...

Make it more polite

- Aye/ Yer/ Yup
- Here you go./ Grab this.
- I am asked this all the time and the answer is always the same
- I can't help you.
- I don't think there's anything more to say/ I don't have anything else to add to my previous answer. / I seem to be repeating myself/ I think I've already answered that question./ That is (absolutely) my last word on this matter./ The conversation seems to be going round in circles./ You've already asked me that.
- It's your own fault.
- Just a sec/ Just a mo'.
- Just this once
- My hands are tied
- Nay./ Nope.
- No chance/ Not a hope in hell/ You'd be lucky
- No comment.
- Sure. Why not?
- That is not acceptable.
- That might be okay in your country, but...
- That's not true./ That's wrong.
- We can't do that./ It's absolutely impossible.
- You should have...
- You're asking the wrong person./ It's not my job./ It's not my responsibility./ It's not my problem.

Work together to think of reasons for saying no to these things:

- Asking for contact details/ documents
- Asking to speak to someone else
- Asking to change something



Brainstorm a list of other things you often have to say no to and do the same.

What could you use these excuses to explain? Choose one, think of a thing it could be used as a reason for, and then roleplay that conversation.

- Lack of authority
- Length of time needed
- Deadline
- Staff shortages
- Not available
- Limitations
- Small print
- University rules/ regulations/ policies
- (National) laws
- (Local) bylaws
- (Government/ University) guidance
- Not allowed/ Not permitted
- Out of date
- Not negotiable
- Updated soon
- Announced soon
- In the prospectus
- On the website
- Technology
- Immigration/ Visas
- Documents/ Paperwork
- Deadlines
- Privacy (policy)
- A recent scandal
- The time of year
- The time of day
- Delays
- Constitution
- Mission statement
- Equal opportunities
- (Recent) changes
- Building work/ Maintenance work
- Code of conduct
- Cultural norms/ Cultural differences



Cards to hold up

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No