

B2-C1 Administrative Law Worksheet

Topic: Licensing decisions and procedural fairness (non-political, human-interest)

Article

When a Street-Food Licence Becomes a Legal Lesson

On Friday evenings, Lila Patel used to count her takings twice: once for the till, and once for the paperwork. Her small street-food stall sits on a riverside promenade that the council hoped would feel family-friendly, yet the area has recently come under scrutiny after late-night noise complaints. Last month the licensing team announced it would clamp down on breaches of permit conditions, and Lila suddenly found her routine held up by requests for extra records.

The issue is not criminal law, but administrative law in action: the council must carry out its duties under statutory guidance, using discretionary powers in a way that is proportionate and procedurally fair. Lila was invited to a short hearing before the licensing committee, where officers had drawn up a summary of evidence and suggested tighter closing times. She took on board the concerns, but asked how the authority would stick to consistency when neighbouring stalls were treated differently.

In the end, the committee chose not to revoke the permit, but to push through a written warning and a new set of conditions, including a clearer plan for waste and queues. Lila did not back down on her right of appeal, yet she and the officers agreed they needed to be on the same page about what counts as compliance. For her, the takeaway was simple: keep notes, ask for reasons, and rule out assumptions that red tape is just a nuisance when it can decide whether a business survives.

True / False

1. Lila's stall attracted attention because some residents complained about late-night noise.
2. The council said it would take stronger action against people who break permit conditions.
3. Lila was summoned to a criminal court for an offence linked to her business.
4. The committee immediately cancelled her permit with no chance to respond.
5. Officials proposed earlier closing times after reviewing information they said supported the complaints.
6. Lila argued that the council had no legal duty to follow statutory guidance.
7. The committee issued a warning and updated conditions instead of ending her permission to trade.
8. Lila decided to keep records and ask for reasons rather than guessing what the rules meant.

Phrase Match

Match each phrase (1-10) with the correct definition (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. come under scrutiny	A. be delayed
2. clamp down on	B. accept and consider feedback
3. held up	C. make something happen despite obstacles
4. carry out	D. take strong action to stop something
5. drawn up	E. share the same understanding or agreement
6. took on board	F. perform a task or duty
7. stick to	G. withdraw from a position after pressure
8. push through	H. continue to follow or adhere to something
9. back down	I. be examined closely
10. be on the same page	J. prepare a document formally

Synonym Match

Match each word (1-10) with the closest synonym (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. discretionary	A. proof
2. proportionate	B. suppositions
3. procedurally	C. nearby
4. statutory	D. by the proper process
5. evidence	E. annoyance
6. consistency	F. optional
7. neighbouring	G. adherence
8. compliance	H. set by law
9. assumptions	I. uniformity
10. nuisance	J. balanced

Discussion Questions

Student A (personal experience)

1. Have you ever had to deal with a rule that felt like red tape? What happened?
2. Would you keep receipts or notes if your hobby or side job could come under scrutiny?
3. How do you usually take on board feedback: quickly, or after thinking it over?
4. Describe a time something was held up by paperwork or waiting for approval.
5. Do you prefer clear rules, or do you like discretionary choices (for example, at work or in a gym)?
6. If you ran a stall or small business, what conditions would you find reasonable?
7. Have you ever had to stick to a plan even when friends wanted to change it?
8. What helps you feel you are on the same page with someone in a disagreement?

Student B (deeper discussion)

1. Should councils have wide discretionary powers, or should decisions be tightly limited by statutory guidance? Why?
2. In licensing, what does proportionality look like in practice: warning, fine, suspension, or revocation?
3. How can an authority show procedural fairness in short hearings where people feel rushed?
4. Is consistency always fair, or can treating cases differently be justified? Give an example.
5. How strong should the right of appeal be for small businesses that cannot afford legal help?
6. When should officials clamp down on minor breaches, and when should they focus on education and support?
7. Do written reasons improve compliance, or do they mainly protect the authority from challenge (for example, judicial review)?
8. If a decision is pushed through quickly, what safeguards should exist to prevent arbitrary outcomes?

Answer Key

True / False: 1=T, 2=T, 3=F, 4=F, 5=T, 6=F, 7=T, 8=T

Phrase Match: 1=I, 2=D, 3=A, 4=F, 5=J, 6=B, 7=H, 8=C, 9=G, 10=E

Synonym Match: 1=F, 2=J, 3=D, 4=H, 5=A, 6=I, 7=C, 8=G, 9=B, 10=E