

Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy: Taught Courses

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the principles and commitments that guide the recruitment, selection, and admission of students to taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses at the University. It ensures that admissions decisions are fair, transparent, and aligned with the University's mission and values.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including apprenticeships and pre-entry courses. It is applicable to all applicants, regardless of their mode of study, level, or domicile.

3. Responsibilities, monitoring and review

- 3.1. The Academic Board has overall responsibility for oversight and approval of this policy.
- 3.2. The Admissions & Enrolment Manager is responsible for operational oversight, training, and implementation.
- 3.3. The Admissions Team and Course Leaders are responsible for assessing applications and making decisions based on academic and non-academic criteria.
- 3.4. The policy is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it complies fully with any changes in legislation and continues to support the vision and values of the University.

4. Admissions Principles

- 4.1. The University is committed to providing a fair, transparent, and inclusive admissions process which serves the best interests of our applicants and assists the University in meeting its strategic aims.
- 4.2. The University's admissions principles align to the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for Higher Education (2018) Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access advice and guidance and are guided by the admissions policies good practice resources made available by UCAS .
- 4.3. The University aims to recruit students:
 - a) From a wide range of backgrounds who demonstrate the potential and motivation to succeed on our courses.
 - b) Who will benefit from studying on a course of study at the University and will enhance the existing community.
 - c) Who will contribute to the skills of the working age population to support the economic growth.
- 4.4. The University is committed to ensuring that enrolled students can successfully complete their course of study. Therefore, a place will only be offered where, during the assessment and selection stage, it is determined that the applicant possesses the potential to achieve these outcomes.
- 4.5. All admissions decisions are based on merit and potential and comply with the Equality Act 2010.

- 4.6. Contextual admissions are supported to ensure equitable opportunity.
- 4.7. The University is committed to providing clear, comprehensive, and accurate information on our courses and entry requirements as outlined in guidance issued by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) for higher education providers. Detailed information is published on our website and provided at offer stage to enable applicants to make informed choices and decisions.
- 4.8. Where courses are offered in partnership with another institution, in accordance with the Policy for the Consideration and Approval of Educational Partnerships this policy will apply unless otherwise specified in the contract governing the partnership activity.

5. Applying for a course

- 5.1. Dependent on the chosen course applications may be made through Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), the University's online application portal or via third party agents. Information about how to apply is published on the relevant course page on the University website.
- 5.2. Applications for apprenticeship courses will only be considered if they have been mutually agreed by the applicant and employer.
- 5.3. For courses requiring application via UCAS the University will observe the procedures and deadlines outlined by UCAS. More information can be found at www.ucas.com.
- 5.4. Application deadlines vary depending on the course and the start date. Applicants are advised to check the website for guidance on application deadlines and to apply as early as possible.
- 5.5. The University may close courses in high demand to new applications during the admissions cycle once all places have been allocated. For undergraduate courses any closure to new applications will always be after the main UCAS scheme deadline at the end of January for entry in the following academic year.
- 5.6. Late applications may be considered at the discretion of Course Leaders. Any decision to permit a late application will be dependent on course availability and potential impact on the course of study.

6. Assessment and Selection

- 6.1. The admissions and selection process will assess applications fairly and consistently. Applicants will be judged on their individual merits including their ability to meet published entry requirements for their chosen course, and to demonstrate relevant experience, aptitude and motivation.
- 6.2. Academic and additional entry requirements differ between courses and are published on the relevant course page on the University website.
- 6.3. The University welcomes applicants with UK or international qualifications equivalent to our published entry requirements. In making offers, the University will make use of the UCAS tariff system (see ucas.com/ucas/tariff-calculator) and other available resources, such as Education Counselling and Credit Transfer Information Service (ECCTIS).
- 6.4. Apprenticeship courses are subject to the entry requirements for the course and additional apprenticeship eligibility criteria, details of which are published on the relevant course page of the website.

- 6.5. Where the University has entered into a partnership, progression or agency agreement, specific requirements may apply which may differ from requirements published on our website. Students seeking to apply via these routes will be advised of the specific requirements.
- 6.6. The University will seek to verify any qualifications that are submitted as part of an application and an applicant may be contacted to request more information to enable this.
- 6.7. All applicants are required to demonstrate a sufficient level of written and spoken English to be able to participate fully in their chosen course. English Language requirements for individual courses are published on the University website.
- 6.8. Applicants may also be considered against their ability to meet Fitness to Practice criteria and any professional standards related to their chosen course and professional route.
- 6.9. For some courses applicants are required to attend an interview as part of the assessment and selection process. The format of the interview varies depending on the chosen course. If an interview is required further information will be provided to the applicant in advance of the interview date.
- 6.10. For applicants where a disability or Additional Learning Support need is declared, the University will put reasonable adjustments in place as required to support the applicant's participation in the interview.
- 6.11. Where a prospective student does not meet the minimum academic qualification requirements, the Course Leader may consider relevant work experience, prior studies, the applicant's motivation and other contextual information to determine whether they are likely to be able successfully to complete the course. Where a determination is made that an individual is likely to be able successfully to complete the course, an offer may be considered.

7. Decision making and offers

- 7.1. Subject to receiving all required information and the full participation of the applicant, the University aims to undertake the assessment and selection process in a timely manner and to keep applicants informed about the progress of their application.
- 7.2. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by email or via UCAS.
- 7.3. All offers will be outlined in a formal offer communication from the University sent via email to the applicant with a copy of the University's Student Terms & Conditions and other important information related to the offer or the chosen course of study.
- 7.4. Contextual offers may be made to eligible applicants based on additional indicators as outlined in section 9 of this policy.
- 7.5. Where an application for a preferred course is unsuccessful, the University may offer applicants the opportunity to be considered for another course at the University.
- 7.6. Applicants who are unsuccessful may apply again for a subsequent year of entry. The University reserves the right to refer to any previous applications or registrations/enrolments when assessing the suitability to a course of study. Applicants who have been unsuccessful on academic grounds or after further assessment (e.g., interview) may not normally reapply for entry to the same course of study in the same application cycle.
- 7.7. The University reserves the right to withdraw offers for applications which are later found to contain misleading or fraudulent information, or where information has been plagiarised or deliberately omitted.

8. Offer conditions

- 8.1. Any conditions related to the offer will be clearly outlined in the offer letter.
- 8.2. All applicants will be expected to provide recent evidence of their ability to meet the minimum English Language requirements for their course. If an applicant does not meet this requirement at the point of application, this will form a condition of their offer.
- 8.3. Offers may be subject to an Occupational Health Clearance (OHC) with the University's approved OHC provider prior to the start of the course. If an OHC is required this will be stated in the offer letter. Further information about Occupational Health requirements is published on the University website at <https://www.hsu.ac.uk/study/apply/how-to-apply/occupational-health-requirements/>.
- 8.4. Offers may be subject to a satisfactory recent Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check. If a DBS Check is required this will be stated in the offer letter. More information is provided in section 14 of this policy.
- 8.5. International students are subject to additional conditions including payment of a deposit and provision of evidence of their right to study in the UK and/or eligibility to apply for a Student visa. Deposit information will be provided in the offer letter. Further information for applicants who require a Student visa is provided in section 15 of this policy.
- 8.6. If an applicant meets all the conditions of their offer their place on their chosen course will be confirmed.
- 8.7. When an applicant holds an offer for a course but does not achieve the required academic results stated as a condition, their application will be reviewed. If there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate the applicant has the potential to be successful on the course; is able to meet other eligibility requirements and the course is not full, the university may revise the terms of the offer.

9. Contextual applications

- 9.1. The University is committed to ensuring that it offers a route to high-quality education for students from a range of backgrounds. The University uses the following contextual data indicators when considering undergraduate applications:
 - a) POLAR 4 Quintiles 1 and 2
 - b) Index of Multiple Deprivation Quintiles 1 and 2
 - c) Care Leaver
 - d) Declared disability or long-term health condition
 - e) Free School Meals
- 9.2. All applicants meeting the standard entry requirements with one or more of these indicators will be offered an interview, where interviews are a part of the selection process.
- 9.3. Where an applicant has one or more of these indicators, and they meet the standard entry requirements, we:
 - a) may make an offer two grades below the standard entry criteria;
 - b) may make an unconditional offer based on an interview or academic profile, or make an alternative offer, for example a Foundation Year; make an offer even if the standard entry criteria have not been met, by taking account of work or life experience and other aspects of the application;

- c) will consider grades achieved against the offer and if the entry conditions have not been met, reassess the applicant's circumstances to see if they can be accepted with the grades achieved or make an alternative offer.

10. Recognition of Prior Learning

- 10.1. The University is committed to the principle that appropriate learning, wherever it occurs, and provided it can be assessed, may be recognised for academic credit towards a University award. All genuine learning, however acquired, is deserving of credit towards an award provided that:
 - a) it can be clearly identified and described;
 - b) its relevance and currency can be evidenced and assessed in relation to approved intended learning outcomes (ILOs);
 - c) it is at the same level and is appropriate to the subject of the exemptions sought.
- 10.2. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a method of assessment (leading to the award of credit) that considers whether a learner can demonstrate that they can meet the assessment requirements for a unit through the knowledge, understanding or skills that they already possess and so do not need to develop these through a course of learning. This can take one of two forms:
 - a) Recognition of prior certificated learning (RPCL) is the process for assessing and awarding credit for learning that has been previously accredited or certificated through a training provider but has not led to an award which is defined in the UK's Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code Advice and Guidance on Assessment, and which has outcomes which can be mapped against the outcomes of the receiving programme;
 - b) Recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) is the process for assessing and awarding credit for learning that has been achieved through experience and/or training that has not been certificated or formally assessed. It is the identification and demonstration of this learning within an academic framework that leads to credit. Evidence of learning must be valid and reliable.
- 10.3. In order to ensure the integrity of the University's courses, varied limits are set on the total amount of RPL which can be recognised for academic credit towards a University award.
- 10.4. RPL applications will normally only be considered once an applicant has accepted an offer to study on their chosen course and before the course start date.
- 10.5. RPL applications should be submitted to the University's Admissions team and will be processed in accordance with the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Procedure.
- 10.6. Course Leaders have the primary responsibility for considering RPL and credit transfer claims and deciding on their validity.

11. Replying to an offer

- 11.1. Undergraduate applicants applying via UCAS must adhere to UCAS processes and deadlines when responding to an offer. Offers not replied to by UCAS decision deadlines may be rejected by default.
- 11.2. Applicants applying directly to the university must accept or decline their offer as per the instructions outlined in their offer letter.

12. Deferring an offer

- 12.1. The University welcomes deferred applications for the majority of courses and will consider requests from applicants to defer their application or offer of a place for up to one year.
- 12.2. In some cases a deferral will not be possible and a place on a future intake for the same course is not guaranteed.
- 12.3. Applicants holding a deferred place for an undergraduate course must meet all academic conditions of their offer during the current application cycle.
- 12.4. If an applicant defers an application or an offer and then wishes to bring their entry forward to the current academic cycle this will be considered and a decision made based on current availability.

13. Applicants with disabilities and Additional Learning Support Needs

- 13.1. The University welcomes applications from candidates with disabilities and Additional Learning Support needs. These applications will be considered against the same criteria as other applicants as outlined in section 6 of this policy.
- 13.2. Applicants with disabilities and Additional Learning Support needs are encouraged to share these as early as possible during the application process to facilitate support and reasonable adjustments.
- 13.3. If an offer is made, the Student Services team will contact an applicant to discuss support needs and plan for any reasonable adjustments the applicant is likely to require.
- 13.4. In the unlikely event that, despite reasonable adjustments, it is decided the applicant will not be able fully engage in their chosen course as a result of a disability, the University will endeavor to support the applicant with exploring alternative options at the University or another provider.

14. Applicants with criminal convictions

- 14.1. The University is committed to the fair treatment of applicants and students regardless of background. The relevance of a criminal record will be considered independently of the academic selection process.
- 14.2. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual studying at the University. However, the University must fulfil its responsibilities and obligations for the safety of the University communities and the safeguarding of children, young people and adults with whom students are in contact as part of their studies and work.
- 14.3. Several courses offered at the University may involve 'regulated activity' such as clinical placements involving children or vulnerable adults, and will lead to professions or occupations exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- 14.4. The University has a legal requirement to ensure any students participating in regulated activity have undertaken and satisfied an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and applicants to relevant courses will be asked to complete this as part of the application process.
- 14.5. All offers for courses involving regulated activity will be conditional on completion of a satisfactory Enhanced DBS Check. The University reserves the right to rescind offers where an applicant does not engage in this process, or in the event that the results of the check mean the applicant can no longer be considered for the course of study.

- 14.6. Non-UK domiciled applicants and applicants who have lived outside of the UK for a period of 6 months or more in the last five years are also required to provide a Police Check or equivalent for the country of residence.
- 14.7. All applicants subject to an Enhanced DBS check will be contacted prior to enrolment with further details and instructions. Enhanced DBS checks are performed by the University's approved third-party supplier.
- 14.8. In the event that an Enhanced DBS check returns no unspent convictions an application will be progressed in the normal way.
- 14.9. DBS Checks which identify unspent convictions will be considered via the University's Criminal Convictions Procedure to determine whether an application can be progressed.
- 14.10. Enhanced DBS Checks should be completed in the three months prior to enrolment. In limited circumstances, such as those where a late course application has been approved, students may be permitted to commence a course while their Enhanced DBS Check is in progress. During this period their offer will remain conditional on successful completion of the check, and they will not be permitted to undertake regulated activity of any kind.

15. International applicants requiring a Student visa to study in the UK

- 15.1. The University holds a Student Sponsor License and can offer immigration sponsorship to applicants who require a Student visa to study in the United Kingdom.
- 15.2. An offer from the University does not guarantee the issue of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement. Issuance will be dependent on the availability of CAS at the point at which the applicant has accepted the offer, met all offer conditions and made payment of their deposit.
- 15.3. Applicants will also need to meet UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) requirements to be able to make a valid visa application before a CAS is issued. Applicants will be asked to supply documents such as copies of passports, qualifications, visas and financial documents that relate to these requirements as part of the admissions process.
- 15.4. The University is not legally obliged to issue a CAS statement. It will always exercise caution when doing so, and may request additional checks to ensure adherence to its obligations as a licensed sponsor.
- 15.5. CAS will be issued no earlier than three months before the scheduled start of the course of study.
- 15.6. Where an applicant is not able to demonstrate that they meet all of the requirements of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for a successful visa application, the University reserves the right to refuse admission.
- 15.7. The University does not sponsor students under the Student Route for any of its part-time postgraduate courses.
- 15.8. The issue of a CAS by the University does not necessarily mean that an applicant or student's application for a Student visa will be successful. The University shall not be liable if any Student visa applications are refused by UKVI.

16. Applicants aged Under 18 at the start of the course

- 16.1. The University is committed to equal opportunities and all applications are considered on their individual merits. Occasionally the University admits students who will be under the age of 18 years old on the start date of their course.
- 16.2. The University has a duty of care towards all its students and staff. In the case of students joining the University before their 18th birthday, the University considers that this duty requires additional measures to be put in place as set out in the University's Safeguarding Policy and Admission and Support for Students Under the Age of 18 Policy.
- 16.3. If an applicant will be under the age of 18 at the point of starting their studies, the University will contact the applicant at offer stage to provide a copy of these policies and seek consent and contact details from their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 16.4. No applicant under the age of 18 will be admitted by the University unless consent and contact details have been obtained from their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- 16.5. The University will not issue a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) statement to support a Student visa application for an applicant aged under 18 until the University has received consent and contact details from the parent(s)/guardian(s). International applicants aged under 18 who require a Student Visa will also be required to provide evidence of parent/guardian consent to UKVI as part of their visa application.
- 16.6. More information about the University's approach to supporting students under the age of 18 can be found in the University's Safeguarding Policy and Admission and Support for Students Under the Age of 18 Policy.

17. Re-admission to the University

- 17.1. All applications for re-admission following non-completion of previous study at the University should follow the standard admissions process for the course and level of study being applied to.
- 17.2. Applicants applying for a course leading to an award by the University should provide details of the previous study in their application for re-admission and demonstrate why they feel they will be more successful if re-admitted.
- 17.3. Applicants who have previously withdrawn themselves voluntarily are able to apply for re-admission at the next available opportunity.
- 17.4. Applicants who have previously studied at the University and have withdrawn due to circumstances such as illness or other non-academic/fitness to practise reason are able to apply for re-admission and have their applications considered.
- 17.5. Applicants whose previous study was terminated and/or withdrawn on academic or disciplinary grounds will not usually be considered for re-admission for a minimum of one academic year after the date of withdrawal.

17.6. Students who have been required to withdraw from one of the University's courses due to outstanding debts will not be considered for re-admission to any course at the University until all outstanding debts have been paid in full.

17.7. The University reserves the right to refer to any previous applications and the circumstances of the previous withdrawal when considering an application for re-admission.

18. Amendments to and Withdrawal of Courses

18.1. The University will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that courses are delivered as advertised.

18.2. Where deemed reasonable and necessary the University may make changes to course content and delivery, or suspend or discontinue a course entirely.

18.3. If the University makes changes of this kind the University will inform affected applicants promptly and seek consent for any resulting contractual changes.

18.4. In the event of course suspension or discontinuation the University will endeavor to offer an alternative and/or provide support with exploring other options.

19. Appeals and Complaints

19.1. The University is committed to upholding the principles of fairness and transparency within its admissions process. However, we acknowledge that occasionally applicants may have reason to question or express an opinion about the University's decision, or the way in which their application has been handled.

19.2. Applicants who wish to appeal a decision or submit a complaint are directed to the University's Admissions Complaints and Appeals Policy for further information and guidance.

20. Data Protection

20.1. Application and enrolment data forms part of the student record for applicants who enrol onto one of the University's courses. Personal Data of applicants who are unsuccessful is deleted one year after the academic year in which they applied in. Personal data of applicants who defer their application to the following year / intake of a course are retained for a further year. Personal data of successful applicants are retained for the duration of the student's course of study at the University plus 6 years.

20.2. All information collected under the requirements of this policy will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. For further information please refer to the Student Privacy Notice. Data used for internal monitoring and reporting to relevant committees will be anonymised.

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Originator/Author	Head of Student Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions
Policy Owner	Admissions & Enrolment Manager
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