HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

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Admissions Procedure for Applicants with Health Conditions, Disabilities and Additional Learning Needs

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1. Introduction

1.1 The University welcomes applications from candidates with health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Needs.

1.2 Applicants with health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Needs are encouraged to share these with the University or Delivery Partner as early as possible during the application process to facilitate appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

1.3 This document outlines procedures for admissions staff to ensure that applications received from applicants with declared health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Needs are treated fairly in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and that reasonable adjustments are put in place to support the admissions process and ensure the applicant can fully participate in their course.

2. Scope

2.1 The procedure applies to applicants seeking entry to the University's taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including apprenticeships and pre-entry programmes. It applies to applicants for courses delivered by Delivery Partners, unless the Delivery Partner has a variation on this procedure which has been approved by the university.

3. Responsibilities, Monitoring and Review

3.1 The Deputy Head of Admissions is responsible for operational oversight, training and implementation for this procedure.

3.2 For courses being delivered by the University, the University Admissions team are responsible for ensuring the procedure is followed for all new admissions and that reasonable adjustments are put in place to support the application and interview process.

3.3 For courses being delivered by a Delivery Partner on behalf of the University, the Delivery Partner is responsible for ensuring the procedure is followed for all new admissions to their courses and that reasonable adjustments are put in place to support the application and interview process. Where role titles are referenced in this document, it should be noted that equivalent roles may undertake duties for delivery partners.

3.4 The relevant Head of School is accountable for decisions regarding reasonable adjustments required to enable an applicant to participate in their chosen course. The Head of School may delegate the consideration and approval of individual adjustments to an appropriately qualified Course Lead or other member of staff, where appropriate. The Head of School will retain overall responsibility for ensuring that decisions are made appropriately and consistently.

3.5 Decisions may be informed by advice from Student Services, the Head of Practice-Related Learning, the Deputy Academic Registrar, the Head of Clinical Education and other staff with relevant academic, professional, practice-related or specialist expertise.

3.6 The Head of Student Recruitment, Admissions and Outreach is responsible for ensuring this procedure is regularly reviewed to ensure that it complies fully with any changes in legislation and continues to support the vision and values of the University.

4. Key Principles

4.1 The university is committed to providing inclusive education which meets the specific needs of individual students. The University welcomes applications from people with health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Needs.

4.2 In the majority of cases a health condition, disability or Additional Learning Need will not prevent an individual studying at the University. The University is committed to removing barriers and putting reasonable adjustments in place to ensure applicants are not disadvantaged due to health conditions, disabilities or additional needs.

4.3 A reasonable adjustment is a change to the way in which the University delivers or enables access to the admissions process, course or associated learning activities, intended to remove or reduce a substantial disadvantage experienced by an applicant because of a disability, health condition or Additional Learning Need.

4.4 In determining whether an adjustment is reasonable, the University will consider the individual circumstances of the applicant, the effectiveness of the proposed adjustment, the impact on the applicant and others, the requirements and academic or professional standards of the course, the availability of alternative adjustments, and the financial, resource and operational implications of the adjustment for the University.

4.5 All applicants to Health Sciences University courses will be asked at application stage to share details of health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Support Needs. This is to ensure applicants can participate in all mandatory elements of their chosen course, and to facilitate any support or reasonable adjustments which may be required.

4.6 Any information shared with the university at application regarding a health condition, disability or Additional Learning Need will be considered secondary to academic eligibility, except to facilitate reasonable adjustments as part of the application and interview process.

4.7 Several of the University's courses involve placements in clinical settings, some of which have additional health and/or vaccination requirements. The University is responsible for ensuring applicants can meet these requirements.

4.8 Applicants to courses with additional health and vaccination requirements will be asked to complete a mandatory Occupational Health Clearance prior to enrolling for their course, and an Immunisation Screening where appropriate. The university will work with applicants to facilitate reasonable adjustments and vaccinations to allow applicants to enrol for their course wherever possible.

4.9 At this time, our buildings, and those at our delivery partners, have certain areas that may pose challenges for students with mobility needs.

4.10 In very limited circumstances, following individual consideration and after reasonable adjustments and alternative approaches have been fully explored, it may not be possible for the university to extend or uphold an offer of a place.

4.11 A decision that a proposed adjustment cannot reasonably be implemented will take account of the requirements of the course and, where relevant, professional, regulatory, placement, safety and operational requirements, together with the effectiveness and practicality of the proposed adjustment and its financial and resource implications.

4.12 The University will seek to engage the applicant in the consideration of potential adjustments and alternatives wherever possible.

5. Procedure for Applicants who Declare a Health Condition, Disability or Additional Learning Need

5.1 All applicants are encouraged to share any health conditions, disabilities and Additional Learning Needs with us at the point of application.

5.2 The University will initially review new applications on academic grounds to determine whether the applicant is academically eligible for the course. If the University is unable to make an offer on this basis, it will not offer a place, and no further action will be taken.

5.3 If the applicant is required to attend an interview as part of the academic assessment, the interview invite will ask the applicant whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Reasonable interview adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may include:

- Preparatory information – guidance on interview format and questions in advance.

- Flexible scheduling and duration – offering flexibility on the time of interview, extended or shortened interview slots, opportunities to take short breaks.
- Ensuring online platforms are compatible with assistive technology (e.g. screen readers, voice recognition software).
- Ensuring in-person interviews are held in accessible locations.

5.4 Where an offer is provisionally approved for offer following academic assessment and the applicant has not shared a physical or visual impairment, a mobility issue or a health condition that may impact participation in physical aspects of the course, the applicant will be automatically progressed to offer stage and an offer will be issued.

5.5 Where an applicant is academically eligible for an offer and has disclosed a health condition, disability or Additional Learning Need that may require adjustments to enable participation in the course, the application will be referred to the relevant Head of School or their authorised nominee for consideration of appropriate reasonable adjustments before the offer is issued, where practicable.

5.6 In considering reasonable adjustments, the Head of School or authorised nominee may:

a) seek advice from Student Services and other relevant professional or specialist services;

b) consult the Course Lead, subject specialists, placement or practice-related staff, or other staff with relevant knowledge of the academic or professional requirements of the course;

c) discuss the applicant's requirements and potential adjustments with the applicant; and

d) where appropriate, seek advice through an Occupational Health assessment or other specialist assessment.

5.7 Where further specialist advice is required to inform the consideration of reasonable adjustments, the applicant may be referred for an Occupational Health assessment with the University's independent Occupational Health provider. The recommendations of the Occupational Health provider will be considered in accordance with the University's Occupational Health Policy and Procedure.

5.8 Where the proposed reasonable adjustments can be accommodated within existing resources and operational arrangements, or within the authority delegated by the Head of School, the adjustment may be approved, and the application progressed to offer stage. The Head of School or authorised nominee is responsible for communicating this decision and any relevant actions to the appropriate University teams.

5.9 Where a proposed adjustment has significant financial, resource or operational implications, or would require a substantial change to existing facilities, staffing or course delivery, the matter must be referred to the Head of School for consideration if they have not already considered the case. The Head of School will determine whether the adjustment can be approved or whether further institutional advice or approval is required.

5.10 Where further institutional consideration is required, the Head of School will refer the matter to a member of the Executive Leadership Group for approval, taking advice from relevant Professional Services and specialist staff as necessary.

5.11 Student Services will work with applicants who have disclosed a health condition, disability or Additional Learning Need to discuss support requirements and develop appropriate support arrangements prior to enrolment. Where adjustments relate to the academic delivery, essential requirements or practical elements of a course, Student Services will work with the relevant Head of School or authorised nominee and other appropriate specialists to ensure that arrangements are coordinated.

5.12 Where the decision has significant financial, resource, operational or other institutional implications, or where it may result in an offer not being made or being withdrawn, the Head of School is responsible for communicating this decision internally and ensuring the reasons for the decision, the adjustments and alternatives considered, and the basis on which the final decision was reached are documented.

5.13 The Head of School is responsible for ensuring the applicant is informed of the outcome and, where appropriate, provided with information about alternative options or relevant sources of support.

6. Additional Process for Courses Subject to Occupational Health Clearance

6.1 If the applicant is applying for a course involving placements in clinical settings, Occupational Health Clearance will usually be required prior to enrolment. This requirement will be stated in the offer letter if applicable.

6.2 Applicants will be required to cover the cost of the initial Occupational Health check and these costs will be published and shared with the applicant at the point their offer is issued.

6.3 Once the applicant has accepted an offer from the university and within three months of the start of their course the Admissions team will contact the applicant to start the Occupational Health process, including a request for payment for the cost of the initial screening.

6.4 Once payment has been received the applicant will be referred to the Innovate Healthcare, the University's chosen provider for independent Occupational Health Screening.

6.5 Innovate Healthcare will contact the applicant directly to ask them to complete an online health questionnaire. Occasionally Innovate may contact the applicant to request further information or to arrange a follow up meeting to discuss information you have shared.

6.6 Once Innovate has concluded the Occupational Health Screening the university will be notified and Innovate may recommend reasonable adjustments to the university for consideration.

6.7 Any reasonable adjustments recommend by Innovate or proposed by the university or applicant will be considered under the University's Occupational Health Procedure. Applicants will be involved in this process to ensure that reasonable adjustments are fully and appropriately explored.

6.8 Following completion of the Occupational Health Procedure any agreed adjustments will be put in place and the applicant notified.

7. Additional Process for Courses Subject to Immunisation Screening

7.1 If the applicant is applying for a course involving placements in NHS settings, Immunisation Screening will usually be required prior to enrolment. This requirement will be stated in the offer letter if applicable.

7.2 Thie Immunisation Screening will be performed by Innovate Healthcare on behalf of the university as part of the Occupational Health clearance process.

7.3 The applicant will be asked to provide evidence of their immunity or immunisations against certain diseases. These immunity requirements are specified by NHS partners as part of their placement conditions and details can be found on the Occupational Health page on the University website.

7.4 If an applicant is unable to provide evidence of existing immunity or current vaccinations, the applicant will be invited to attend an on-campus vaccination clinic at the University for a blood test to determine current immunity.

7.5 If vaccinations are required, the applicant will be invited to attend an on-campus vaccination clinic at the University to receive these.

7.6 Blood screenings and vaccinations delivered at on-campus vaccination clinics are offered free-of-charge to the applicant if they are necessary for course placements, but applicants are expected to cover the cost of late cancellations, missed appointments or non-mandatory vaccinations.

7.7 Applicants are welcome and encouraged to organise their own vaccinations but must provide evidence of these to the University via Innovate healthcare.

7.8 Immunisation screenings and vaccinations should ideally be completed prior to enrolment as delays can impact the start of placements.

8. Procedure for Applicants who have not received Occupational Health Clearance or Immunisation Screening at the Point of Enrolment

8.1 In some instances, it is not possible to complete an Occupational Health clearance or Immunisation screening prior to enrolment. However, applicants are expected to be actively engaging with the process before the following can be considered.

8.2 An applicant may be permitted to enrol at the University's discretion if the following applies:

a) They have not shared any health conditions, disabilities or Additional Learning Needs or, if information has been shared, it is highly likely reasonable adjustments can be put in place.

b) They are engaging with the Occupational Health and/or Immunisation Screening process.

c) They have met all other conditions of their offer.

d) They have been made aware in writing that their continued enrolment remains subject to the outcome of the Occupational Health and/or Immunisation Screening process.

e) They have been made aware that they may not be permitted to take part in clinical placements until these processes have been completed and clearance has been granted.

8.3 The decision to allow an applicant to enrol while Occupational Health clearance or Immunisation screening is outstanding will not prejudice the outcome of any subsequent risk assessment that may be required.

9. Data storage, Access and Retention

9.1 Information relating to applicant health conditions, disabilities or Additional learning Needs are accessed by authorised staff on a 'need to know' basis to ensure reasonable adjustments can be considered and the applicant can be supported throughout the admissions process and for the duration of their studies. The University handles this information securely, keeps it only for as long as necessary, and destroys it safely when it is no longer needed, in line with the law and data protection requirements.

9.2 Information shared at the point of application will be stored securely on the applicant's file within the University's student records systems.

9.3 Any additional information by Innovate Healthcare for the purposes of Occupational Health clearance and Immunisation screenings will be stored electronically and securely within Innovate's systems. You will be asked for your consent to share this information with the University and can request a copy of the report shared with the University before it is sent.

9.4 Information shared with the university will be retained and destroyed in line with our Student Privacy Notice.

10. Appeals and Complaints

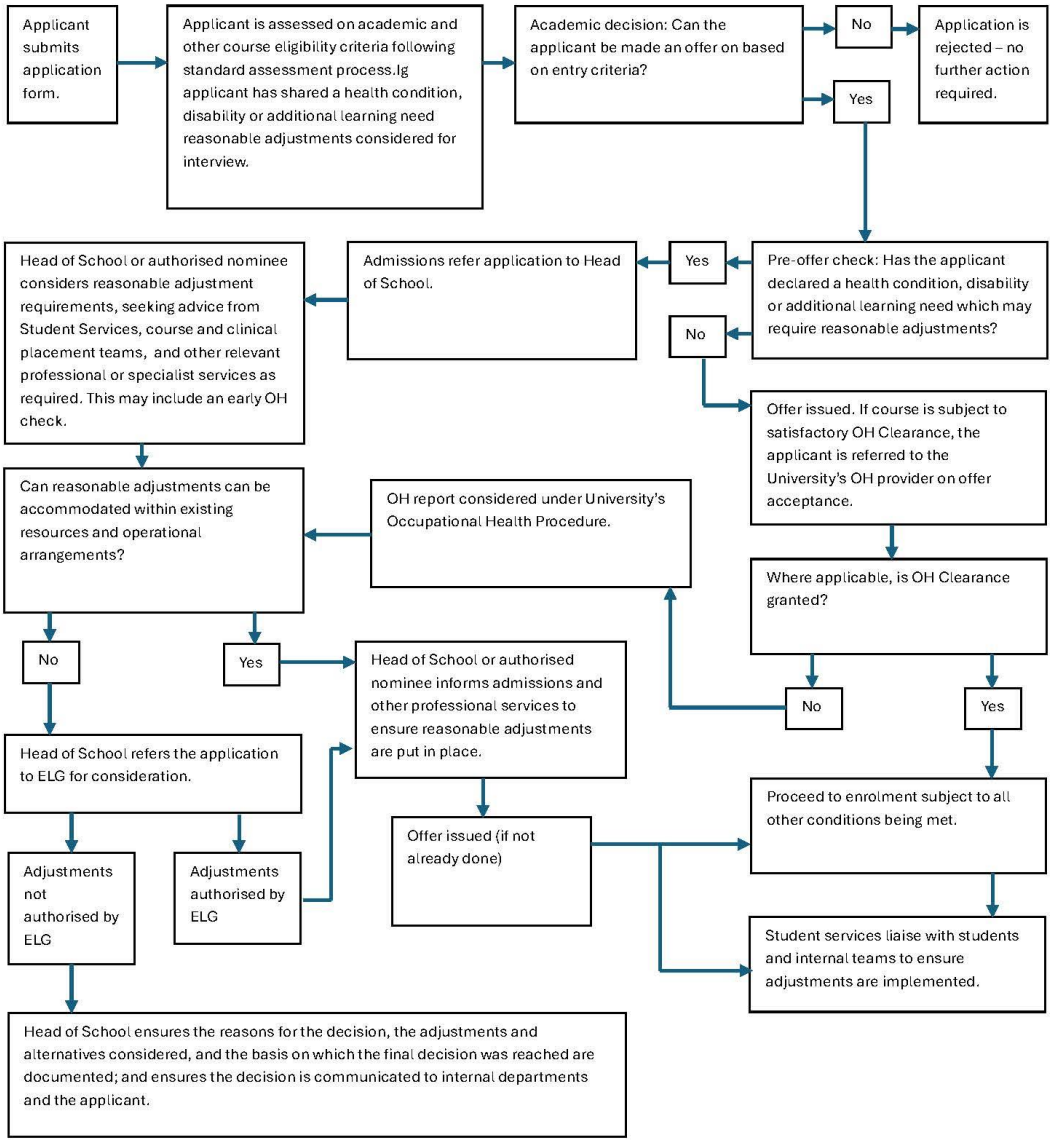
10.1 An applicant has the right to appeal against any decision by the university resulting in the rejection or withdrawal of the offer of a place where the applicant believes the University's policies and procedures have not been followed correctly.

10.2 Applicants wishing to appeal against a decision should complete the Admissions Appeal and Complaint Form found in the Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy and submit this to the Academic Registrar within 10 working days.

10.3 The Academic Registrar will investigate the appeal and aim to respond in writing within 10 working days.

10.4 If the appellant is not satisfied after receiving this response, they may ask for a further review by the Head of People and Development as per the university's Admissions Appeals and Complaints Policy.

Appendix: Admissions Workflow for Applicants with Health Conditions, Disabilities or Additional Learning Needs



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