

University of Edinburgh Admissions Policy

Purpose of Policy

This policy provides an overarching framework for University admissions policies and College and School policies and procedures.

Overview

The University is committed to equality in education. Students are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes.

The University aims to offer clear advice and guidance to prospective applicants to enable them to make informed choices and to apply to programmes appropriate to their interests, academic qualifications and potential.

Admission is subject to the availability of places. Where there are restrictions on the number of places the University can make available, competition for places is often extremely high.

Scope: Mandatory policy

This policy applies to the admission of all categories of students to accredited programmes of under- and postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh.

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Document control

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Approving authority

Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group

Consultation undertaken

Section responsible for
policy maintenance and
review

Student Recruitment and Admissions

Related policies,
procedures, guidelines
and regulations

UK Quality Code 2018

Core practices: *The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.*

Policies superseded by
this policy

None

Alternative format

If you require this document in an alternative format please email SRA.Adteam@ed.ac.uk

Keywords

Admissions, selection, entry requirements



The University of Edinburgh Admissions Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy provides an overarching framework for University admissions policies and College and School policies and procedures.
- 1.2 This policy applies to the admission of all categories of students to accredited programmes of under- and postgraduate study at the University of Edinburgh.
- 1.3 The University is committed to fair, transparent and consistent admissions practices. This policy is underpinned by the University of Edinburgh's strategies, codes of practice and policies on [Data Protection](#), [Disability](#), [Equality & Diversity](#) and [Widening Participation](#).
- 1.4 The University is committed to equality in education. Students are selected on the basis of their individual merits, abilities and aptitudes.
- 1.5 The University aims to increase the diversity of its student population: we believe that diversity is educationally as well as socially desirable in a civilised society, enriching the educational experience for all. We therefore seek to attract a wide range of applicants from different social, cultural and educational backgrounds who can demonstrate the academic ability and the skills required to succeed in their chosen studies. We actively encourage applications from students from all groups who are currently under-represented in higher education.
- 1.6 The University aims to offer clear advice and guidance to prospective applicants to enable them to make informed choices and to apply to programmes appropriate to their interests, academic qualifications and potential.
- 1.7 Admission is subject to the availability of places. Where there are restrictions on the number of places the University can make available, competition for places is often extremely high.
- 1.8 This policy and associated procedures comply with relevant legislation and meet the expectations and practices of the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#).

2. Terms and conditions

- 2.1 The University's published terms and conditions apply to all applications for undergraduate and postgraduate study. The University will draw these to the attention of anyone who receives an offer of a place to study at the University. The terms and conditions are fair and transparent, and form a contract between the University and each student when an offer is accepted. Terms and conditions are reconfirmed at registration each year.

3. Roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 The Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group is responsible, on behalf of the University, for approving admissions practices and policies.
- 3.2 The University's Student Recruitment & Admissions department is responsible for ensuring that policies and procedures regarding student recruitment and admissions are operated fairly and consistently, and in line with the University's strategic aims and objectives and relevant legislation.
- 3.3 The University's Schools and Colleges are responsible for setting entry requirements for their programmes. Admissions decisions are made by admissions staff within Schools and Colleges. Heads of School and College are responsible for ensuring that these staff are appropriately qualified and experienced and that the College or School maintains clear and transparent admissions criteria and procedures.
- 3.4 Admissions staff are provided with regular training on admissions issues and are expected to follow University admissions policies, procedures and guidance.

4. Selection

- 4.1 For all programmes, the selection process will take into account:
 - Achieved and pending academic qualifications
 - The academic context in which qualifications have been achieved
 - An applicant's stated interest, commitment and motivation for study
 - Where relevant, work or other non-academic experience
 - Academic and/or professional references
 - Where required, an applicant's performance at interview
 - Where required, an applicant's portfolio or sample of written work
 - Where required, an applicant's research proposal
 - An applicant's English language proficiency.
- 4.2 Each application will be considered on an individual basis by appropriately trained and qualified staff working to agreed selection criteria.
- 4.3 Admissions decisions will be made as quickly as possible. However, due to the large volume of applications, and in order to operate a fair admissions process, in some cases it may take longer for decisions to be reached.
- 4.4 For admission to some postgraduate programmes, a full or partial 'gathered field' will operate, whereby some or all applications from suitably-qualified candidates will be held until the application deadline before decisions are made. Gathered field deadlines are published in the online Degree Finder where relevant. The University aims to keep such delays to a minimum.
- 4.5 Undergraduate applications are assessed in line with the UCAS equal consideration deadlines and all applications received prior to the relevant UCAS deadline will be given full and equal consideration.
- 4.6 Admissions decisions will be communicated to applicants in an appropriate and timely manner. Any conditions attached to an offer of a place will be clear and specific.
- 4.7 In some cases where the University is unable to make an offer for an applicant's programme choice, an offer for an alternative programme may be made.

5. Fraud & Plagiarism

- 5.1 The University of Edinburgh will not admit applicants on the strength of information considered to be either fraudulent or plagiarised. Where an applicant is suspected of having provided a fraudulent or plagiarised application the application will be assessed in the first instance on the basis of standard academic and non-academic selection criteria. If it is recommended that an offer be made, an investigation of the fraud or plagiarism will be carried-out before the final decision is made.
- 5.2 The University reserves the right to reject or cancel an application under these circumstances. The University may terminate a student's registration if they are found at a later stage to have submitted a fraudulent or plagiarised application to the University.
- 5.3 The [Policy & Procedure regarding Admissions Fraud](#) establishes the process by which applications suspected to contain fraudulent or plagiarised material are handled by the University.

6. Disclosure of criminal convictions

- 6.1 The University has a duty to ensure the safety of its student and staff community. For certain programmes involving interaction with children and/or vulnerable adults, applicants must disclose all convictions, including cautions, reprimands, final warnings, bind-over orders and spent convictions. All other applicants are encouraged to discuss any pending charges or restrictions relating to a conviction which may impact on their ability to study with the Head of Admissions in Student Recruitment & Admissions.
- 6.2 Applications from applicants with declared criminal convictions will be assessed in the first instance on the basis of standard academic and non-academic selection criteria. If it is recommended that an offer be made, further investigation of the relevance of the criminal conviction(s) will be carried-out before the final decision is made.

7. Disabled applicants

- 7.1 Applications from disabled students will be assessed against the University's entry requirements on the same basis as any other application, and will be subject to the same selection process. Any support needs or adjustments which are required will be considered separately, after the admissions decision has been taken.
- 7.2 If there are overriding health and safety concerns or barriers relating to fitness to practise requirements, the applicant will be involved in discussions to explore options and, if necessary, to find a suitable alternative programme.
- 7.3 The [Policy and Procedure for Applicants with Declared Disabilities](#) establishes the process by which applications from individuals with declared disabilities are handled by the University.

8. Challenging circumstances

- 8.1 Applicants who have faced challenging circumstances which have had a long term impact on their education are encouraged to provide relevant information in their application. This will allow admissions staff to consider the context of the applicant's achievement in the selection process.

8.2 The [Policy for consideration of challenging circumstances affecting undergraduate and postgraduate applicants](#) establishes the definition of challenging circumstances, and how these will be taken into account in admissions.

8.3 The University is not best placed to fairly and consistently take account of any adverse circumstance which may have affected an applicant's performance in pre-entry qualifications. Examples of special circumstances include personal or family illness at the time of exams, or the impact of changes to qualifications, curriculum or the examination system studied, or the way in which grades are awarded. The University expects applicants to have taken appropriate action to ensure that the relevant examination bodies have allowed for such circumstances prior to the announcement of results or following an appeal.

9. Interaction between the University and the applicant

9.1 The University is committed to ensuring that any interaction with an applicant is conducted in a professional, courteous and respectful manner and it expects that any communication from an applicant is conducted in the same way.

9.2 Applicants should note that the University will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour or language towards its employees or members of the wider University community during the admissions process. Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing, and excessive levels of contact, will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint.

9.3 The University will normally warn an applicant that their behaviour or language is inappropriate and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

10. Undergraduate admissions, including admission to the PGDE

10.1 Applications to all full-time undergraduate degrees should be made via the Universities & Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), except those from North American applicants to the 4-year Graduate Entry or 5-year Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine & Surgery (BVM&S), which should be submitted via the Veterinary Medical College Application Service (VMCAS).

10.2 Applications for part-time undergraduate study are made directly to the University.

10.3 Applications to the Professional Diploma in Education (PGDE) should be submitted via UCAS.

10.4 Applications to visiting and exchange programmes should be made directly via EUCLID, the University's online application service.

10.5 Academic and non-academic entry criteria for undergraduate degrees will be described in the online Degree Finder, and on UCAS Search.

10.6 All applications received prior to the relevant UCAS deadline will be given full and equal consideration. No preference will be given to applications submitted early. Late applications will be considered at the discretion of the admitting College.

10.7 Applications for deferred entry will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

11. Postgraduate admissions

- 11.1 Applications for postgraduate programmes should be submitted directly to the University via EUCLID, the University's online application service.
- 11.2 Academic and non-academic entry criteria for postgraduate programmes will be described in the University online Degree Finder and in some print brochures and guides.
- 11.3 Applicants to postgraduate degree programmes are normally expected to hold an undergraduate degree in a discipline relevant to the subject or nature of the programme to which they are applying, or to be in the final year of such an undergraduate degree programme. Additionally, applicants to some postgraduate research programmes will be expected to hold a Masters degree in a discipline relevant to their proposed studies and to submit a satisfactory research proposal.
- 11.4 In some cases, relevant work experience may be accepted in lieu of formal academic qualifications.
- 11.5 Offers to postgraduate research programmes will only be made when the University can offer satisfactory research supervision in the area of the applicant's intended research.
- 11.6 The University's detailed arrangements for the admission of postgraduate students are covered by the [Policy and Procedure for Postgraduate Admissions to the University of Edinburgh](#).

12. Feedback

- 12.1 Unsuccessful applicants can reasonably expect to receive feedback on their application on request. The School or College responsible for the admissions decision will provide this feedback.
- 12.2 While the University aims to provide informative feedback that is helpful to applicants, it may not always be possible to provide highly specific or tailored advice.
- 12.3 The University is only able to give feedback to a third party (e.g. a parent, guardian, advisor or agent) with the written consent of the applicant.

13. Complaints and appeals

- 13.1 Should an applicant wish to raise concern about or question the University's decision or the way in which an application has been handled, the University's [Policy and Procedure for Admissions Feedback, Appeals and Complaints](#) should be followed.

14. Related policies

- 14.1 The University Admissions Policy is underpinned by a number of other policies and procedures offering specific guidance on aspects of the process or for specific kinds of applicant:
 - [Policy and Procedure for Undergraduate Applications from Adult Returners to Higher Education](#)
 - [Policy and Procedure for the Recognition of Prior Learning for Admissions to the University of Edinburgh](#)
 - [Policy and Procedure Regarding Confirmation of Examination Results for Undergraduate Entry](#)

- [*Policy and Procedure for Undergraduate Applications from Elite Athletes*](#)
- [*Policy Regarding English Language Entry Requirements*](#)

These policies are available on the University website.

[Admissions policies and procedures](#)

15. Monitoring and review

- 15.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Student Recruitment and Fees Strategy Group and revised in light of changes in legislation and University regulations and strategic objectives.

Last revised May 2021