

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Setting and monitoring admission criteria.

1. Admissions criteria related to academic standards, including English language criteria, transfer credit and offer levels/thresholds, are set by the Academic Board, and reported to the Academic Committee of the Trustees.
2. Once approved by Academic Board, the admissions criteria appear in the Admissions Policy for the relevant year and are published on the University website.
3. Admissions Officers and the University recruitment team provide advice, guidance and recommendations on the general acceptability and equivalence of a range of entry qualifications using NARIC and United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) guidelines.
4. The Admission team provides semesterly updates on admissions entry criteria and statistical trends to the Academic Board. The Provost will report this data to the Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees.
5. The final decision over and responsibility for the admission of any student belongs to the Provost, as Chief Academic Officer and Chair of the Academic Board, reporting to the President and the Academic Committee of the Board of Trustees.

Monitoring & Review

6. Monitoring and review of admissions for each programme is undertaken by the Academic Board within the annual monitoring cycle, through 5-year review/revalidation exercises, and externally via formal reviews of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Office for Students.

Admissions Decisions

7. The University applies standard admissions criteria across a range of entry qualifications. All applications are considered on the basis of the following with due consideration given to equality, adjustment and the ability to benefit from the programme of study:
 - a. Fee status is applied based on the information provided by the applicant;
 - b. Prior academic achievement, or prior experiential learning;
 - c. Any expected results in formal examinations;
 - d. English Language Qualification;
 - e. Personal statement in support of the application;
 - f. Referee's statement;
 - g. Performance at interview (where an interview is part of the admissions process);
 - h. Suitability for intended profession (where course provides professional

training and post-qualification registration).

8. Applications from candidates holding non-standard qualifications are referred to a member of faculty for review and comment.
9. Applicants with advanced qualifications or eligible university-level credit are referred to Registry Services to determine the point of entry and any relevant transfer credit or exemptions.
10. In the majority of cases, applications are assessed on application alone; however, we may invite specific applicants to interview or to undertake a placement test where there is insufficient information within the initial application on which to base a decision. In addition, certain programmes may require prospective students to submit portfolios of work or video evidence of sporting ability and/or to attend interviews or sporting trials in person.
11. Further details of current qualifications accepted and grades required may be found on the University website, noting that these are common to all undergraduate programmes at the University and there is no requirement as to the subject of entry qualifications.

Admission Requirements – Academic

12. By admissions requirements or entry criteria, we mean a minimum threshold of academic and English Language achievement that all applicants must meet in order to be considered for admission to an academic programme.
13. An admissions requirement is expressed both in terms of a qualification at a specific study level, and a specified grade or result to be achieved, and is communicated to the applicant in a Conditional Offer Letter.
14. The minimum academic requirement for admission to an undergraduate programme is 96 UCAS points or its international equivalent:
 - a. A Level: 96 UCAS points or its European or International Equivalent;
 - b. US High School Diploma (or equivalent): 2.5 GPA minimum (on 4.0 scale);
 - c. International Baccalaureate: 24 IB points;
 - d. BTEC National Diploma: MMM;
 - e. hold the required grade(s) in a complete US High School Diploma, UK GCE A levels, or other UK or international qualifications deemed equivalent by the University.
15. Prospective undergraduates from the United States should note that SATs are optional and not required, but should applicants wish to submit SAT or ACT scores, Richmond's CEEB/ATP code is 0823L, and its ACT code is 5244. Whilst not routinely required, prospective students may be invited to interview where this is considered necessary in order to fully consider their application.

16. The minimum academic requirement for admission to a postgraduate programme is a UK undergraduate degree with minimum second class honours (2.2), or a US Degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of between 2.70 and 3.00, or an international equivalent. The University accepts a wide range of international undergraduate degree award qualifications. The University may consider candidates with substantial relevant work experience in lieu of a first degree.
17. A summary of the University's academic admissions requirements are published on the University website.

Admission Requirements – English Language

18. Applicants who are non-native speakers of English or are not nationals of a majority English-speaking country, or do not possess a first degree from a majority English speaking country, as defined by the United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI), are required to provide evidence of their English language proficiency with a recognised English language test qualification as follows:

Foundation Programme	IELTS 5.0 with 4.5 in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking
Undergraduate Programme	IELTS 5.5 with 5.5 in Listening, Reading Writing and Speaking TOEFL IBT 80 with 17 Listening, 18 in Reading, 17 Writing, 20 Speaking
Postgraduate Programme	IELTS 6.5 with 5.5 in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking Pearson PTE: 57 in Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking TOEFL IBT: 87 with: Listening 21 Reading 21 Writing 21 Speaking 21 Cambridge English: Proficiency: Level C2 or Level C1

Entry with Advanced Standing and Transfer Credit

19. In line with the University's transfer credit policy and procedures (see [Transfer Credit Policy](#)), we welcome applications from prospective students with qualifications which can be counted towards the accumulation of credit for a BA degree and/or provide exemption from specific Richmond BA modules. Such entry can only be assessed:
- a. against a declared undergraduate programme;
 - b. on the basis of existing qualifications (APCL).
20. The University distinguishes between advanced credit being that awarded from University entrance level qualifications exceeding the level of the US high school

diploma (such as A-levels, International Baccalaureates, or advanced international secondary qualifications), and transfer credit, being that awarded from previous university-level study. A table giving common examples of advanced qualifications and their typical Richmond equivalents is located on the admission pages of the [university website](#).

21. The following amounts of credit may be transferred in:
 - a. a maximum of 60 US lower-division/240 UK FHEQ levels 3 and 4 credit;
 - b. and a maximum of 15 upper-division/60 UK HFEQ level 5 credit.
22. Applicants are advised that to be eligible for a BA or BSc degree, students entering with transfer credit must successfully complete at the University a minimum of 45 US upper-division credits (15 US/60 UK credits at FHEQ Level 5 and 30 US/120 UK credits at FHEQ Level 6). See AP4 Transfer Credit Policy for full details.
23. Application for transfer credit evaluation is conducted via the normal application routes, with applicants providing full details of qualifications held and to be taken to Admissions Officers, who then pass this information on to Registry Services for evaluation.
24. When offering a place, the University will provide an estimate of advanced or transfer credit to be allowed and of time to completion expressed in semesters. Final verification of credit to be transferred and study time to completion will be made by Registry Services, using final transcripts, after the student has deposited, although earlier evaluations may be made upon request.

Equality of Opportunity

25. The University is committed to equal opportunities policies through which all students are selected on the basis of the ability to benefit from their selected programme of study.
26. If an applicant declares a disability or special educational need, this is referred to our Student Affairs department who work confidentially with the applicant and the Faculty to determine the appropriate level of support to be provided by the University for the selected programme of study, and that this will be achievable with reasonable adjustments.
27. Where appropriate support cannot be provided even with reasonable adjustments, this will be discussed with the applicant and, where relevant, alternative programmes explored. The University also ensure that any reasonable adjustments to the applicant assessment process are put in place.
28. When applicant declares a criminal record, this is considered by our Student Affairs department with appropriate professional input and in relation to the programme applied for, to decide whether we can proceed with the application.

29. Registry Services assesses the applications of those who have previously studied at Richmond – former students should consult and follow the University's Readmission policy. Where an applicant has previously applied, the outcome of the previous application may be relevant to the outcome of the current application.

Age

30. The University minimum age for admission is 17 years of age. The university would normally expect a 17 year old to turn 18 in their first semester. There is no upper age limit.
31. If an applicant is under 18 years of age, in accordance with UK legal requirements, the University's Child Protection Policy applies. The University requires the parent/guardian to complete the Under 18 Consent Form, and upon its receipt, the Admissions Team will confer with The Department of Student Affairs, who will confirm that the applicant can be admitted.

Admissions Decision

32. The University applies standard admissions criteria across a range of entry qualifications. All applications are considered on the basis of the following with due consideration given to equality, adjustment and the ability to benefit from the programme of study:
- a. Fee status is applied based on the information provided by the applicant;
 - b. Prior academic achievement, or prior experiential learning;
 - c. Any expected results in formal examinations;
 - d. English Language Qualification;
 - e. Personal statement in support of the application;
 - f. Referee's statement;
 - g. Performance at interview (where an interview is part of the admissions process);
 - h. Suitability for intended profession (where course provides professional training and post-qualification registration).
33. Applications from candidates holding non-standard qualifications are referred to a member of faculty.
34. Applicants with advanced qualifications or eligible university-level credit are referred to Registry Services to determine the point of entry and any relevant transfer credit or exemptions.
35. In the majority of cases, applications are assessed on application alone; however, we may invite specific applicants to interview or to undertake a placement test where there is insufficient information within the initial application on which to base a decision. In addition, certain programmes may require prospective students to submit portfolios of

work or video evidence of sporting ability and/or to attend interviews or sporting trials in person.

36. Further details of current qualifications accepted and grades required may be found on the University website, noting that these are common to all undergraduate programmes at the University and there is no requirement as to the subject of entry qualifications.

Admission to Study Offers

37. The University issues two types of offers based on the information presented in the application form and on supporting evidence provided by the applicant:
- a) A **Conditional Offer** is issued to prospective students who have submitted an application but have not been able to evidence that they have met the admission requirements.
 - b) An **Unconditional Offer** is issued to prospective students who have demonstrated that they have met the University's admission requirements, by supplying documentary evidence of their completed academic qualification, the English foreign language test result for the study level of their selected programme, and any other stipulated supporting documents.
38. Official study offers (offer letters) and all other communications are sent to the email address that the applicant has supplied on their application.
39. Offers are communicated via UCAS for those who applied through UCAS, followed by an electronic Offer Letter sent to the applicant.
40. An Electronic Offer is sent to those who applied to the University via the Common Application, UK Pass or with a direct application.

Course Closure and Changes Policy for Prospective Students

41. The University makes every reasonable effort to avoid changes to or closure of an academic programme for which an offer has been made to a prospective student.
42. When programme closure or major changes are necessary, the Admissions Team provides written notification of programme change or closure, and presents alternative study options to each applicant, intended to ensure that the applicant's study intentions can be met. In such cases, the Admissions Officer discusses the options directly with the applicant and offers one or more of the following options as circumstances allow:
- a. deferral of the study offer by one or more semesters if appropriate;
 - b. transfer of the offer to an alternative programme for the original entry semester;
 - c. transfer of the offer to the same or similar programme at another University – releasing applicant record to UCAS and the Common Application as promptly as possible.

Joining the University

43. When offering a place, the University ensures that a prospective student understands:

- a. the obligations involved in taking up their place;
- b. the availability of further advice and guidance before joining the University;
- c. how to enroll.

44. All Richmond admissions offers are accompanied by:

- a. a student contract to be signed and returned on take up of offer;
- b. a telephone number and an e-mail address for a named enquiry contact in the Admissions Office;
- c. details of how to progress the application, including verification of qualifications and other documentation and, if our offer is conditional, details of what to do if conditions are not fully met;
- d. details of how to obtain further information to aid decision making, including open and visit days, telephone support from current students, Faculty and admissions staff;
- e. a link to the University website through which the prospective student is advised to access the following academic information:
 - a. academic regulations and policies including relevant award regulations;
 - b. academic integrity and student conduct policies;
 - c. programme specification and course descriptors;
 - d. details of fee, housing and financial support information, including scholarships;
- f. a programme-specific welcome pack including orientation timetable is dispatched to those applicant that have accepted their study offer by Student Support Services prior to enrolment.

Induction/Orientation and Integration

45. Richmond offers an effective introduction to the University for all our new students through:

- a. “Orientation Week” of events at start of each entry semester;
- b. Postgraduate induction events;
- c. Inclusive curricula designed to meet the needs of students from a wide variety of backgrounds and entry routes;
- d. Placement tests for academic literacy and numeracy;
- e. The “Transitions” course sequence.

Feedback to unsuccessful candidates

46. The University provides basic feedback to all unsuccessful candidates for full time undergraduate programmes.

47. On request the Admissions Team may also provide more detailed feedback to unsuccessful applicants. Where a prospective student with a disability or special educational needs is unsuccessful because it is not possible to support them adequately, even with reasonable adjustments and after exploring alternative University programmes, the Student Affairs department will provide feedback which may include potential options elsewhere.

Appeals and Complaints against the outcome of an application to study

48. We only consider appeals which are made:

- a. against our final decision on an application;
- b. made by the applicant in writing to the Head of Admissions;
- c. received by the University within twenty working days of the date on which the University first informed the applicant of the final outcome of their application; and made on the following grounds:
 - i. relevant and material information was not made available to us at the time of application, through no fault of the applicant; and/or
 - ii. the way we dealt with the application differed materially and significantly from our written policy and procedure.

49. The complaints procedure cannot be used to appeal against the outcome of an application (see above for that process). We consider complaints relating to admission where these:

- a. relate to a submitted application;
- b. are made in writing by the applicant within twenty working days of the events documented; and concern the way an application has been handled, the subsequent dissemination of information, and/or the conduct of a member of University or partner staff directly involved in processing the application.

50. For more information relating to admissions appeals and complaints, see [Complaints Policy for Non Academic Related Matters](#).

Implementation, dissemination, monitoring and review

51. This policy is disseminated to University and partner staff, and made available to prospective students via the University website and appropriate links in admissions correspondence.
52. The Academic Board has responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the Admission Policy and its implementation with recommendations and guidance from the Head of Admissions and the Director of Recruitment, and Admissions.

Admissions Procedures

53. Admissions Roles are as follows:

Role	Duties and Responsibilities
The Head of Admissions	The Head of Admissions is the University's UCAS correspondent. S/he is responsible for institutional correspondence with UCAS along with the adherence to UCAS indications and leads on all matters relation to the admissions of undergraduate and postgraduate applicants.
Senior Admissions Officer	Senior Admissions Officers are line-managed by the Head of Admissions, undertakes delegated duties and supervises the processing of applicants (offer making).
Admissions Officer	The Admissions Officer is responsible for dealing with applications and enquiries from UK, EU and International students for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, from initial enquiry to final registration. Responsibilities include responding to queries promptly, making and communicating decisions.

54. Key Functions of the Admissions Office are as follows:

Procedure	
Transmission of Offer	Admissions Officers provide an offer based on criteria approved by Academic Board and transfer credit/exemption confirmations provided by Registry Services (see below).
Transfer Credit Evaluation and Advanced Entry	Registry Services review all requests for transfer credit evaluation and exemptions (Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning - APCL). Any urgent requests are highlighted by Admissions Officers. Transfer credit for applicants with advanced qualifications and university-level credit is determined through the review of academic transcripts evidencing prior study. Faculty from the proposed programme of study are consulted (if necessary). Registry Services communicates its evaluation to the candidates directly, copying in the Admissions Officer.
Non-Standard Applications	When an applicant's profile falls outside the standard criteria, Admissions Officers refer the case to relevant Associate Dean (or to Registry Services for potential transfer credit – see above) for a decision, before proceeding to issue a formal study offer.
Joining Instruction	The Student Affairs department provides prospective students with University joining instructions and associated materials, once academic, English Language and student migration conditions are met.

55. Training and Support for Staff and partners. When taking up a role in recruitment and admissions, University staff participate in a programme of preparation, professional updating and sharing of good practice, including relevant components from the following:

- a. in-post training overseen by an experienced manager;
- b. subscription to NARIC and access to international qualification equivalencies;
- c. regular team meetings and briefing events;
- d. external development and updating events.

Dissemination of information for prospective students and applicants

56. Programme Content: Academic programme content, teaching and assessment methods, duration, and subsequent employment information and further study opportunities are published on the University's website (in downloadable prospectuses and programme specifications).

57. Admissions Requirements (academic and English language proficiency): Standard offer levels including key qualifications and transfer credit policies are summarized on the University website.

58. Fees, housing & financial support:

- a. Admissions staff explain the financial commitment involved in taking up a place at Richmond, including the cost of tuition and housing together with when and who this is payable.
- b. On receipt of an offer, the applicant is directed to the University's housing and scholarship offer, and to information on fees and external sources of funding support, via the relevant sections of the University website.
- c. Prospective students are also offered the opportunity to seek advice from University financial aid advisors at this point.

59. Support for students with disabilities and special educational needs: On receipt of a study offer, applicants declaring a disability or special educational needs are referred to the Department of Student Affairs and provided with additional information on the support required. The following are our priority media for delivering information and support:

- a. The University website;
- b. The University's Customer Relationship Management system (Hobson Radius) through a scheduled enquirer and applicant communications plan;
- c. Printed media including prospectus, catalogues, and brochures;
- d. External listings services, including those provided by UNISTATS, UCAS and the Common Application;
- e. Selected third-party websites and publications;
- f. Digital Marketing Campaigns;

- a. Open and Taster days;
- b. Face-to-face student recruitment and outreach activity;
- c. School Recruitment Liaison;
- d. Key UK metric data including Unistates, DHLE, NSS.

VERSION MANAGEMENT

Responsible Department: Admissions			
Approving body: Academic Board			
Version no.	Key Changes	Date of approval	Date of effect
001		24 July 2018	28 August 2018
002	Minor editorial changes	20 September 2018	20 September 2018
		Restricted access? <i>Tick as appropriate</i> ☐ Yes ☒ No	