

POSTGRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY

2026-2027

Introduction

1. The University is committed to providing a fair, efficient and professional admissions service which complies with legislative and regulatory requirements and aligns with sector best practice, including the [Universities UK and Guild HE Fair Admissions Code of Practice](#).
2. The University aims to ensure that all information provided to applicants is clear, accurate, timely and complete, in accordance with consumer protection legislation and regulatory expectations.
3. Information published on the University's [website](#) and in applicant communications forms part of the basis of the contract between the applicant and the University. The University will take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is correct at the time of application.

Scope

4. Admissions criteria related to academic standards, including English language criteria, transfer credit and offer thresholds, are set by the Academic Board, and reported to the Board of Trustees.
5. Once approved by Academic Board, the admissions criteria are published in this policy for the relevant year and are published on the University [website](#).
6. The Admissions and the University Recruitment Team provide advice, guidance and recommendations on the acceptability and equivalence of a range of entry qualifications using UK ENIC (Ecctis) and United Kingdom Visa and Immigration (UKVI) guidelines.
7. Admissions provides semesterly updates on admissions entry criteria and statistical trends to the Academic Board. The Provost reports this data to the Board of Trustees.
8. The final decision over and responsibility for the admission of any student belongs to the Provost, as Chair of the Academic Board, reporting to the President and the Board of Trustees. All decisions are made in accordance with published criteria and retained for audit purposes.
9. Monitoring and review of admissions are 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 (OfS).

General Principles

Admissions Requirements – Academic

10. The University welcomes applications from students with the academic ability to succeed. All applications are considered in a robust and holistic manner.
11. The University operates a centralised Admissions process. Admissions staff are responsible for processing decisions in line with agreed criteria approved by Academic Board. Where discretion is exercised, reasons will be recorded and subject to internal audit review.
12. Admissions requirements are defined as the minimum threshold of academic and English language achievement that all applicants should meet to be considered for admission to an academic programme.
13. The minimum academic requirement for admission to a postgraduate programme is normally a UK undergraduate degree with minimum second-class honours (2.2), or a US undergraduate degree with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.500, or an international equivalent. Please see the University's [website](#) for further details. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission.
14. 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.
15. Admissions requirements are expressed in terms of qualification level and grade.

Admissions Requirements – English Language

16. In addition to meeting the academic entry requirements, all students must meet the minimum English language entry requirements for their chosen programme to study at the University.
17. Applicants who are not nationals of 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.
18. English language requirements vary by programme. Please see the University [website](#) and programme pages for programme-specific requirements and a list of acceptable English language proficiency tests.
19. The University may, with the approval of Academic Board, offer an internal English language proficiency test for applicants from Partner universities. Internal English tests

may be used for academic assessment only and do not replace UKVI requirements unless explicitly approved.

Admission Decisions and Offers

20. The University applies standard admissions criteria across a range of qualifications. All applications are assessed on the following with 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 at the point of application;
 - b. Prior academic achievement, or prior experiential learning;
 - c. Any expected results in formal examinations;
 - d. English language qualification;
 - e. Personal statement;
 - f. Academic or professional reference;
 - g. Performance at interview (where applicable)
 - h. Suitability for intended profession (where relevant).
21. Applications that do not clearly meet or exceed the published entry requirements are referred to an appropriate member of faculty for review and recommendation. The University may invite such candidates to interview.
22. In most cases, applications are assessed on application alone; however, the University 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, or where this is considered necessary to fully consider an application. 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.
23. The University issues two types of offers:
 - 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. The offer includes conditions which the applicant must achieve before their place on the programme is confirmed. Conditions may include achievement of minimum grades, academic qualifications, and English language qualifications.
 - 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, English language test results, and any other stipulated supporting documents.
24. Offer letters are issued electronically via the Applicant Portal. All admissions-related communications are sent to the email address supplied by the applicant on their application.

10.

Entry with Transfer Credit

25. Postgraduate applicants who have accumulated credit at FHEQ Level 7 may request to have this credit applied to degree requirements on taught Masters programmes. Please see [Postgraduate Transfer Credit Policy](#) for further details.
26. An estimate of transfer credit and of time to completion expressed in semesters will be provided. 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 accepted their offer, although earlier evaluations may be made upon request.

Equality of Opportunity

27. The University is committed to equality of opportunity in its admissions processes. All applicants will be considered fairly on the basis of their ability to meet the academic requirements and benefit from their chosen programme.
28. Admissions decisions are made solely on academic merit and potential, assessed against the published entry criteria. No applicant will be treated less favourably on the grounds of any protected characteristic, as defined under the Equality Act 2010. These characteristics include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The University is committed to ensuring that its admissions process is fair, transparent and consistently applied.

Readmission

29. Registry Services assesses the applications of those who have previously studied at the University in line with the University's [Readmission Policy: Postgraduate](#). Where an applicant has previously applied, the outcome of the previous application may be relevant to the outcome of the current application.

Applicants with Disabilities

30. The University welcomes applications from individuals with disabilities, long-term health conditions or specific educational needs. Disclosure of a disability, long-term health condition and/or special educational need has no bearing on the academic selection decision, which is made independently based on academic merit and programme requirements.

31. Disclosures are referred to Student Affairs who work confidentially with the applicant 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.
32. 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 ensures that any reasonable adjustments to the applicant assessment process are put in place.

Criminal Convictions

33. When an applicant declares a criminal record, this is considered by Student Affairs with appropriate professional input and in relation to the programme applied for, to decide whether the University can proceed with the application.

Joining the University

34. When making an offer, the University ensures that applicants understand:
- a. obligations of accepting a place;
 - b. where to access further advice and guidance before joining the University;
 - c. how to enrol.
35. All Admissions Offers are accompanied by:
- a. offer terms and conditions; payment terms and conditions, and fees policies;
 - b. Admissions contact details;
 - c. Instructions for progressing the application, including verification of qualifications and other documentation and, if the 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 days and support services;
 - e. academic regulations and policies;
 - f. academic integrity and student conduct policies;
 - g. programme specification and course descriptors;
 - h. details of fees, housing and financial support information, including scholarships.
 - i.
36. Applicants are required to accept their offer via the Applicant Portal.
37. A contract between the applicant and the University is formed when an applicant accepts an offer of admission.
38. In accordance with UK consumer protection legislation, applicants have the legal right to withdraw from an offer they have accepted within 14 days of acceptance of the offer. We will, however, consider cancellation requests once this cancellation period has elapsed, where possible. A request to withdraw from acceptance of an offer must be made in writing to the Admissions Team.

Deferred Entry

39. Applicants must normally meet all academic entry requirements in the year of application to be granted deferred entry. Deferred entry is normally permitted for up to one academic year (two semesters).

Programme Closure and Changes Policy for Prospective Students

40. The University makes every reasonable effort to avoid changes to or closure of an academic programme for which an offer has been made. However, where changes are necessary, the University reserves the right to make reasonable variations to programmes where such changes are required due to:
- a. academic developments;
 - b. staffing/operational changes;
 - c. regulatory requirements;
 - d. circumstances beyond the University's control.
41. Where material change is required, Admissions provides written notification of programme change and/or closure at the earliest possible opportunity, and presents alternative study options to each applicant, intended to ensure that the applicant's study intentions can be met.
42. Applicants will be offered one or more of the following options as circumstances allow:
- a. deferral by one or more semesters if appropriate;
 - b. transfer to an alternative programme for the original entry semester;
 - c. transfer to the same or similar programme at another University.

Plagiarism and falsified applications

43. The University reserves the right to withdraw an offer of admission where an applicant is found to have supplied false information, including falsified references, plagiarised content, or omitted relevant information from their application.
44. No further applications will be considered from an applicant who has been found to have supplied false information. If an applicant is found to have provided fraudulent documents after the point of enrolment, this could result in being withdrawn from the programme.

Applicant Data

45. The University collects and uses applicant data in line with its Privacy Policy. Data submitted by applicants as part of the application and during the admissions process is used to assess the suitability of applicants for study at

the University. Anonymised data is used for the purposes of analysis and monitoring.

46. Application data forms part of the student record for applicants who are admitted to the University and is transferred to Registry Services after their place is confirmed. Personal data for applicants who are not admitted is deleted in accordance with the University's data retention schedule.

47. All personal data is handled in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Feedback, Appeals and Complaints

48. The University aims to consider all applications fairly, consistently and in line with this admissions policy. Admissions will provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants on request.

49. The University recognises that there may be occasions when applicants wish to make an appeal against an admissions decision or formal complaint about the admissions process.

50.

51. An Admissions appeal refers to the admissions decision on an application to study at the University, either at the offer stage or confirmation of results. The University only considers appeals which are made:

- a. against a final decision on an application;
- b. made by the applicant in writing to the Head of Admissions;
- c. received by the University within ten 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 the University at the time of application, through no fault of the applicant; and/or
 - ii. how the University dealt with the application differed materially and significantly from written policy and procedure.

52. An Admissions complaint refers to a specific concern about the admissions service provided while making an application to study, which could be unrelated to the decision on the application. The complaints procedure cannot be used to appeal against the outcome of an application. For more information relating to admissions complaints, please see the [Non-Academic Related Matters Complaints Policy \(NARCP\)](#).

53. 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, Student Affairs will provide feedback which may include potential options elsewhere.

- 54. Admissions appeals and complaints made on behalf of an applicant by a third party would not normally be accepted, unless this type of arrangement has already been formally recorded as part of an approved disability support plan or similar agreement.
- 55. Applicants will not be disadvantaged for raising an admissions complaint or an admissions appeal.

Policy Review

- 56. This policy is subject to annual review to ensure that it remains accurate, effective and compliant with applicable legislation, regulatory requirements and sector best practice. Any material changes to this policy will be subject to approval by Academic Board.

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
003	Updated English language requirements	25 June 2020	11 August 2020
004	Editorial changes, updated English language and pre-sessional information, updated appeals timeline	June 2021	30 August 2021
005	3+2+M requirements added, change to PG interview requirement	May 2022	01 September 2022
006	Changed Provost to the Office of the Provost	June 2023	Sep 2023
007	Updated English language requirements and entry requirements, removed underage admission and safeguarding information, minor editorial changes	July 2024	Sept 2024
008	Refreshed in alignment with Fair Admissions Code of Practice and for clarity	June 2026	Sept 2026
		Restricted access? <i>Tick as appropriate</i> ☐ Yes ☒ No	