

UNIVERSITY CENTRE PETERBOROUGH POLICY

Procedure Number and Name:		
Higher Education Recruitment and Admissions Policy		
Date:	01/09/19	<h1>UCP P921</h1>
Version:	F / 01/09/2019	
Originating Author:	Academic Officer	
Equality Impact Assessment:	Section one completed	
Last date of enhancement:	01/09/2019	
Date of Review:	31/07/2020	
Purpose of Policy:	<p>This procedure is designed to ensure that all undergraduate and postgraduate degree applications are considered fairly and consistently and in accordance with professional standards. PRC and UCP are committed to ensuring fair access for all individuals seeking a place and encourages applications from all students who are able to demonstrate the potential to meet the entry criteria for the relevant course and to benefit from study at this level.</p> <p>This procedure ensures that UCP and PRC works within the guidance for Higher Education providers published by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to ensure that applicants are provided with all the information they need to make an informed decision about their course of study, under extant consumer rights regulations. It also acts within the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) guidelines in relation to undergraduate admissions.</p>	
Scope	<p>UCP Admissions has oversight of all recruitment and decision making on applications being made to HNC and HND courses at PRC and degree or postgraduate degree courses at UCP. This policy covers all stages of an applicant's interaction from initial enquiry through application, receipt of selection decision and the transition to enrolments and induction of successful applicants.</p>	
Risk Analysis	<p>The UCP Admissions are committed to the provision of comprehensive, open and transparent recruitment information ensuring accurate, relevant, and current procedures are followed enabling applicants to make an informed decision. Failure to have this policy in place or non-adherence may result in inconsistency practices leading to dissatisfaction and poor reputation.</p>	
Consolation undertaken:	<p>This has been reviewed and endorsed by the Student Officer and Academic Standards and Quality Committee members.</p>	

1. RELATED DOCUMENTS

1.1 This procedure is based on the expectations contained within Chapter B2 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). It complies with awarding body and validating partner's admission procedures.

1.2 <http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/>

Policy 920 Higher Nationals Recognition of Prior Learning
Policy 981 Higher Education Complaints Process
Policy 940 Higher Education Removal of Course, Curriculum Revisions
UCP Rules and Regulations v2
UCP/ARU Academic Regulations
HE Student Charter
Terms and Conditions of Admissions and Enrolment

<http://infozone.peterborough.ac.uk/policies>

Policy 818 Additional Learner Support (ALS)
P980 Higher Education Fitness to Practise
Policy 822 Recruitment of Tier 4 sponsored migrants

<http://www.peterborough.ac.uk/policies-statements/>

Policy 101 Equality and Diversity
P922 Higher Education HNC/D Fee and Refund Policy

2. DATA PROTECTION

2.1 PRC and UCP takes its responsibilities regarding the protection of personal privacy seriously. The formation we collect and hold as a result of application, enrolment and progress through the course will be processed and used in accordance with Data Protection Legislation. As such, applicants' data is treated as confidential by all staff involved in the admissions process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately. However, the aforementioned Act requires UCP and PRC to release certain information to UK authorities upon request in order to assist those authorities with the prevention and detection of fraud or other crimes. We will release the requested information on receipt of an appropriate request from UK authorities such as (but not limited to) the police, Home Office (for immigration and related matters), local authorities, and the Department for Work and Pensions. We may use anonymised data collected as part of an individual's application for the purpose of fulfilling statistical and reporting requirements.

2.2 Staff involved in admissions communicate only with applicants themselves. Information will only be shared in exceptional circumstances, and only where the applicant has given express permission for a third party to communicate on their behalf.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The UCP Admissions are the first point of contact for students wishing to apply to study a HNC/HND course at PRC or an undergraduate/postgraduate degree course at UCP. The Academic Director of UCP has overall responsibility for overseeing student admission on undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Enquiries

4.1.1 UCP Admissions is committed to providing clear and concise information about qualifications, entry requirements, application procedures and the admissions process in a timely manner. This includes ensuring detailed and up-to-date information is provided on the UCP website and prospectus.

- 4.1.2 The prospectus information is correct at the time of going to print. In the event that information changes, these changes are communicated through the website and where necessary by direct communication to applicants affected. Applicants are advised to refer to our webpages for the most up-to-date information.
- 4.1.3 A member of the Admissions Office will respond to an applicant/course enquiry within 10 working days.
- 4.1.4 All enquiries are logged on ProSolution by a member of the Admissions Office with 5 working days of receipt.
- 4.2 **General Entry Requirements**
- 4.2.1 UCP Admissions, makes explicit and publishes the entry requirements in the prospectus and on the UCP website (<http://www.ucp.ac.uk>) for each undergraduate course and the means by which the eligibility of each applicant is assessed. These entry requirements include the educational qualifications (including minimum grades to be achieved) and the knowledge and skills required for admission. The website has the latest application and entry requirement information which is valid and binding.
- 4.2.2 Applicants are admitted based on an assessment that:
- they can satisfy all pre-course requirements including completing all paperwork accurately and within agreed timescales, and attending interviews and assessments
 - they have read, understood and agree to be bound by the Terms and Conditions of their admission and enrolment (found at <http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/>)
 - they meet the specific entry requirements of a course as outlined on their offer letter- for example they may have to have a work placement
 - they have satisfactory references where these have been requested
 - they agree to pay any fees required
 - if the applicant is offered a provisional place they must provide details of meeting the provisions set as soon as they are met
 - they meet all other admission criteria.
- 4.2.3 This assessment is based on a range of factors including applicants' educational, professional and personal experiences and competencies and their potential contribution to the course. In addition to academic qualifications applicants will also be considered on their ability to be self-organised and to work well independently and with others, their motivation to learn and their demonstration of interest in the subject area.
- 4.2.4 The decision to admit an applicant is based solely on an assessment of the merit of each individual case.
- Qualifications completed and pending are compared against the published entry requirements for the course applied for, to assess whether the applicant meets, or could potentially meet, the entry requirements prior to the intake date.
 - International qualifications are checked against the Equivalences Database and advice sought where necessary.
 - Consideration is given to applicant's personal statement to see why an applicant has applied for a particular course, the research they have undertaken into the course, the transferable skills they have, their motivation, and suitability.
 - Consideration is given to the academic ability and suitability of the applicant for the course applied for by looking at references.

- Criminal Convictions may prevent entrance to specific courses (refer to the Higher Education Fitness to Practise Policy).

4.3 **HNC and HND PRC provision Entry Requirements**

4.3.1 Specific entry requirements are published on the PRC website. The minimum academic qualifications required for admission to Higher National awards are one of the following:

- a) pass in one subject at GCE or VCE Advanced Level and passes at grade C or above in three other subjects at GCSE level;
- b) a P grade or above in a BTEC National Award (6 units) and passes at grade C or above in three other subjects at GCSE level;
- c) passes at grade C or above in two subjects at Scottish Highers;
- d) passes at grade C or above in one subject at Scottish Advanced Highers;
- e) passes at grade C3 or above in two subjects at Higher Level in the Irish Leaving Certificate;
- f) successful completion of the European or International Baccalaureate;
- g) pass in an Access Course approved by an Authorised Validating Agency or evidence of an equivalent learning achievement;
- h) any other academic qualification or combination of qualifications (including combinations involving GCE or VCE Advanced Subsidiary level and/or Key Skills qualifications) deemed to be equivalent in breadth and depth to one of the above. In considering other qualifications take into account the UCAS Tariff;
- i) GCSE English Language grade C/ 4 or ILETS 5.5 (overall band score) with 5.5 for reading and writing elements.

4.4 **Degree and Postgraduate UCP provision Entry Requirements**

4.4.1 UCP welcomes applications from appropriately qualified students holding a wide range of qualifications, including GCE A levels, BTEC qualifications, Access to Higher Education Diploma, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Diplomas and many others. Up-to-date entry criteria for part time and full time courses are published on the website.

4.5 **Applicants for Whom English is not the First Language**

4.5.1 Applicants whose first language is not English are required to demonstrate proficiency in the English language before they are admitted through possession of one of the following:

- GCSE English Language grade C/4 or equivalent
- Degree and Foundation Degrees- UKVI IELTS 6/6.5 (overall band score) with nothing lower than 5.5 in any of the four elements (listening, speaking, reading and writing) dependent on course.
- Higher National Awards- UKVI IELTS 5.5 (overall band score) with 5.5 for reading and writing elements

4.6 **Recruitment of Tier 4 sponsored migrants**

4.6.1 The College and University Centre Peterborough are not accepting applications from International students for courses requiring a Tier 4 visa.

4.7 **Recognition of Prior Learning RPL/ Admission with Credit APL**

4.7.1 RPL/ APL/ APEL is the term used to describe the process for admitting students with prior learning acquired through formal study, through work, and through experience. RPL entry offers applicants flexibility in their studies by enabling the approved credit value from their study to be applied towards the receiving award. The student then achieves the higher award by successfully completing the remaining required modules/units for that award. HNC and HND Applications must adhere to the P920 Higher Nationals

Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. Degree Applications must adhere to the ARU Academic Regulations. Evidence is required to be submitted i.e. certificates, transcripts and employer statements.

4.8 **Fraudulent Applications**

4.8.1 UCP Admissions expects that applicants will have provided full, honest, and accurate information on their application form and in all subsequent communications with the institution. Where the Admissions Team has reason to suspect that this may not be the case, it reserves the right to investigate the matter fully.

4.8.2 **UCAS similarity detection for personal statement**

UCAS operates a verification unit and has a number of systems in place to check full time applications for fraud. All identified fraudulent applications from UCAS are notified to the UCAS verification unit.

4.8.3 UCAS check all personal statements using a similarity detection system, Copycatch. Each incoming personal statement is compared against a library of personal statements already in the UCAS system and a library of sample statements collected from a variety of websites. Any statements showing significant levels of similarity are reviewed by members of the UCAS Similarity Detection Service.

4.8.4 UCP are then notified on a daily basis of any cases where there are reasonable grounds to suspect plagiarism. **A member of the Admissions Office contact the applicant within 10 working days** and they are notified that the personal statement has been identified as potentially plagiarised. A full list of fraudulent applications is available on a restricted area of the UCAS website, for all universities to access.

4.8.5 The decision about what action, if any, to take regarding notified cases rests with the UCP Deputy Director. It is the responsibility of a member of the Admissions Office to note this information on an applicant's record on Prosolution and contact the applicant in relation to the results. **The applicant will have 14 days to respond.** If the applicant does not respond during this timeframe then their application will be rejected.

4.8.6 If the UCP Deputy Director adjudges that an offer cannot be made, the applicant will receive a rejection of their application and will be provided with the details of the Complaints Procedure.

4.8.7 If the information provided by the applicant is sufficient to demonstrate there has been no plagiarism, then this will be communicated to the applicant and their application will be considered in the normal way.

Anti-fraud checking on qualifications from UK educated applicants

4.8.8 It is the responsibility of the Admissions Office to ensure that all undergraduate applicants who are admitted to UCP have verified qualifications.

4.8.7 Most qualifications are verified by UCAS. In this instance, where a qualification has been verified by UCAS, no further checking is required. Where applicants have disclosed qualifications not verifiable by UCAS, a member of the Admissions Office will attempt to validate this information using the verification tools available to them. For UK educated applicants, the main source for this information is the Learner Records Service (LRS) provided by the government.

4.8.8 Where an applicant is suspected to have provided information on their application which does not match the information on the verification tool, a member of the Admissions Office will write to the applicant to query the discrepancy within **10 working days of**

receipt of the applicant. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Officer to set an appropriate period of time for the applicant to respond to this query, this is **14 days**. If the applicant does not respond during this timeframe then their application will be rejected.

- 4.8.9 If the information provided by the applicant is sufficient demonstration to be adjudged as valid evidence, then this will be communicated to the applicant and he/she will receive confirmation of the offer. The assessment must be made within 10 working days from receipt of the applicant's response. If the Admissions Office adjudges that an offer cannot be made, the applicant will receive a rejection on their application and will be provided with the details of the Complaints Procedure.

Anti-fraud checking on qualifications from non UK educated applicants

- 4.8.10 Where an applicant's qualification information is not verifiable by UCAS, the applicant will be required to provide formal evidence of their qualifications. This formal evidence will typically be requested by a member of the Admissions Office. Where a member of the Admissions Office has concerns on the legitimacy of the information provided, they are within their rights to request further information from the applicant.
- 4.8.11 Where an applicant is suspected to have provided information on their application which does not match the information on the verification tools used for assessments, a member of the Admissions Office will write to the applicant to query the discrepancy. The applicant is asked to respond within 14 working days of being contacted. If the applicant does not respond during this timeframe then their application will be rejected.
- 4.8.12 Should the applicant provide a response, this explanation and accompanying evidence will then be considered by a member of the Admissions Office and the UCP Deputy Director, alongside all other elements of the application. It is ultimately the Admissions Tutor's responsibility to determine whether there is a case to be answered.
- 4.8.13 If the information provided by the applicant is sufficient to address the suspicions raised, then this will be communicated to the applicant and the application will be considered in the normal way.
- 4.8.14 If the UCP Deputy Director adjudges that an offer cannot be made, the applicant will receive a rejection on their application and will be provided with the details of the Complaints Procedure.

Current students

- 4.8.15 If a current student is suspected of providing fraudulent information to gain entry, the UCP Academic Director will agree an appropriate course of action. Students who have already registered at UCP are subject to the Terms and Conditions for Study, and may have their registration terminated or may be subject to the Student Disciplinary procedure found in the Rules, Regulations and Procedures for students.

4.9 Selection Decisions

- 4.9.1 Full-time undergraduate course applications are made through UCAS. Applications to UCAS are made online using their web-based Tracker System via 'Apply' www.ucas.ac.uk/apply. The application period begins on 1st September and the first deadline is 15 January in the year the programme commences, although it is possible to apply later than this if courses still have vacancies. Anyone applying after the 30 June by 18:00 will be automatically entered into 'Clearing'. Clearing takes place after the

publication of the A Level results in August when universities will have a clearer picture of how many offers have been accepted and therefore how many vacancies they may have. These dates may vary or be updated each academic year by UCAS. Visit their website for up-to-date information and deadlines.

4.9.2 Part-time and postgraduate course applications are paperbased. Application forms are available from www.ucp.ac.uk/how-to-apply/ and should be returned to: University Centre Peterborough, Park Crescent Campus, Peterborough, PE1 4DZ or via email to ucp.admissions@anglia.ac.uk

4.9.3 When an application form is received the UCP Admissions staff review this for:

a) Learning Support/ mobility requirements

- If there is a declared learning support/mobility requirement a member of the UCP Student Support team contacts the applicant to confirm the applicants previous history of support and to complete a Disclosure Form. Once the completed form is received it is passed to the Student Support team for processing.
- Reasonable Adjustments will be offered to all applicants who disclose based upon a needs assessment and/or a meeting between the UCP Support Team and the student, leading to the SORA (Statement of Reasonable Adjustments). The purpose of reasonable adjustments is to remove barriers which you may experience because of your disability, whilst maintaining academic standards.
- For those students whose needs require more than the Reasonable Adjustments that are offered, UCP will support students in applying for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). In order for a student to receive support from our organisation, students must apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) funding through Student Finance England. Failure to apply for DSA may result in minimal support being provided and/or you be liable for any costs incurred by UCP/PRC providing support. Instances where students are not in receipt of DSA should be referred to the UCP Deputy Director via Student Support.
- If an applicant is eligible for DSA, Student Finance will write and tell them to arrange a Needs Assessment to find out exactly what equipment and support they need. The nearest Needs Assessment centre can be found at www.dsa-gag.org.uk.
- Once DSA get the results of the applicants Needs Assessment, they will let them know if they can pay for any specialist equipment and other support recommended in your needs assessment report. They will also give instructions for ordering equipment or arranging other support. The applicant will need to provide UCP with a copy of your entitlement notification, via email or post. ALS will contact the learner about beginning their Specialist 1:1 Study Skills Support (Band 4) or other lower Band support that is awarded due to sensory impairment or multiple and profound difficulties.
- If an applicant discloses that they have a medical condition which could affect their studies it is a requirement that UCP undertake a Risk Assessment to ensure that all their needs are supported whilst studying.
- Failure to disclose a learning support/mobility requirement may lead to delayed support when a student does not declare a need before commencement of their course.
- Disclosure of any learning support and mobility requirements does not impact on an offer.

4.9.4

b) Criminal Convictions

It is necessary to take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe environment for other students, visitors and staff, meet requirements of PSRB's and also assess applicants ability to undertake workplacements and practice in their chosen profession. UCP therefore requires all applicants who accept an offer of a place to study to disclose to UCP any unspent, relevant criminal convictions **within fourteen days of accepting their offer and prior to enrolment**. A fresh disclosure is required for any offer regardless of any previous disclosure and assessment of a criminal conviction.

Additionally, all institutions which offer programmes of study requiring students to work with children or with adults in vulnerable situations must ensure that such students provide a satisfactory Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS; formerly the Criminal Records Bureau) enhanced disclosure before being permitted to commence such a programme of study.

Possession of a criminal conviction will not necessarily mean that an application to study will be unsuccessful. However, as part of the admissions process, 'relevant' matters on an applicants criminal record are risk assessed.

Relevant Unspent Convictions

4.9.5

A 'relevant' criminal conviction is one which may have implications for UCP's duty of care towards the safety of our students, staff, and visitors. This includes, but is not limited to convictions concerning:

- Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm.
- Sexual offences, including those listed in the Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking (drug offences only involving possession are not relevant offences).
- Offences involving firearms.
- Offences involving arson.
- Offences involving terrorism.

This list is not definitive but seeks to outline the sorts of offences for which a conviction will be considered relevant by UCP.

4.9.6

There is no requirement for an applicant to disclose a conviction which is 'spent' unless the application is for a course linked to a professional, statutory, and regulatory bodies (PSRBs). For these programmes a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check will be required as a condition of offer. A criminal conviction can become 'spent' after a period of time. The length of time it takes to become spent is defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and depends on the sentence or disposal made by the court following the conviction. Until that period has passed, the conviction is considered 'unspent'. An applicant who is unsure whether their conviction is 'unspent' and therefore needs to be disclosed can seek advice from the charities NACRO <https://www.nacro.org.uk/>

Declaration of an unspent criminal Conviction

4.9.7

No declaration of criminal matters or associated information will be requested or considered until UCP has decided to issue an offer to the applicant on the basis of the standard admissions criteria for the relevant course. A criminal convictions declaration and instruction on how to complete the declaration is sent to the applicant with an offer of

study. The offer-holder will be required to complete this declaration before they are able to enrol on the course. It is important to note that a failure to declare a relevant unspent criminal conviction is taken very seriously, and could result in withdrawal from UCP.

Assessment of a Criminal Conviction Disclosure

4.9.8 Once returned to UCP Admissions, the Declaration Form is sent to the relevant faculty's HE Manager. An assessment is led by the HE Manager with a member of Student Support present to record the findings. As part of this process the applicant will be given an appropriate opportunity to provide information and to identify any third parties who may be willing and able to provide relevant information.. In making its assessment the HE Manager considers whether there are unacceptable risk associated with admitting the offer holder or admitting the applicant without specific conditions. The following factors will be considered:

- information indicating that the offer-holder presents, or may present, an ongoing risk to the safety or wellbeing of individuals with whom students come into contact on site, during work placements or is otherwise unlikely to be able to meet the profession's requirements and standards during that activity;
- The overall offer-holder profile together with the following information:
 - The seriousness of the offence and its relevance to the safety of staff, students and individuals;
 - Any pattern of offending;
 - Any mitigating circumstances;
 - The offer-holder's ability to reflect on the alleged offence and their motivation to change;
 - Professional or statutory body requirements, including any requirements as to honesty and integrity;
 - The recommendation of any referees.

Disclosure Assessment Outcome

4.9.9 One of the following outcomes is made.

1. The level of risk is determined to be unacceptable such that the offer holder may not be admitted to UCP. Where this is the decision, the Admissions team will contact the offer-holder to withdraw their offer. The applicant will be notified in writing including a brief description of the reasons for the decision. The applicant will be informed of the period for which the information relating to their conviction will be retained.
2. The level of risk may be managed by the imposition of specific conditions, such as exclusion from workplacements. The applicant will be notified in writing including a full explanation of the conditions applied and brief description of the reasons for the decision. The applicant will be informed of the period for which the information relating to their conviction will be retained.
3. The level of risk is determined to be acceptable and the applicant may be admitted without any specific conditions. The applicant will be notified in writing including information about the period for which the information relating to their conviction will be retained.

4.9.10 **Failure to provide accurate declarations of criminal convictions**

Where information is received indicating that there may have been a failure to make a declaration the relevant HE Manager will be informed and shall take reasonable steps to

- 4.9.10 establish whether there has been such a failure, including through communication with the offer-holder.
- If the applicant has not yet received an offer, or the deadline for submission of self-disclosure has not yet passed, the applicant will be contacted to make them aware that the information has been disclosed to and inform them that they will need to make a self-disclosure by the relevant deadline should they accept the offer. Where a failure to accurately declare a relevant conviction is identified after a student has enrolled, action under the Student Disciplinary Procedure or the Fitness to Practise Procedure may be taken. If at any time during their enrolment a student is convicted of a criminal offence, they are required to report this immediately to their HE Manager.
- 4.9.11 **Record keeping**
- Information relating to disclosure and assessment of a criminal conviction is recognised as subject to data protection legislation. All records and correspondence relating to an offer holder who has a relevant criminal conviction disclosure will be securely stored by UCP Admissions and only accessible by authorised staff members.
- 4.9.5 For the majority of pathways, UCP Admissions has delegated responsibility for decision making on behalf of tutors in order to ensure a responsive admissions process. For these pathways if an applicant meets, or is likely to meet the entry requirements of the award for which they have applied, the UCP Admissions staff makes an unconditional or a conditional offer as appropriate. This decision is input into admissions student database. An offer letter is produced and sent to the applicant. UCAS applicants are informed via UCASTRACK prior to receiving an offer letter.
- 4.9.6 An application may be referred to the Tutor for a decision when the applicant does not meet the entry requirements but has substantive relevant work or career experience, or where a borderline decision on an offer needs to be made.
- 4.9.7 For some pathways the UCP Admissions Team do not have devolved responsibility for decision making. This may be because consideration of written work or a portfolio is involved which requires an academic decision, or the course is governed by a professional body and interviews are required. In these cases the application will be sent to the Tutor for a decision and returned to the UCP Admissions Team for the decision to be processed. Wherever possible and to avoid unnecessary delay, documents are emailed/electronically communicated.
- 4.10 **Interviews**
- 4.10.1 For awards where an interview is part of the entry requirements, the UCP Admissions shortlists applicants for interview using criteria provided by the faculty. The interview is arranged by UCP Admissions who invite the applicants to attend within 10 working days of receipt of the application. After the interview the Course Leader/Tutor decides whether to offer a place and returns the application to UCP Admissions within 5 working days to complete the offer making process.
- 4.10.2 Applicants who are not invited to attend for an interview will receive equal consideration. However, the College and UCP reserve the right to reject applications from applicants who are invited to attend an interview and who do not respond to one, or exceptionally two, specific invitations to attend.
- 4.11 **Conditional Offer Making**
- 4.11.1 Conditional Offer letters state the specific entry requirements that an applicant must achieve to confirm their place. The offer may include non-academic conditions that the

- applicant must meet before admission to the course is confirmed. These may include satisfactory completion of a Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- 4.11.2 UCP Admissions staff may lower the standard conditional offer in individual cases in accordance to this policy. Where appropriate, an offer on an alternative course to the course for which the applicant has applied may be made.
- 4.11.3 UCP will verify all results by receiving and checking certificates and information provided on the Personal Learning Record System prior to confirming an applicant's place and before enrolling him/her on a course. Applicants must provide evidence of their stated qualifications on official paperwork before their offer is made unconditional allowing them to enrol.
- 4.11.4 On receipt of the applicant's results, UCP Admissions check to see if the conditions of the offer have been met. An Unconditional Firm status will be confirmed where the applicant has met the conditions set. If an applicant has missed the conditions by a small margin the applicant's place may still be confirmed at the discretion of the UCP Academic Director.

Contextualised Offer Making

UK universities are increasingly being called upon to reduce academic entry requirements for disadvantaged applicants as a vital means of promoting fairer access to higher education.

Contextual data and information can be used to assess an applicant's prior attainment and potential, in the context of their individual circumstances. Contextual data includes educational, geodemographic, and socio-economic background data, such as historic data about an applicant's school or college. Contextual information relates to individual applicant circumstances, such as if they have been in care, or involved in widening participation activities.

Extensive research shows that socio-economic background, where you live, type of school attended, and subject choice, can all impact on attainment and, therefore, progression to HE. Most recently, research by the [Centre for Social Mobility at the University of Exeter](#)¹, commissioned by the Fair Education Alliance, found that evidence supports the use of contextual data and information.

Sources of Contextualised Information

Contextualised admissions is used by UCP in an attempt to mitigate these factors, by using a wider range of indicators to identify who 'merits' a place, rather than attainment alone. As part of UCP's admissions process there are multiple sources of contextual data and information sources UCP use to help assess an applicant's before a decision about an application is made.

Contextual data sources could include:

- UCAS' contextual data services – these include third party data from public sources about school performance and young participation in higher education rates by neighbourhood (POLAR3, SIMD etc.), as well as UCAS generated

¹Fair Admissions to Higher Education: Recommendations for Good Practice 2004 (accessed 05/11/19) https://static1.squarespace.com/static/543e665de4b0fbb2b140b291/t/5b4457fb70a6ade52de65f16/1531205646268/Research+into+the+use+of+contextualised+admissions_University+of+Exeter+report.pdf

statistics, such as an applicant's MEM quintile commercial sources (e.g. companies that specialise in offering these services);

- other sources (e.g. direct from government departments / agencies);
- UCP's own data and research;

Contextual information sources could include:

- Applicants declare contextual information as part of their UCAS Undergraduate application. Crucially, the personal statement and reference also contain contextual information.
- Participation in outreach activities

How UCP uses contextual data

Each case is considered on an individual basis and the information used is primarily drawn from UCAS application forms, with the information on participation in widening participation/outreach activities provided by the Admissions and Widening Access Committee (AWAS).

In addition to considering an applicant's academic achievement, UCP will consider contextual data when making admissions decisions. Where possible, UCP will make an offer of admission, or offer an interview, audition or portfolio review, to students who have one or more of the following contextual identifiers:

- Applicant has been under a Local Authority in care or looked after for three months or more
Applicants will be expected to confirm their Care Status. This information is derived from two fields in the UCAS/Part time application form, so it is important that care leavers declare this in their application. If their reference confirms that they spent three months or more in local authority care, Admissions will process the application. If not, Admissions will ask the applicant to send some more information, such as an email or letter from their local authority, school/college or other organisation.
- Applicants who live in a POLAR4* Q1 and attend a English state school/college
The Participation of Local Areas (POLAR)² classification groups areas across the UK based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education. It looks at how likely young people are to participate in HE across the UK and shows how this varies by area. POLAR classifies local areas into five groups - or quintiles - based on the proportion of 18 year olds who enter HE aged 18 or 19 years old Quintile one shows the lowest rate of participation. Quintile five shows the highest rate of participation. To find out if applicants will be eligible for a contextual offer, the following lookup is used to identify the POLAR quintile that someone lives in: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/postcode-search/>
- Verifiable participation in UCP targeted widening participation outreach activities
Target activities are defined in the UCP Access and Participation Plan.

Contextual Offer Requirements

Applications will be assessed in the usual way, the only difference will be that applicants who meet one of the contextual admissions criteria listed above could be:

- a) given additional consideration and will not be rejected solely on the basis of their predicted (or actual) grades;

² <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/>

- b) guaranteed an interview (or similar additional opportunity dependent upon the course);
- c) made an offer which is lower than the typical offer for that course.

Where the entry requirements include a required subject, this subject must still be achieved at the minimum requirement set out in our published entry requirements.

UCP reserves the right to apply this process to applications using data available at that time. Where there is no data available in order to make a fair judgement, we will not apply the contextual admissions policy to the application.

4.12 **Unconditional Offer Making**

4.12.1 An unconditional offer means that an applicant has a place to study here with no conditions attached. An unconditional offer may be made to an applicant who has already achieved and have evidence of qualifications results which meet the required entry criteria. Personal statements and references will also be taken into account and, for some courses, an interview will form part of the assessment.

4.12.2 Applicants are still required to provide evidence of their qualifications.

4.13 **Unsuccessful applicants**

4.13.1 The reasons an offer has not been made are communicated to applicants via UCAS Track (full time applications) or via letter (part time and postgraduate applications) 15 working days from the date the application was received by the Admissions office.

Applicants may be refused entry to a particular course due to not meeting the entry requirements, but this does not prevent them from applying for other courses. UCP Admissions reserves the right to make applicants an offer on an alternative programme.

4.13.2 To protect students and others it may also be necessary, in exceptional circumstances to refuse to admit an individual as a student where the UCP Academic Director or PRC Executive Director of Students believes-

- 4.13.3
- It would not be in their best interests
 - It would not be in the best interest of others
 - The safety of others may be put at risk
 - The learning of others may be put at risk
 - There is any other substantial or justifiable reason.

4.14 **Applicant Responses to offers**

4.14.1 Full time applicants should respond to their offers via UCAS Track. Response deadlines apply and will be confirmed via UCAS Track.

Part time, postgraduate and undergraduate applicants applying directly should respond to their offers via admissions@ucp.ac.uk. Where response deadlines apply, these will be confirmed within the offer letter. Subsequent changes to responses can be made via admissions@ucp.ac.uk.

4.14.2 Applicants applying for a September intake must meet academic and non-academic conditions (other general entry requirements) of offers by 31 August of the application cycle in which the application has been submitted (this also applies to applications for deferred entry). For full time applicants this is explained in the UCAS offer letter which applicants receive when an institution makes an offer of admission. For all other applications the offer letter will state the applicant's deadline which needs to be met to guarantee a place on the course.

4.14.3

- Where results are received after 31 August of a September start date, we may be able to confirm places depending on the availability of places; however, this is not always possible. Applicants should ensure that we receive all results upon which their offer is based by 31 August to ensure that we are able to process them and, if appropriate, confirm the applicant's place.
- 4.14.4 By accepting the offer of a place on a course, a contract is made between the applicant and PRC/UCP. Applicants, who accept their offer, but change their mind and wish to subsequently decline; under the requirements of the Consumer Protection Law have the right to cancel this contract within 14 days without giving any reason.
- 4.15 **Verification of Qualifications**
- 4.15.1 If an applicant who has received a conditional offer fulfils the conditions of the offer as specified, or if UCP or PRC exercises its discretion to accept an applicant on the basis of satisfactory academic performance, then an unconditional offer will be made. Confirmation will be provided either via UCAS Track or by email.
- 4.15.2 All applicants are required to submit evidence of qualification results before they are permitted to enrol. Where an applicant requires a Tier 4 Visa to study in the UK, an offer of a place will be subject to compliance relevant aspects of the Policy 822 Recruitment of Tier 4 Sponsored Migrants.
- 4.15.3 Any delay in completing registration may lead to delays elsewhere; for example, payment of student loans into student's bank account and access to IT facilities. Delays in registration can also have visa implications.
- 4.16 **Re-admission of students**
- 4.16.1 All students who voluntarily withdraw from PRC or UCP, leave, or are suspended or dismissed, must have their readmission approved by the UCP Academic Director.
- 4.16.2 We do not accept students who have previously withdrawn or have discontinued by PRC or UCP more than once.
- 4.16.3 A student who has been withdrawn or discontinued by an Awards Board because of academic failure are not permitted to apply for re-admission to the same course unless all the following criteria have been met:
- At least 6 months has elapsed between the date of discontinuation and the date of application for readmission;
 - The student is able:
 - to provide clear evidence of a change in personal circumstances since the date of discontinuation;
 - demonstrate a positive commitment to resume study at higher education level;
 - to demonstrate an enhanced knowledge-base and/or relevant experience e.g. based on employment in the period since the date of discontinuation;
 - The student has been formally interviewed by at least two members of academic staff whose decision to readmit the student is unanimous.
- 4.17 **Deferred entry**
- 4.17.1 Applicants in possession of an offer may request that it be deferred to the next intake. Applicants must normally have satisfied all conditions in order to defer their place. The normal maximum length of deferral which will be considered will be one year. The decision to grant or decline a request for deferred entry is made by the UCP Admissions

Team /Tutor as appropriate. Requests may be turned down if an applicant is unable to meet revised entry criteria or if UCP/PRC does not intend to deliver a programme in a subsequent academic year. No guarantee is made at the point of deferral that the course applied for will be available if a student defers entry. Applicants wishing to defer entry should contact the UCP Admissions staff for advice and support.

4.18 **Record Keeping**

4.18.1 All PRC and UCP staff are responsible for keeping well organised and effective records. They must keep student records safely and securely to ensure that they are available for verification. Up-to-date, securely stored assessment records also help to minimise the risk of assessment malpractice, or potential issues when staff leave the organisation.

4.18.2 Records are:

- stored securely and safely (i.e. are secure against hazards like theft and fire, etc.) with all application documents uploaded to Prosolution.
- sufficient detail is kept to show admission decisions made (i.e. how an applicant meets entry requirements)
- are monitoring and information is kept in an appropriate and accessible format on Prosolution
- are available to awarding bodies for audit as required
- are kept for 3 years after a student's award has been confirmed

4.19 **Withdrawal of Courses**

4.19.1 In exceptional circumstances PRC and UCP reserve the right to suspend a course for which applications and offers have been made. Applicants are informed as soon as possible and where possible are offered alternative course options. (Refer to the P940 Higher Education Removal of Course, Curriculum Revisions Policy).

4.20 **Applicant Fee Status**

4.20.1 Applicants are required to declare their fee status when they complete their UCAS application or paper based application form. UCP Admissions staff check information on applications relating to fee status, including nationality, country of residency, address and declared fee status of each applicant. A fee assessment may be carried out where the information provided is insufficient to determine the applicant's status. A member of the Admissions Office contacts the applicant within 10 working days of receipt of the application requesting more information from the applicant within 10 working days. The fee assessment is process within 5 working days of receipt of further information. It should be noted that the UCP Admissions Team reserves the right to amend an applicant's fee status after a formal offer is made.

4.20.2 An offer to study at UCP and PRC is not a guarantee of funding.

4.20.3 It is the student's responsibility to seek funding from Student Finance England and to resolve any funding issues. Students must be mindful of all repayment points and eligibility requirements.

4.20.4 Students being funded by an employer must provide evidence before they are permitted to enrol. Sponsorship may be declined if the employer has outstanding fees to pay to UCP/PRC. Evidence can be in the form of a sponsor letter confirming the student's details and fee payment. The letter must be signed and on company headed paper with the following information:

- Student Name
- Course

- Year of study
- How much they are paying
- Purchase order if applicable

4.21 **Enrolment and induction**

4.21.1 Applicants who have firmly accepted an unconditional offer will be invited to enrol.

4.21.2 Enrolment invitations are sent to Applicants with unconditional offers for courses starting in September by the first week in September each academic year. For course starting in January, applicants with unconditional offers are invited to enrolment by the first week in January each academic year.

Students enrolled for an undergraduate or postgraduate course may not usually be enrolled at the same time for any other qualification at this or another institution, unless such enrolment forms part of an approved programme of study involving another institution or institutions.

4.22 **Appeals and Complaints**

4.22.1 UCP and PRC are committed to delivering a high quality, fair admissions process. Applicants are encouraged to convey any cause for concern related to the admissions process. In the unlikely event that an applicant is dissatisfied with their experience of the admissions process and is unable to resolve this informally they are able to submit an appeal or a complaint.

4.22.3 An appeal is a request for a reconsideration of an admissions decision and can only be used if the appeal relates to;

- a procedural irregularity i.e. where the applicant believes that the application has not been considered in line with this policy;
- the emergence of new information which was not available at the time of application and which, if available, may result in a different decision. The reasons why this information was not available at the time of application must be given.

4.22.4 A complaint is defined as a specific concern relating to the service or facilities offered. A complaint may be made if an applicant believes they have legitimate grounds to be dissatisfied with the process followed during the admissions process.

4.22.5 If an applicant feels that they may have a cause for an appeal or complaint, the Appeals and Complaints Procedure can be found at: <http://www.ucp.ac.uk/policies/>.

4.22.6 Applicants will not be discriminated against in any further application should they request feedback, or make a complaint under the UCP and PRC policies and procedures.

RESPONDING TO ENQUIRIES TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Responding to an applicant/course enquiry	UCP Admissions Office	10 working days working days of receipt of the enquiry
2	Logging enquiry on Prosolution	UCP Admissions Office	5 working days

FRAUDULENT APPLICATION TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Contact the applicant where there are reasonable grounds to suspect plagiarism/invalid qualifications and/or documents	UCP Admissions Office	10 working days of receipt of the application
2	Applicant responds to allegation	Applicant	14 working days
3	Review of applicants response and decision made	UCP Admissions & UCP Deputy Director	10 working days

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Contact relevant offer-holders to secure information using the appropriate Declaration Form	UCP Admissions	With offer letter
2	Completes Disclosure Assessment Form	Offer holder / Applicant	Within 14 working days of receipt of offer and prior to enrolment
3	Refer the completed Declaration Form to HE Manager (if programme requires Enhanced DBS check)	UCP Admissions	Within 2 working days of receipt
4	Completes Disclosure Assessment Liaises with authorities/referees for further information on behalf of the Disclosure Panel	HE Manager	Within 14 working days of receipt of disclosure
5	Acts as secretary for the Disclosure assessment.	Student Support Representative	n/a
6	Informs applicant of the final decision	HE Manager	Within 5 working days of assessment

APPLICANT INTERVIEWS TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Invite Applicant to interview	UCP Admissions Office	10 working days of receipt of the application

2	Application outcome decision	Course Leader/Tutor	5 working days from the interview
----------	------------------------------	---------------------	-----------------------------------

OFFERS AND RESPONSES TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Acknowledge receipt of Application	UCP Admissions Office	5 working days of receipt of the application
2	Respond with an offer to study/reject the application	UCP Admissions Office	20 working days of receipt of the application

FEE ASSESSMENT TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Contact the applicant requesting further information/ clarification	UCP Admissions Office	10 working days of receipt of the application
2	Applicant provides information	Applicant	10 working days from request
3	Conclude fee assessment	UCP Admissions Office	5 working days

ENROLMENT TIMELINE

STAGE	TASK	RESPONSIBILITY	TIME FRAME
1	Applicants invited to enrolment	UCP Admissions Office	First week in September (Sept entry) First week in January (Jan entry)