

TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

ADMISSIONS POLICY

2019-20 ADMISSIONS CYCLE

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1. Opening Statement

Teesside University's admissions policy details the principles and processes that underpin the selection and recruitment practices for admission to all undergraduate and postgraduate courses of study delivered both internally and externally by franchised partners. It aligns with the University's key vision, mission and values of embracing diversity and actively opposing prejudice as set out in the Corporate Plan 2015-2020 (Teesside, 2020). The policy is underpinned by the principles of the [University Equal Opportunities Policy](#), the University OFFA agreement, the Data Protection Act 1998 and maps to the [QAA Quality Code](#) and the [Supporting Professionalism in Admissions \(SPA\) Good Practice Guidance](#).

This policy is relevant to the following:

- The general public
- All prospective students
- Current students wishing to undertake further study
- Higher Education advisers and providers
- University and Collaborative Partner staff.

The University welcomes applications from all people who have the potential to succeed in Higher Education and is committed to enabling students to fulfil their personal and employment potential. [University Equal Opportunities Policy](#)

2. Key principles

The key principles of the Admissions Policy are congruent with the [UK Quality Code](#) and are broadly informed by the following:

- **Transparency.** To ensure that clear, consistent and accessible information and guidance is available to all stakeholders in all stages of the admissions process and that this is clearly communicated.
- **Inclusivity.** To attract students from a wide and diverse community and make selection decisions to provide equality of opportunity to all with the potential to succeed and benefit from a course of study.
- **Minimise barriers.** To seek to minimise barriers to prospective students and to provide a good quality applicant experience.
- **Reliability and validity.** To ensure that all processes and assessment methods result in equitable and sound judgements and offers are based on a

reasonable expectation that applicants have the potential to achieve the standards of the award.

- **Professionalism.** To ensure that the appropriate organisational structures and processes are in place and are regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure continuing fitness for purpose and alignment to sectoral best practice.

3. Responsibilities

University Academic Board has the overarching responsibility for admissions and selection processes. The Student Admissions Sub-Committee has responsibility to monitor and enhance matters relating to admissions to the University and reports to the Student Learning and Experience Committee who in turn report to Academic Board.

The Academic Registrar is responsible for ensuring that:

- Admission processes for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate applicants are clear and updated regularly.
- Admissions processes for research applicants are clear and updated regularly.

Deans of Academic Schools or their delegated representative are responsible for ensuring that:

- Appropriate admissions criteria are developed for each course, communicated to relevant University Departments and updated annually;
- All Admissions Tutors and other staff engaged in admissions work are: aware of and support the University's Admissions Policy and associated procedures; Are competent to make fair and sound judgements; are trained to an appropriate standard in admissions work; are aware of the University's Equal Opportunities Policy and how to obtain further advice when dealing with enquiries and applications; have sufficient time to carry out their duties to a high standard.

The Doctoral Training, Research and Governance Team Manager or their delegated representative is responsible for ensuring that these processes are followed for research degrees.

4. Training and Support

All staff involved in admissions processes receive appropriate training and support.

5. Monitoring and Review

The Student Admissions Sub-Committee will review the University Admissions Policy annually.

6. Transparency and Consistency

The University is committed to providing clear, accurate and accessible information on its courses, including entry requirements and associated admissions procedures. The University website provides information about [undergraduate](#), [postgraduate](#), full-time, part-time and [international](#) course fees and scholarships.

The University strives to ensure that clear, accessible information for all recruitment activities is made available with regard to academic and non-academic requirements for entry to its courses. Where additional methods of assessment (e.g. interview or portfolio submission) are used to select candidates, this will be explicitly stated for the benefit of applicants on the course pages on the University website.

Home/EU admissions decisions are made or overseen by trained admissions tutors within the Academic Schools and Collaborative Partner institutions. The International Admissions Team along with Schools, make decisions on international applications. All admissions decisions are recorded on the University Student Records System as well as those which are maintained on the UCAS system.

The University adheres to the UCAS procedures and deadlines in the communication of decisions to all full-time undergraduate applicants. For further information on timescales and how to apply, including how to fill out the form, please see the [Universities and Colleges Application System \(UCAS\) website](#).

Application procedures and deadlines for postgraduate courses and research degrees are published on the [University website](#).

7. Entry Criteria and Selection Processes

All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission to the University is based on an applicant's merits and abilities. The principal academic criterion for determining a candidate's suitability for admission is that there is a reasonable expectation that he/she will be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course and achieve the standard required for the award. The University will look for evidence of academic achievement as well as personal and professional experiences, where

relevant, that provide an indication of ability to meet the demands and professional requirements of the course.

Entry criteria for a given course are set by the Academic School responsible for the course and can be accessed through the University website. Where appropriate, Academic Schools comply with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements for entry.

- For undergraduate courses, entry criteria are specified in terms of [UCAS tariff tables](#) and guidance is provided on the [University website](#).
- For entry to postgraduate taught courses and research degrees, guidance is provided on the [University website](#).

The University welcomes applications from international students and accepts a wide range of equivalent qualifications under the guidance of the [Teesside University Country Pages](#) and [NARIC](#). The International Compliance Team and the International Admissions Team are responsible for ensuring compliance with UK Visas and Immigration requirements, keeping records of all new applicants and ensuring adequate identity checks are carried out as per Tier 4 sponsorship duties. The University's Tier 4 Compliance Policy contains information regarding selection and admission of applicants requiring Tier 4 sponsorship by the University. The University's English Language requirements are set out in the [English Language Policy](#).

Entry criteria are reviewed by the responsible School annually and are updated as required. Minimum entry criteria for all courses entering clearing are deemed to be the same as those used at all other times unless a variance is specifically authorised by the appropriate Dean of School. Academic judgement may be used in special cases where a student is deemed capable to succeed in a course but may not necessarily meet all prescribed entry criteria. Such decisions will be subject to scrutiny by the Dean or delegated representative and PSRB where appropriate to ensure consistent and transparent decision-making.

The University expects all applicants to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner throughout the admissions process and in line with the expectations defined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#). Hostile, aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language, whether expressed verbally or in writing will be viewed seriously and may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. The University will normally warn an applicant that his or her behaviour or language is inappropriate and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

8. Students without Conventional Entry Qualifications

Teesside University welcomes applications from students who do not meet conventional entry requirements and will take into account alternative qualifications or other experience. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy (RPL) provides opportunities for individuals to claim credit for knowledge and skills that they have obtained through experience, certified learning or uncertified learning, against courses of further study (For further information please see the University [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#)).

9. Advanced and Deferred Entry

Applicants may be considered for entry with advanced standing to a course, dependent on credit achieved and the relevance of content from previous study. See individual courses for details. See also the University [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#)).

The University is happy to consider deferred applications where prospective students request to be admitted the year after an application is made. This request may be at the application stage or after an offer has been made.

10. Applicants with Criminal Convictions or Cautions

As part of its duty of care to staff and students, the University asks applicants for information about any relevant criminal convictions or cautions. A criminal conviction or caution does not preclude an applicant from studying at the University, this will depend on the nature of the course applied for and the circumstances and background of the offence. The University will not unfairly discriminate against individuals on the basis of the information that has been disclosed. Where an applicant declares a relevant criminal conviction or caution, the application is assessed in accordance with the University's Criminal Convictions Policy

All applicants to a programme of study requiring students to work with children or with adults in vulnerable situations will be required to provide a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service enhanced disclosure, as identified in the course entry criteria. For courses where there are PSRB requirements, such applicants may be subject to Fitness to Practise regulations.

Applicants who do not declare criminal convictions or cautions may have their enrolment rescinded and/or be subject to University disciplinary procedures.

11. Fraudulent Applications

The University reserves the right to withdraw any offer made on the basis of an application which has been found to contain fraudulent information. If an applicant is found to have omitted key information, the offer of a place may be withdrawn. If a student has been admitted onto a course and it is discovered that they have provided fraudulent information, the University has the right to terminate their studies.

12. Application Processes

All full-time undergraduate applications (including EU and international applicants) should be made through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Courses are listed and applications are made through the [UCAS website](#).

International and EU applications can also be made by applicants contacting a Regional Office or an approved Agent (details of Agents by country can be found on the University's international pages).

Applications for part-time undergraduate courses are made directly to the University through the 'apply online' button on the relevant course page on the website.

[Part-time applications](#) and [Short courses](#)

Applications for postgraduate courses are made directly to the University through the 'apply online' button on the relevant course page on the website: [Postgraduate applications](#).

Applicants wishing to discuss eligibility for a course before application should call the number provided in the course details on the website.

13. Informing Applicants

Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will be informed via UCAS or direct communication from the University as appropriate. Information will be issued providing full details of the enrolment process.

Course Changes

If it becomes necessary to withdraw a course, this will be communicated to applicants at the earliest possible opportunity. Applicants will be given the chance to be considered for an alternative course where possible. Where this is not possible, or where an applicant does not wish to be considered for an alternative course at the University, applicants are able to request a substitute choice through UCAS or by contacting the University directly. The relevant School is responsible for co-

ordinating the process of communicating with applicants affected by significant changes to courses.

Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful students will be informed via UCAS or direct communication from the University as appropriate. Feedback to unsuccessful applicants will be provided on request and will usually only be provided to the applicant themselves and not to any third party e.g. parent, teacher unless specific permission has been granted. Where a student has been unsuccessful, consideration for other courses will be actively undertaken by the University.

Admissions Appeals

An applicant may request a review if they wish for the decision on their application to be reconsidered. The use of this process should not adversely affect any later dealings with the applicant.

An applicant who is considering making an appeal should, in the first instance, if it has not already been supplied, request feedback from the Admissions Office in the School responsible for the course to which the applicant has applied.

If, after considering this feedback, the applicant still wishes for the decision to be reviewed, they should submit, in writing, to the Dean of the School, the reasons why they believe the decision should be reconsidered. This request should be made within 10 days of the publication of the reject decision. A representative nominated by the Dean will consider the request, and inform the applicant of the outcome, in writing, within 10 days of its receipt.

If the situation is not resolved, then the applicant, within 7 days of notification of the decision from the School representative, may submit an appeal on an Admissions Appeal Application Form with evidence to support their case.

The appeal can be made on one or more of the following grounds:

1. That there was a material and/or procedural irregularity in the decision-making process.
2. That there is evidence of unjustified discrimination or bias against the applicant.
3. That additional evidence has come to light since the decision of the School's representative, which could not reasonably have been expected to have been produced at the time of case.

The Admissions Appeal Application Form is available on the University's website, and should be submitted by post to:

Office of Student Complaints, Appeals and Regulations ('OSCAR')
Legal & Governance Services
Teesside University
Borough Road
Middlesbrough
TS1 3BX

Or via email to: oscar@tees.ac.uk

It is strongly advised that the applicant keeps a copy of their Application Form and any supporting documentation submitted to the University, as documents will not normally be returned and may be destroyed unless the return of documentation is requested at the point of submission.

Appeals will not be accepted by a third party unless written consent is received from the applicant allowing an individual to act on his/her behalf. Any information provided as part of the appeals process will be handled in confidence, and only released to those members of staff who need it.

Please note that incomplete Admissions Appeal Application Forms, applications that do not meet the criteria, late-submissions, frivolous or vexatious applications, or applications not supported by evidence will normally be rejected, and will only be accepted at the discretion of the University Secretary.

Where an appeal is accepted for consideration, it will be sent to the relevant School who will be asked to supply all information relevant to the case. The case will then be passed to a Pro Vice-Chancellor who will consider the appeal by way of a review of the relevant evidence and, the applicant or School may be asked to provide further information on, or clarification of, any points in their submission. After consideration of the case, the Pro Vice-Chancellor may take action as follows:

1. Reject the appeal.
2. Uphold the appeal, and impose an alternative outcome.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor will inform the applicant of their decision within 15 days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Pro Vice-Chancellor is final and no further appeal is permitted.

All outcomes of appeal are recorded and monitored by OSCAR.

Complaints

Whilst the University hopes to provide a quality service there may be occasions where an applicant wishes to complain about the services he/she receives. When those few occasions occur, the applicant should follow the University's 'Procedure for Complaints by Persons External to Teesside University'. A copy of this Procedure is available on the University's website, or by contacting the Legal & Governance Services Department by telephoning 01642 342322 or by emailing oscar@tees.ac.uk.

14. Further Information

National Guidance

[Higher Education Academy, International Student Lifecycle Resource Bank](#)

[National Union of Students, Postgraduate applicant advice](#)

[QAA Quality Code](#)

[SPA \(2014\) Good Practice Statement: Admissions Policies](#)

[SPA \(2014\) Good Practice Checklist for Admissions Policies](#)

[SPA \(2008\) Schwartz Report on Fair Admissions: Review](#)

[SPA \(2012\) Fair Admissions Task and Finish Group](#)

[SPA, Information on the applicant Experience](#)

[SPA \(2013\) *Contextualising Admissions: Examining the Evidence Report*](#)

[Universities and Colleges Application System \(UCAS\)](#)

Relevant Teesside University Documents

[Admissions Process for Disabled Applicants](#)

[English Language Policy](#)

[Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#)