

# TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY

## ADMISSIONS POLICY

### 2022-23 ADMISSIONS CYCLE

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## 1. Scope

This policy applies to all undergraduate and postgraduate admissions at Teesside University, including admissions to courses delivered by external partners. It provides information about our admissions procedures to prospective students, their advisers, and to staff of the University.

## 2. Admissions Statement and Key principles

The University is committed to excellence in admissions and aims to provide a professional, fair, equal and transparent service to all applicants. The University aims to recruit students who have the potential to meet the demands of and benefit from their course and is committed to the Widening Participation agenda. The University will take every possible step to ensure that no prospective student or applicant is treated unfavourably.

In accordance with the [University Equal Opportunities Policy](#) the University welcomes applications from all people who have the potential to succeed in Higher Education. Congruent with the [UK QAA Quality Code](#), the key principles of Admissions at Teesside University are:

- **Transparency.** To ensure clear, consistent and accessible information is available to all stakeholders throughout the admissions process (see Section 5 below).
- **Inclusivity.** To attract applicants from a diverse community and make admission decisions that provide equality of opportunity to all with the potential to succeed.
- **Minimise barriers.** To minimise barriers for applicants and provide a good quality applicant experience.
- **Reliability and validity.** To ensure that all processes and assessment methods result in equitable judgements and offers based on the reasonable expectation that applicants have the potential to achieve the learning outcomes.
- **Professionalism.** Organisational structures and processes are in place, and regularly reviewed, to ensure alignment to sectoral best practice.

## 3. Responsibilities

Teesside University's Academic Board has the strategic responsibility for admissions processes.

The Student Admissions Sub-Committee (SASC) has the responsibility to monitor and enhance matters relating to admissions and reports to Academic Board via the Student Learning and Experience Committee (SLEC).

The Director of Student Recruitment and Marketing (SRM) is responsible for ensuring:

- Admissions processes are clear and updated regularly.
- Staff engaged in admission decisions follow the Admissions Policy and associated procedures; are competent to make fair judgements; are trained to an appropriate standard; and, are aware of the University Equal Opportunities Policy.

SLEC, via School Student Learning and Experience Sub-Committees (SSLESC), is responsible for ensuring that appropriate admissions criteria are developed for each course and communicated to relevant University Departments.

#### 4. Transparency and Consistency

The [University website](#) provides information about courses, including entry requirements and associated admissions procedures, fees and scholarships (where applicable) for its provision. Where specific methods of assessment (e.g. interview or portfolio submission) are used to select candidates, this will be explicitly stated on the relevant course webpage.

All admissions decisions are recorded on the University Student Records System as well as those maintained on the UCAS system.

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

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

#### 5. Entry Criteria and Admissions Processes

All applications are assessed on an individual basis and admission is based on an applicant's merits and abilities. Offers are made where there is a reasonable expectation the applicant would be able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the course.

Entry criteria for a given course are set by the School responsible for the course and can be accessed via the University's course pages. Where appropriate, Schools comply with Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements for course 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 courses, entry criteria guidance is provided on the [University website](#).

The University welcomes applications from international students and accepts a wide range of equivalent qualifications. The University's [UKVI Sponsored Student Compliance Policy](#) contains further information for applicants requiring student sponsorship. The University's English Language requirements are set out in the [English](#)

## [Language Policy.](#)

Entry criteria are reviewed and updated by the responsible School as required by SLEC. Academic Judgment may be used in particular circumstances where a student is deemed capable of succeeding on a course but may not necessarily meet all prescribed entry criteria.

Applicants without conventional entry qualifications are considered using Academic Judgement as detailed in the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#) (see RPL for Admission).

Applicants with disabilities or learning difficulties may request support with the process of making an application (see Appendix II).

If as a result of a formal procedure, applicants have previously been withdrawn or rejected, or applicants who have previously studied with us have been withdrawn or excluded, this may be taken into consideration when considering their application or enrolment. The University reserves the right not to make an offer, not to allow enrolment or to revoke enrolment on this basis.

## **6. Advanced and Deferred Entry**

Applicants may be considered for entry to a later entry point on a course based on a qualification or academic coursework completed at another institution through the process of advanced standing. Applicants may be given credit for relevant professional experience as detailed in the [Recognition of Prior Learning \(RPL\) Policy](#).

Where prospective students request to be admitted to study the year after an application is made the University will try to support this by making the offer of a deferred place. This request may be at the application stage or after an offer has been made.

## **7. Applicants with Criminal Convictions or Cautions**

Information about an applicant's criminal convictions will not be requested or considered when making an initial academic admissions decision.

Applicants to courses that require students to work with children or vulnerable adults will be required to provide a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service enhanced disclosure (DBS), as outlined in the relevant course entry criteria. For overseas students with no previous entry to the UK, Certification from the Police Authority in their home country will be required in place of the DBS. For courses where there are PSRB requirements, such applicants may be subject to Fitness to Practice regulations.

After an offer has been made and accepted, applicants will be asked to declare criminal convictions as outlined in the [University's Criminal Convictions Policy](#) to assess their suitability to join the University community.

## Appendix I - the Application Processes

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

In exceptional circumstances International and EU applications can sometimes be made through a Regional Office or an approved Agent. These will be submitted to UCAS by the University via the Record of Prior Acceptance (RPA) process after a final Unconditional Offer has been firmly accepted.

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

Most applications are processed by either the UK Admissions team or the International Admissions & Compliance team based in the Department of Student Recruitment & Marketing. This is done in close co-ordination with Schools.

### Withdrawal of Offers

The University reserves the right to withdraw any offer on the basis of:

- an application contains fraudulent information
- an applicant has omitted key information
- failure to declare any relevant criminal conviction in accordance with the University's Criminal Convictions Policy
- as a result of a declared conviction being in breach of 6.19 and 6.20 of the UKVI Sponsored Students Compliance Policy.

The University expects all applicants to behave in an appropriate and respectful manner throughout the admissions process. Aggressive or otherwise inappropriate behaviour or language may adversely affect the consideration of an application, appeal or complaint. The University will normally warn an applicant that their behaviour or language is inappropriate, and that action is being considered, but where the behaviour or language is particularly inappropriate no warning need be given before action is taken. Such action may include the withdrawal of an offer or the rejection of an application. Conduct which constitutes a criminal offence will be referred to the relevant authorities.

### Informing Applicants of Decisions

#### Third Parties

All communication (including responses to enquiries about applications, feedback on unsuccessful applications, and requests for appeals) will not be accepted from or sent to a third party unless written consent is received from the applicant allowing an individual to act on their behalf.

#### 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, or significant changes are made to a course, this will be communicated to applicants at the earliest opportunity. Applicants will be offered an alternative course at the University where possible. Where this is not possible, or where an applicant does not wish to be considered for such a course, applicants are able to request a substitute choice through UCAS or by contacting the University directly. The relevant School is responsible for identifying any significant course changes and ensuring that applicants are informed of these changes in a timely manner. The Admissions team will work with Schools to communicate any such changes to applicants through the appropriate channels.

### **Unsuccessful Applicants**

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed via UCAS or direct communication from the University as appropriate. Feedback can be requested from the Admissions team within 28 days of the notification of the unsuccessful decision. Where an applicant has been unsuccessful an alternative course offer may be made.

### **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 will not adversely affect any later dealings with the applicant.

1. Within 7 days of notification of receiving feedback, an applicant may submit an appeal on an Admissions Appeal Application Form (Application Form) with evidence to support their case.
2. 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 on the application was made.
3. The Application Form is available on the University's [website](#), and should be submitted via email to the Office of Student Complaints, Appeals & Regulations (OSCAR) via email to: [oscar@tees.ac.uk](mailto:oscar@tees.ac.uk)
4. 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.
5. If a student submits an Application Form outside of the timescale cited at point 1 above, they must enclose with their Application Form a separate written explanation for the late submission supported by evidence (if applicable), which will be considered by the Vice-Chancellor's nominee who will determine whether the application can proceed for consideration. The Vice-Chancellor's nominee's decision will be final and is not subject to further review. If the decision is not to accept the late Application Form for consideration the case will be closed.

6. Please note that incomplete Application Forms, applications that do not meet the criteria, frivolous or vexatious applications, or applications not supported by evidence will also normally be rejected and are not subject to further review, and will only be accepted at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor's nominee.
7. Where an Application Form is accepted for consideration, it will be sent to the relevant Admissions Manager who will be asked to supply all information relevant to the case. If the relevant Admissions Manager believes that there appears to be a case for the decision to be reviewed they may impose an alternative outcome. In which case, they will write directly to the applicant and OSCAR with a new admissions decision. However, if the applicant does not wish to accept this decision they may request that their appeal continues to be considered in accordance with the Appeal Stage of the Policy by notifying OSCAR within 5 days.
8. In the event the relevant Admissions Manager believes the decision should not be amended, then the Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing (or nominee) will consider the appeal by way of a review of all the relevant evidence. The applicant or Admissions Manager may be asked to provide further information on, or clarification of, any points in their submission. After consideration of the case, the Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing or their nominated representative may take the following action:
  1. Reject the appeal.
  2. Uphold the appeal and impose an alternative outcome.
9. The Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing (or nominee) will inform the applicant and OSCAR of their decision within 15 days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the Director of Student Recruitment & Marketing is final and no further appeal is permitted.
10. 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 they receive. 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 from OSCAR by emailing [oscar@tees.ac.uk](mailto:oscar@tees.ac.uk)

## Appendix II – Admissions process for disabled applicants

The University welcomes applications from disabled people and is committed to the principle of fair access as set out in the Equality Act (2010). The admissions procedures for applicants who declare a disability will ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged and are judged on their merits and abilities to fulfil the learning outcomes of the proposed course of study. Applications from disabled people are assessed following standard procedures and consideration of support requirements will remain entirely separate.

The University will endeavor to provide all the necessary information to allow applicants to make an informed decision in respect of their options and will make reasonable adjustments for all identified disabled applicants. It is the applicant's responsibility to declare information about their disability and where requested, provide appropriate supporting evidence.

When applying, applicants will be invited to select a disability code from the following:

- A. No disability
- B. You have a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder
- C. You are blind or have a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- D. You are deaf or have a serious hearing impairment
- E. You have a long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy
- F. You have a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- G. You have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- H. You have physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- I. You have a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above
- J. You have two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions.

Applicants who have indicated a disability from any of the Categories B-J should be invited to indicate any particular adjustments required to the selection process. The following will be considered:

1. Does the applicant require adjustments in the selection process to ensure that they are treated fairly (e.g. extra time for written exercises; sign language interpreters for group exercises)? This may necessitate asking for additional information from the applicant and discussing what adjustments they feel would be appropriate for the activities they need to undertake as part of the selection process. This information will only be used for determining provision of support and will not be part of the admission decision.
2. Are the adjustments requested by the applicant reasonable? In the unlikely event that adjustments cannot be made in the selection process, the applicant will be supported to consider alternative options.
3. Where a course has PSRB requirements, applicants will be referred to Occupational Health to ensure they meet the fitness standards as set out in HEOPS (Higher Education Occupational Physicians Practitioners). Reasonable adjustments will also be considered through this process.



Admissions decisions and information will be recorded on SITS and disabled applicants holding conditional or unconditional firm offers at Teesside University will be contacted with information about how to register with Disability Services. This will include the need for applicants to provide appropriate evidence and discuss support needs with a Disability Adviser. Information about how to register with Disability Services can be found here: [Disability | Current students | Teesside University](#). Applicants can register at any time before or throughout their course and any queries can be submitted to [studentlife@tees.ac.uk](mailto:studentlife@tees.ac.uk). Applicants should be encouraged to register as early as possible as it may take time to organise adjustments.

In the unlikely event that adjustments cannot be made to support the student to meet the requirements of their course of study, the University will offer the applicant support in submitting an alternative application.

Further information about disability and dyslexia support at Teesside University can be found here [Disability | Current students | Teesside University](#)

## **Appendix III - Related University Policies**

[English Language Policy](#)

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

[UKVI Sponsored Student Compliance Policy](#)

[University Equal Opportunities Policy](#)

[Criminal Convictions Policy](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy](#)