

University of Leicester  
Admissions Office

**Code of Practice for Admissions**

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This document sets out to describe the principles and practices that underpin the admissions process at the University of Leicester. It relates to all levels and modes of attendance and is informed by the recommendations for good practice as specified by the QAA and other government directives.
- 1.2 The purpose of the admissions process is to recruit students who will be best able to benefit from the experience of their chosen course at the University of Leicester.
- 1.3 The University is committed to ensuring a diverse student population. It embraces the principles of widening participation and welcomes applications from mature students.
- 1.4 The University upholds the key principle that the policies and procedures governing the admissions process should be fair, transparent and implemented consistently. These policies embrace the University's commitment to equal opportunities. No applicant will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, social class, age, disability, colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins. Any conditions for entry to a course will only be imposed if justifiable on academic grounds.
- 1.5 The University's admissions procedures operate within the legal framework of the University's ordinances and the relevant legislation. This includes the Race Relations Amendment Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, and the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 1.6 The University ensures that admissions decisions are made by those members of staff who are equipped to make such judgements.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

### **2.1 Senate**

The authority to regulate the admission of persons to courses of study in the University, subject to the Ordinances of the University, is invested in the Senate under Statute 19.8.

### **2.2 Heads of Departments/Schools and admissions tutors**

2.2.1 This authority is devolved through Faculty Boards and Heads of Departments/Schools, to a nominated member of the academic staff who takes on the role of admissions tutor.

The admissions tutor needs to:

- be aware of the courses for which he/she has responsibility;
- be familiar with the policies and procedures governing the admissions process;
- understand the intake targets which provide the context for admissions decisions;
- be adequately equipped with the necessary knowledge about the relevant qualifications framework;
- be aware of the potential bias that can arise from cultural difference.

For research programmes, postgraduate tutors have the additional responsibility of seeking appropriate supervisors and theses committee members to ensure that the best students are recruited and the most appropriate committees are constituted. They are also responsible for building and maintaining a critical mass of doctoral students to effectively conduct research within the department. In some cases, the postgraduate tutor's role may be delegated to a member of staff responsible for admissions to research programmes.

2.2.2 Exceptionally, the admissions tutor may delegate their responsibility to an appropriate member of the non academic staff. In these circumstances, selection criteria are set up with the Head of Department/School which include not only the expected level of qualifications upon entry, but also other qualitative criteria that may influence a selection decision. Any decisions that need to be made outside these criteria are referred back to the admissions tutor.

### **2.3 Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee**

The Student Recruitment and Admission Committee is chaired by the pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for admissions and comprises the Deans or their representatives and key officers in corporate services who are responsible for student recruitment and admissions. Its remit is to advise Policy and Strategy Committee on recruitment and admissions policies, strategies and objectives and to monitor their implementation.

### **2.4 Director of Admissions**

2.4.1 The Director of Admissions is responsible for ensuring that admissions are conducted in a fair and equitable manner and for the management of the admissions process. This includes checking that applicants at least meet the minimum requirements for matriculation, in addition to the entry requirements for a particular course. He/she is also responsible for communicating any decisions to applicants in a timely, appropriate and accurate manner.

- 2.4.2 The Director of Admissions should provide clear operational procedures, which define the roles of staff involved in the admissions process and lay down the framework for a transparent and fair admissions process.
- 2.4.3 The Director of Admissions should provide appropriate advice and training for admissions tutors who are new to the role. He/she should also give regular updates to all admissions tutors concerning changes to the relevant qualifications and/or the legislative frameworks.
- 2.4.4 The Director of Admissions will advise an admissions tutor if:
- an offer has been made to an applicant who is not expected to reach the established criteria;
  - an offer has not been made to an applicant who is expected to reach the established criteria.
- 2.4.5 If the Head of Department/School or the Admissions tutor disagrees with any decision made the Director of Admissions, then the matter will be referred to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for admissions.
- 2.4.6 The Director of Admissions should provide admissions tutors with application statistics on a regular basis to monitor overall progress in meeting recruitment targets.

### **3. Criteria for Admission**

- 3.1 Every student will at least meet the requirements for matriculation, as laid down in the University regulations. Exceptionally, a case can be made for special matriculation, which must be agreed by the Pro Vice Chancellor with responsibility for admissions for undergraduate courses, and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, for postgraduate courses.

Specific requirements for individual courses are laid out in the University prospectuses.

- For undergraduate courses, the University accepts a wide range of qualifications, including A levels, Diplomas, International, European and Welsh Baccalaureates, BTEC, OCR, Access to HE and other qualifications that may be approved from time to time.
  - For postgraduate courses, the University requires a good first degree, normally upper second class honours or above or an equivalent qualification.
- 3.2 The University also accepts a wide range of international qualifications. All applicants whose first language is not English and who have not lived in a country where the first language is English must demonstrate a satisfactory standard of written and spoken English by obtaining the necessary level in an appropriate qualification (e.g. IELTS or TOEFL).
- 3.3 For some subjects (eg Medicine and the PGCE) and for research programmes, the offer of a place may be dependant upon a satisfactory performance at interview. In addition, for some subjects there is a requirement to sit an admissions test, the results of which will influence the selection process.
- 3.4 In the case of applications to some courses that carry professional recognition, the decision to make an offer will also be informed by the relevant professional body's requirements for pre-registration screening (eg Fitness to Practice).
- 3.5 If the nature of the course involves the student coming into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, the offer of a place will be subject to the satisfactory completion of a check with the Criminal Records Bureau.

- 3.6 Admission for some applicants may be dependant upon the applicant having met Home Office requirements to study in the UK.
- 3.7 When selecting between applicants with broadly similar qualifications, admissions tutors consider other indicators of merit and potential to succeed, such as evidence of personal initiative or team working abilities. In order to make such judgments, admissions tutors are made aware of the impact of cultural diversity and the variation of opportunities available to applicants to demonstrate such potential.

For research programmes, postgraduate tutors also consider the merits and feasibility of the project that it is being proposed by the applicant and the availability of an appropriate supervisor.

- 3.8 If an applicant declares a criminal record, the University will request further information. In certain circumstances, this information may influence the decision to offer a place on a course or a place in University accommodation.
- 3.9 Applicants who request exemption from part of a course on the basis of prior learning must provide suitable evidence to support their request. Such prior learning can be certified or experiential.

#### **4. Responsibilities of the University**

- 4.1 The University seeks to ensure that its promotional activities, literature and website are accurate, relevant, and allow applicants to make an informed choice about both the University and the relevant course. In the case of undergraduate courses, the University maintains detailed and accurate information on the UCAS database, including entry profiles.
- 4.2 The University maintains clearly documented procedures that govern the admissions process. Applications are dealt with promptly, allowing time for the collection of further information, if required, and decisions are communicated to applicants as soon as possible. Any offer of a place will specify the level of fee to be paid. The University complies with Home Office guidelines on the assessment of an applicant's fee status. For overseas students, the outcome of this assessment is explained in the letter which offers a place.
- 4.3 Details of registration and induction are sent once any conditions are met. These include full details of the arrangements for arrival at the University.
- 4.4 All applications are dealt with confidentially and are only seen by those staff who make decisions or administer the admissions process.
- 4.5 All applications received by the relevant deadline will be given equal consideration. Late applications will also be considered, depending upon the availability of places at that time.
- 4.6 The University provides appropriate feedback to unsuccessful applicants on request.
- 4.7 The University aims to provide the range of provision as advertised in promotional literature. However, if there are any significant changes after an offer is made, these will be communicated to applicants promptly and the options available will be explained.
- 4.8 The University complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. It also undertakes to make reasonable adjustments in order to ensure that students who have declared a disability can effectively pursue their studies.

- 4.9 The University complies with the requirements of Data Protection Act (1998) and its own data protection policy, retaining an applicant's details as appropriate.
- 4.10 The University undertakes to review the policies and procedures which relate to the admissions process on a regular basis, at least once every five years.

## **5. Duties of the applicant**

- 5.1 If the applicant is offered and accepts an unconditional place on a course, they are responsible for the payment of the relevant tuition fee. Arrangements can be made to invoice a third party, but this does not excuse the applicant from liability for the tuition fee. Tuition fees can be paid by instalments, in accordance with the relevant scheme laid down by the Finance Office.
- 5.2 All applicants undertake to provide true and accurate information to support their application. If an application is found to include inaccurate or fraudulent information, after an offer is made and before the applicant registers, the offer will be withdrawn immediately. If an application is found to include inaccurate or fraudulent information, after the applicant registers, their place on the course will be terminated and any fees paid will not be refunded.
- 5.3 Applicants undertake to allow any data they supply to be shared with staff involved in making selection decisions, and to provide the University with the information needed to compile student records.
- 5.4 Applicants should inform the University of any change of circumstance during the period of application (eg change of address).
- 5.5 Applicants who need to obtain appropriate clearance before registering on a course are responsible for obtaining that clearance.
- 5.6 If an applicant has a criminal record, they are obliged to declare this fact on their application form. The University will ask for further information, as appropriate (see 3.8 above).
- 5.7 Applicants with a disability which may affect their participation in their chosen course of study are advised to declare this in their application. Suitable adjustments and support arrangements can then be put in place, as appropriate.

## **6. Appeals against decisions**

- 6.1 The University endeavours to conduct a fair and transparent admissions process. However, there may be occasions where an applicant wishes to request that a decision be reconsidered. The grounds for an appeal are as follows:
- there has been a procedural irregularity;
  - new information emerges, which was not available at the time of application;
  - there is evidence of bias or prejudice.
- 6.2 In the first instance, the applicant is encouraged to contact the relevant admissions tutor or the Director of Admissions.
- 6.3 If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the initial enquiry and wishes to pursue the matter further, he/she should write to the Director of Admissions, specifying their concerns, and including any relevant supporting documentation. The Director of Admissions will endeavour to seek a satisfactory solution to the matter by undertaking a prompt investigation. The applicant should expect to receive a written response within two weeks.

- 6.4 If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may present an appeal, in writing, to the Pro-Vice Chancellor with responsibility for admissions who will conduct a further investigation. The outcome of this review will be considered final.