

Admissions Policy

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 It is the policy of the University of Northampton to admit students who can demonstrate the potential to benefit from, and have a reasonable chance of successfully completing, its programmes of study. It does not assume that ability to benefit must be demonstrated through the formal achievement of specific qualifications.
- 1.2 The University portfolio includes both academic and professional courses intended to meet a wide range of needs. The University of Northampton is concerned to provide opportunities for those of all ages including those who might not have traditionally secured entry into higher education.

2.0 Purpose and scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all programmes offered by the University of Northampton, as well as any delivered via Partner institutions, except where it has been agreed that a collaborative organisation's own Admissions policy will apply. Programmes that run in collaboration with, or are delivered by, FE colleges or other HE providers, will be required to adhere to the University of Northampton's regulations, policies, procedures and institutional agreements.
- 2.2 All applicants to the University of Northampton will be treated fairly and equally in a transparent and reasonable manner.
- 2.3 The University is committed to practices which positively promote equality, fairness, widening participation and lifelong learning in admissions across all equality areas. The University does not discriminate directly or indirectly against applicants' race, colour, gender, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, age, religious or political beliefs, membership of professional associations or trade unions, disability, marital status, family responsibility and socio-economic standing or any other category where discrimination cannot be reasonably justified. It aims to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy, where an individual role is named this refers to that role or a nominee.

4.0 Key principles

4.1 Entry Requirements

- 4.1.1 To ensure and maintain the quality of its programmes, the University of Northampton General Entry Requirements are the minimum level of attainment that an applicant must demonstrate to be considered for an offer onto the appropriate level of programme. Programme details, including entry requirements, can be found on the University of Northampton website and in the prospectus.
- 4.1.2 Any programme which requires supplementary entry requirements to be met, including those related to English Language level, will submit these for consideration by the Head of Admissions, Head of International Student Recruitment and Immigration Compliance Manager. If approved these will be clearly stated in all materials provided to potential applicants. A list of the approved supplementary entry requirements will be held in Admissions.
- 4.1.3 Entry requirements, including supplementary regulations, are normally reviewed annually.

4.2 Special Admissions

- 4.2.1 As part of its commitment to widening access, University programme admission requirements emphasise an applicant's ability to benefit from, and have a reasonable chance of successfully completing, its programme of study. This may include motivation and ability demonstrated in ways other than via standard qualifications. All non-standard admission criteria will be handled in accordance with the Special Admissions Policy and will be subject to examination by admissions tutors, senior admissions tutors within programmes, in conjunction with the Head of Admissions and the Head of International Student Recruitment.

4.3 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Credit Transfer

- 4.3.1 The University of Northampton acknowledges that learning which has taken place outside the classroom and credits gained in one learning environment may be valuable when studying for an award. This can be based on certificated or experiential learning. A request will normally be made by prospective students at the point of application. For more information please refer to the Accreditation of Prior Learning and Credit Transfer Policy.

4.4 English Language Proficiency

- 4.4.1 All University of Northampton programmes are taught and assessed in English, regardless of mode or place of delivery. Applicants are therefore required to be competent in English language at the appropriate level to ensure that they derive full benefit from the chosen programme of study. Many English language

qualifications are acceptable to meet this requirement and are detailed on the University of Northampton website.

4.4.2 Applicants required to demonstrate the requisite proficiency in English will only be offered a place conditional upon achieving the appropriate level of attainment. The current institutional English Language entry requirements are specified in Appendix 8.1 and are applicable to all applicants including those studying with Partner institutions.

4.4.3 The Head of Admissions, Head of International Student Recruitment and Immigration Compliance Manager are jointly responsible for the University of Northampton Institutional English Language Entry Requirements. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the setting of institutional and programme English language levels, assessing and designating the suitability of English language qualifications for proof of English proficiency (e.g. score, test date) and the University of Northampton's compliance with regards to UKVI requirements.

4.5 Admission of Minors

4.5.1 All applications to programmes are assessed against the relevant entry criteria requirements irrespective of age on entry. Applicants who are under eighteen should demonstrate the requisite academic maturity to benefit from study at their chosen level and be aware that certain limitations may exist for them at the University of Northampton whilst they are under eighteen. For more information please refer to the Students under the age of Eighteen Policy.

4.6 Data Protection

4.6.1 The provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018, General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and UCAS regulations are adhered to by the University of Northampton in the use of applicant data. During the application/admissions process applicant personal data will be handled in accordance with admissions privacy notices.

4.7 Applicants requiring a visa to study in the UK

4.7.1 To ensure that the University of Northampton meets the requirements of its UKVI Licence to sponsor international students, applicants who require a Student Route Visa to study any programme at the institution must adhere to specific conditions.

4.7.2 Applicants must provide all original qualification documents, or certified translations if not in English, that are the basis for admission to the University of Northampton. Appropriate staff at the University of Northampton must view and maintain copies of all current passport and visa information related to the

applicant. It is not possible for an applicant requiring a Student Route Visa to enrol or register at the University of Northampton without the proper enrolment process being completed. All additional documentation provided as part of an application to study at the University of Northampton, regardless of level, will also be stored.

- 4.7.3 It is the joint responsibility of the Head of Admissions, Head of International Student Recruitment and the Immigration Compliance Manager to ensure that all applicants requiring a visa to study in the UK meet the necessary governmental and institutional requirements.

4.8 Applicants requiring additional checks

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- 4.8.1 The successful completion of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check is a mandatory requirement for entry onto all courses involving direct contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults.
- 4.8.2 The University will follow national guidance regarding the requirement to complete a DBS check prior to entry onto a programme and/or prior to starting on a placement.
- 4.8.3 Where an applicant is employed, is undertaking a programme of study directly related to and funded by that employer and requires a DBS check to undertake that programme of study, the University will not normally be responsible for requesting that a new DBS is undertaken as part of the admissions process. The responsibility for providing assurance that a DBS has been undertaken, and is satisfactory, normally lies with the employer. Any departures from this will be discussed with the Head of Admissions and the relevant Programme Leader.
- 4.8.4 Where an applicant has already completed a DBS check but where this DBS check is linked to an unrelated profession from the course for which the applicant is applying, the University will normally request another DBS check is undertaken by the applicant as part of the admissions process. This is to ensure that the University can fulfil its obligations to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Occupational Health Assessment

- 4.8.5 The successful completion of an Occupational Health (OH) check is a mandatory requirement for entry onto all professional teaching and health programmes.
- 4.8.6 Each programme will have specific arrangements with local occupational health providers and the University will adhere to these agreements.

Prohibition from Teaching

- 4.8.7 The successful completion of a Prohibition from Teaching check is a mandatory requirement for entry onto all professional teaching programmes.
- 4.8.8 The University will follow national guidance and procedures regarding the requirement to complete a Prohibition from Teaching check.

4.9 Applicants requiring residency/fee status assessment

- 4.9.1 Applicants whose residency and/or fee status is unconfirmed will be required to complete a University of Northampton fee/residency status assessment in order to determine their student status (e.g. fees, visa requirements). University decisions may differ from other bodies (e.g. Student Finance England).

4.10 Applicants with a disability or specific learning differences and development conditions

- 4.10.1 The University recognises it has a responsibility to ensure that, as far as possible, persons with disabilities, learning differences or development conditions are not prevented from benefiting from educational opportunities on account of their additional or special needs.
- 4.10.2 Applications from people with disabilities will be judged initially on the basis of academic criteria alone. In discussion with the applicant the University of Northampton will endeavour to make all reasonable adjustments to meet all reasonable needs. The University is committed to a clear and honest matching of needs and available resources and will avoid commitments which it cannot meet.

4.11 Applicants who declare a Criminal Conviction

- 4.11.1 Applicants who declare a criminal conviction are managed in accordance with the Admission of Applicants with Criminal Convictions Policy.

4.12 Fraud and Misrepresentation

- 4.12.1 Any applications which we have grounds to believe are fraudulent and/or misleading or are found to be fraudulent and/or misleading will be rejected, and any student admitted to the University of Northampton who it later transpires has provided materially false or misleading information, or has failed to disclose information that could materially have affected the determination of the application for admissions, will have their registration terminated and be required to leave the programme of study. Any fees paid, including those fees paid prior to enrolment, will not be refunded and UCAS will be informed where relevant.

4.12.2 Any student who fails to provide, prior to enrolment, evidence of qualifications and/or prior professional or industrial experience or training, which is acceptable to the University of Northampton and a specific requirement of their chosen programme, must produce such evidence within three weeks of enrolment. Any student who fails to complete the necessary additional checks (detailed in Section 4.8) to the approved institutional requirement prior to enrolment must do so within three weeks of enrolment. Failure to comply with this deadline will result in the registration on their programme of study being terminated.

4.13 Alternative offers to unsuccessful applicants

4.13.1 Where an applicant has been unsuccessful in their original application, the University of Northampton may make an alternative offer to the applicant if they meet the entry requirements of other programmes, which could potentially be delivered by a partner institution, and where it is deemed a suitable interest is evident.

4.14 Feedback on unsuccessful applications

4.14.1 Where an applicant has been unsuccessful in their application, they can request, in writing, feedback on why the application has not been successful. The Head of Admissions will respond to requests for feedback in a timely manner.

4.14.2 When an applicant has been unsuccessful in their interview, they can request, in writing, feedback on why they have not been unsuccessful. Unless there are legitimate reasons to withhold this information the Head of Admissions will respond to requests for feedback in a timely manner.

4.14.3 Applicants who have been unsuccessful in their application may not apply to the same course in the same admissions cycle.

4.15 Appeals and Complaints

4.15.1 Appeals and complaints from applicants regarding the service they receive during the admissions process will be handled in accordance with the Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy.

4.16 Right of Entry to Programmes of Study

4.16.1 An offer made and accepted cannot normally be withdrawn without the applicant's consent except in the case of cancellation of the programme, where relevant information supplied by the applicant is found to be incorrect or because of limits imposed on the University as part of its responsibilities as a UKVI sponsor. With the latter the offer would not be withdrawn just moved to the next available intake.

- 4.16.2 The University reserves the right to refuse admission to applicants who have not met the academic or English language entry requirements for their chosen programme or where there are justifiable grounds that they cannot (or are likely to be unable to) meet the academic, professional or vocational requirements of study or the academic obligations outlined in the Academic and Student Regulations.
- 4.16.3 Normally, applicants are considered for admission and enrolment to the University of Northampton in the period up to and including the Wednesday of the third week of the first term of the programme of study on which they wish to register. In liaison with the Academic Registrar this period may be reduced in specific circumstances (e.g. intensive programmes, programmes delivered over block 1 or block 2 only and Pre-Sessional English).
- 4.16.4 Applicants wishing to join a programme of study after the end of the second week need approval from the Academic Registrar or nominee.
- 4.16.5 Applicants who have an existing liability to the University will have their application processed however they will not be permitted to enrol until the outstanding liability has been cleared or resolved.

4.17 Studying more than one programme of study

- 4.17.1 Students are not normally allowed to study two programmes of study at the University concurrently. Applicants must make the Admissions Team aware of any on-going studies with the University at the point of application to ensure that this regulation can be upheld. There may be specific exceptions to this regulation, which will be detailed and held as precedents within Admissions.
- 4.17.2 Where an applicant wishes to undertake concurrent cross-institutional learning, and to use the credits gained at the other institution as APL/credit transfer, the principles set out in the Concurrent Cross-Institutional Learning Policy must be followed.
- 4.17.3 The University does not recommend that a student undertakes studies at more than one institution concurrently, except in circumstances covered by the Concurrent Cross-Institutional Learning Policy.

5.0 Key responsibilities

- 5.1 The authority to offer a place on a programme of study lies solely with the University of Northampton as an autonomous corporate body. The University has detailed arrangements in place for dealing with admissions. In certain circumstances this authority is devolved to a partner institution.

- 5.2 All applicants are required to adhere to the expectations of the University and programme entry requirements and to provide and produce all information in support of their application as requested by the institution.
- 5.3 All University of Northampton staff involved in the admission of students to courses of study, regardless of level, are required to comply with the Admissions policy, guidance and processes.
- 5.4 The Admissions Teams (Home and International) are the primary contact for all communications to applicants related to their application, unless formally agreed by the Head of Admissions. Offers to study at the University of Northampton are only official when they have been agreed and communicated by the Admissions Teams to the applicant either directly or via appropriate parties (such as UCAS).
- 5.5 The Admissions Teams are responsible for ensuring that all applicants can meet the institutional entry requirements for their chosen programme of study, including verifying all requisite qualifications and associated documentation.
- 5.6 The primary responsibility for setting, and ensuring the adherence to, institutional and programme entry requirements lies with the Head of Admissions.
- 5.7 The International Admissions Team are responsible for setting international qualification equivalencies and monitoring changes. These are outlined in the International Qualification Guide. Primary responsibility for equivalencies lies with the Head of International Student Recruitment.
- 5.8 Admissions Tutors within each academic faculty are involved in the admissions process and are responsible for agreeing with the Head of Admissions the entry requirements and selection criteria for all individual programmes of study.
- 5.8 Only application forms approved by Admissions, or agreed nationally by bodies such as UCAS, can be used to manage the application process.

6.0 Links to related UN Policies/Guidance/Regulations

- 6.1 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Credit Transfer Policy
- 6.2 Special Admissions Policy
- 6.3 Admission of Applicants with Criminal Convictions Policy
- 6.4 Applicant Complaints and Appeals Policy

7.0 Links to related external documents (e.g. QAA)

- 7.1 UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access

8.0 Appendices

8.1 University of Northampton Institutional English Language Entry Requirements

8.2 Summary Sheet

Appendix 8.1 – University of Northampton Institutional English Language Entry Requirements

- Undergraduate Programmes: IELTS 6.0 overall, with a minimum of 5.5 in each band (or equivalent)
- Taught Masters Level Postgraduate Programmes: IELTS 6.5 overall, with a minimum of 6.0 in writing and 5.5 in each other band (or equivalent)
- Postgraduate Research Programmes: IELTS 7.0 overall, with a minimum of 6.5 in each band (or equivalent)

Note 1: IELTS scores are listed but the University of Northampton accepts UKVI approved equivalencies. These can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests> .

Note 2: IETLS scores are listed but the University of Northampton may accept other proof of English depending on individual circumstances (e.g. qualifications, programme of study, visa requirements). A full list of acceptable equivalencies is held in the International Qualification Guide.

Summary Sheet:

Policy Title:	
Admissions Policy	
Purpose of Policy and to whom it applies (please specify cohorts):	
To meet the requirements of the UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access. It applies to all applicants, students, their advisers, and University of Northampton staff and affiliates involved in the admission of students to programmes of study, including programmes delivered via Education with Others (except where it has been agreed that a collaborative organisation's own Admissions policy will apply).	
Owner and Department:	
Dawn Mains, Head of Admissions	
Principal contact:	
Dawn Mains, Head of Admissions	
Dissemination and implementation plan:	
Via SEC and SSECs Via web	
Date of initial committee approval (state committee name):	SEC June 2014
Date of Senate approval:	2 July 2014
Date for implementation and cohorts to which it applies:	September 2014
Proposed date of annual update:	June 2022
Date of last annual update:	August 2023
Proposed date of full review:	June 2024
Date of last full review:	June 2020
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