STATEMENT ON QUALIFICATION REFORM

The University of Essex has considered the forthcoming reforms to UK qualifications in relation to our undergraduate Admissions Policy and our entry requirements. We recognise that schools and colleges will face challenges over the next few years in terms of what qualifications they are able to offer their students; as a result, we will continue our approach of being flexible in our offer-making and have not introduced any major changes to our standard conditional offer levels from 2017 entry onwards.

We continue to consider applications in an individual and holistic way. As we do not currently use AS-levels as the sole predictor in whether to make an offer of admission to our applicants, we will continue to take all aspects of the UCAS application into consideration, in line with our admissions policy – this includes GCSE performance, AS-level results if taken, predicted grades for any pending level-three qualifications, personal statement and reference. We will not, therefore, discriminate against applicants who do not have the opportunity to take certain subjects at AS-level. We understand that there will be a transitional phase where applicants are taking a mixture of both existing and reformed A-levels, and we do not plan to change our offer levels or entry requirements for students taking both the old and new-style A-level qualifications.

Our offers will continue to be expressed in three A-level grades, for example BBB, although we are happy to consider applications from students who may have taken two A-levels and 2 AS-levels. We will also continue to consider applications from students who have taken BTEC qualifications for entry to the majority of our degree courses, either on their own or in combination with A-levels (or in combination with other qualifications).

For 2017 entry, we will continue to ask for BBB at A-level (or equivalent) for entry to the majority of our degree courses. Some subject areas may be slightly lower than this level, and some will require A-levels in specific subjects, for example for entry to some science courses. Please refer to our Course Finder for detailed information.

Currently we ask for five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English, as part of our entry requirements. We do not anticipate that this will change once the new GCSE grading structure has been fully introduced; we will equate a mark of 4 in the reformed GCSE to the current grade C, and a mark of 5 in the reformed GCSE where a grade B is required.

The University of Essex will also consider applications from students who have taken re-sits, and will not penalise students who may not have achieved all their final examination results in one sitting.

Where possible, we encourage referees to provide a link in the UCAS reference to the information on their school or college's policy in respect of what qualifications and subject areas they are offering.

Although Core Maths will not typically form part of any offer made by the University of Essex, we welcome the introduction of this new qualification. We believe that it will provide valuable preparation for university study, particularly those wishing to study courses which involve the use of statistical data such as the social sciences.

The University of Essex will continue to monitor and review the impact of the qualification reforms, and may update our admissions policy accordingly in the future.

If you would like further advice about specific qualifications and whether they will be considered by the University of Essex, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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www.essex.ac.uk/coursefinder