

# UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

## GRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY

*This policy applies to admission in the academic year 2019/20.*

### SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all admissions to full, part-time and distance learning postgraduate<sup>1</sup> taught courses and research degrees at the University's campuses in Colchester, Loughton and Southend. It covers all stages of an applicant's interaction with the University from initial enquiry through application, receipt of the University's selection decision, and the transition to first registration and induction for successful applicants. It does not cover admission to modular study at postgraduate level.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY

The Graduate Admissions Policy is approved by the Senate. Implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Director of Admissions and Access, Communications & External Relations.

### REVIEW OF POLICY

Monitoring and review of the Graduate Admissions Policy is undertaken annually by the Senate and its sub-committees.

### PRINCIPLES GOVERNING GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

The University of Essex recognises the value of diversity and is committed to equality of opportunity. It aims to provide an environment in which applicants are treated with dignity and respect and solely on the basis of their abilities, merits and potential.

The University of Essex is committed to fair access and encourages applications from all students who are able to demonstrate the potential to meet the entry criteria for the relevant course and to benefit from study at postgraduate level. Individual applicants are considered on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, socio-economic background, family circumstances, religious or political beliefs and affiliations or other irrelevant distinction. The University's admissions policies and procedures are designed to ensure that all applications are considered fairly and consistently and in accordance with professional standards.

The University acknowledges the principles and precepts governing good admissions practice set out in Chapter B2 of the Quality Assurance Agency UK Quality Code for Higher Education. The University welcomes the recognition by the QAA of the autonomy enjoyed by higher education institutions in making admissions decisions and of the need to exercise judgement in making such decisions. Against this background, the University of Essex Graduate Admissions Policy is intended to provide a policy and procedural framework within which admissions decision-making is characterised by transparency, fairness and consistency.

The University strives to comply with all relevant legislation in relation to its graduate admissions activity.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes Graduate Certificate and Diploma courses, which are graduate in time, but not in level. Use of the term 'postgraduate' in this document is intended to be inclusive of provision at graduate as well as postgraduate level. Graduate level study is defined as equivalent to Honours level (6) by the Quality Assurance Agency in its National Qualifications Framework; for further details, see <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications>

## SECTION 1 – MARKETING AND STUDENT RECRUITMENT

The University is committed to the provision of comprehensive, open and consistent messages in its marketing and recruitment information, and to the management of activity which leads to the admission of students to the University in ways that are fair, clear and explicit and implemented consistently.

Ensuring consistency is important especially in relation to the very wide range of different countries, in the EU and beyond, in which the University undertakes marketing and recruitment activities. The University's marketing and recruitment messages are delivered through promotional materials and activities in which we aim to ensure are accurate, relevant, current, and accessible in order to provide information that will enable applicants to make informed decisions about their options.

Marketing and Student Recruitment activities include:

- participation at education exhibitions around the world
- collaboration with potential and existing partner institutions
- communicating with enquirers and applicants
- working with agents who represent us around the world
- on-campus Open Days and Applicant Days
- working with schools and colleges around the world

Marketing and Student Recruitment information is communicated via a number of different channels and includes:

- printed prospectuses at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
- the University website ([www.essex.ac.uk](http://www.essex.ac.uk)) which includes specific pages for international students ([www.essex.ac.uk/international](http://www.essex.ac.uk/international))
- HTML email campaigns to enquirers and applicants
- social and new media.
- print and digital advertising campaigns

Marketing and Student Recruitment also ensure that communications with applicants and enquirers adheres to CMA (Competition and Markets Authority), GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) and PECR (Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations) legislation.

Marketing and Student Recruitment and admissions staff maintain a strong working relationship in order to ensure a holistic approach that is informed by the principles set out in the Graduate Admissions Policy.

## SECTION 2 - ADMISSIONS

The University operates a centralised Graduate admissions function for all direct applications, which are processed by a team of Senior Admissions Advisers in the Graduate Admissions Office, who act as the principal contact for admissions purposes.<sup>2</sup>

The selection of students for admission is the responsibility of the Dean of Postgraduate Research & Education (research students) and Heads of Department<sup>3</sup> (taught students). The Dean delegates the selection of research students to Heads of Department and in practice selection is further delegated to Admissions Selectors, who may be members of academic staff or members of the central Graduate Admissions team. The exact arrangements vary according to the organisational structure of the department and the variety of provision within the subject. Members of academic staff in a selecting role are supported by the post of Graduate Administrator, who will liaise with the relevant Senior Admissions Adviser to ensure that selection decisions are made and reported in a timely manner and with access to appropriate resources and reference materials.

The Graduate Admissions Office is responsible for checking and approving the offer and any conditions, and for issuing the formal University offer document. The offer document is binding on the

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<sup>2</sup> This function may be delegated to academic departments by agreement with the Director of Admissions and Access

<sup>3</sup> The term department is used generically in this document and includes academic Schools and Centres of the University.

University. Once an offer has been made, the Graduate Admissions Office is responsible for further formal communications with the applicant.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF APPLICANTS IN ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

Applicants are expected to:

- provide complete and honest information in applications submitted to the University
- respond in a timely manner to requests for further information from the University
- communicate any changes to the information originally supplied in their application as soon as possible
- be courteous and respectful in their communications with University staff involved in admissions.

## **ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

### **1. Academic requirements**

Applicants for postgraduate study must meet the admissions criteria as set out in University Regulations and any course-specific entry requirements, which are published annually in the Postgraduate prospectus and on the University website. Entry requirements are reviewed annually and may include achievement in specific subjects and/or the submission of specific items with the general application.

### **2. English language competence**

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to achieve a minimum English language score to be admitted to a postgraduate taught course or research degree. The University accepts a range of English language qualifications and degrees taught in English as being equivalent to IELTS.

Normally English language test results must be dated within three years of the date of admission to be valid. Other factors in addition to the test or qualification may be taken into consideration, including whether the applicant has undertaken further study or employment in English. The English language condition will be expressed in a standard format, according to the departmental requirement. Applicants that have a valid IELTS (or equivalent) score that is below the entrance requirement for their course or research degree may be referred to the University of Essex International College as a route to achieving the English language entrance requirement.

The English language qualifications and tests which are acceptable for entry to the University and the levels required are listed on the following web page:

[www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/study/english\\_language\\_requirements.pdf?la=en](http://www.essex.ac.uk/-/media/documents/study/english_language_requirements.pdf?la=en)

### **3. Publication of entry requirements**

Entry requirements are normally revised no later than 12 months before the start of the academic year in which admission is sought and are published in the printed Postgraduate prospectus. The University reserves the right to amend its entry requirements before the proposed point of admission. Amended entry requirements will be published on the University website. Applicants already holding offers at the time of the change will be admitted in accordance with the terms of the existing offer unless the new requirements are in favour of the applicant, in which case a revised offer will be issued automatically.

### **4. Acceptable qualifications**

The University accepts Bachelors and Masters degrees from UK, EU and overseas institutions where the status of the institution and its degree awarding powers can be verified.

The equivalence of other qualifications, including professional qualifications and non-UK qualifications, to level 6 of the UK qualifications framework (an Honours degree)<sup>4</sup> and the equivalence of non-UK grading systems to the UK classification system will be evaluated in accordance with independent national guidance provided by UK NARIC and other recognised sources. The Head of Graduate Admissions has overall responsibility for undertaking such evaluations in consultation with the International recruitment staff, and for maintaining the University's *Guide to International Qualifications* for use by Admissions Selectors and Senior Admissions Advisers.

**5. Verification of qualifications**

Applicants are required to submit evidence of their academic achievement to date at the point of application. Evidence of the award of a Bachelors or higher degree must be provided at the confirmation stage, if not already verified during the admissions process, and before the applicant's place is confirmed.

**6. Tier 4 requirements**

Where an applicant requires a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK, an offer of a place will be subject to compliance with relevant aspects of the Home Office's Tier 4 sponsor guidance and University guidance relating to the admission of Tier 4 applicants.

The Home Office/UKVI guidance can be found at:

[www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa](http://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa)

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators)

## **SELECTION**

**7. Assessment of Applications**

All applications are subject to an initial check on receipt by the Senior Admissions Adviser. The initial check will identify applications which require specific attention, in order to ensure that they are dealt with in accordance with relevant procedures. The initial check will also verify that the applicant's existing academic achievements are from institutions which can be verified as acceptable in accordance with paragraph 4 above. The Senior Admissions Adviser will request further evidence or clarification from the applicant if there is insufficient information for the application to be considered or passed to the Admissions Selector. On completion of the initial checks the application will be assigned to the appropriate Admissions Selector to make the selection decision.

8. Applications from individuals who do not meet the University's admissions criteria for postgraduate study as set out in University Regulations and who do not demonstrate compensating professional experience may be rejected at the initial assessment stage. Applications where there is uncertainty about the level of existing academic achievement will be referred to the Head of Graduate Admissions who will determine whether the application should be forwarded for selection.

**9. Selection Decision**

In accordance with the University's commitment to fair admissions, each application is considered individually by an Admissions Selector, who will determine whether an offer should be made on the basis of academic achievements to date, future academic achievement as indicated by transcripts and references and other evidence of the applicant's ability and potential to complete the course for which they have applied. This includes evidence of the applicant's motivation, skills, experience and attitude, as expressed in any

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications>

personal statements and references. Admissions will endeavour to respond to PGT applications within two weeks of submission and within four weeks for PGR applications.

With regards to PGR applications, the timelines for the management of applications will include: a deadline of a maximum of five working days within which the Admissions team will carry out the initial review of the application and pass it on to the Department; a deadline of a maximum of 10 working days (including periods outside teaching terms; excluding DTC/DTP applicants, where application reviews are carried out by committee and follows a relevant procedure) from receipt of the application by the Department to the decision to invite for interview, followed by up to five working days between the interview and communication of offer to the applicant. Within Departments, a named individual (e.g. PGR Director) will be responsible for the management of applications in collaboration with the Admissions Team.

#### 10. **Interviews, auditions and other evidence**

Interviews are not part of the standard admissions procedure for the majority of postgraduate taught courses, but exceptions apply, and applicants are notified accordingly during the admissions process where attendance at interview is required.

Applicants to a research degree who are being considered for an offer will be invited to interview (often by video link) to provide an opportunity for further conversation between applicants and the department. This does not always include the Admissions Selector but will where appropriate. A formal offer will be dependent on a satisfactory performance at interview.

Applicants to East 15 Acting School are required to undertake an audition as part of the selection process.

Applicants to specific courses may be required to provide a sample of academic work. Requirements are set out in the University's Graduate prospectus and the University website and will be communicated to relevant applicants within the application form.

### **OFFER-MAKING**

#### 11. **Communication of Offer**

The Admissions Selectors in each subject area are responsible for proposing offers to suitably qualified applicants. The proposed offers are reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Office, on behalf of the relevant Head of Department (taught courses) or the Dean of Postgraduate Research & Education (research degrees) before being issued to applicants online via the *myEssex* applicant portal. Applicants are advised by email that an offer has been published.

12. The University aims to respond to all applicants with a decision or communication within two weeks of receipt of a complete application for taught courses and within four weeks for research degrees.

#### 13. **Conditional Offers**

A conditional offer will be issued to an applicant who has not provided evidence of an academic or English language entrance requirement, or who is still to complete an academic or English language qualification, or additional documentation, for example a reference. The condition specified will be attainable by the applicant and will ensure that the University's minimum entrance requirements for Higher Degrees and any specific course requirements are satisfied. These may include satisfactory completion of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The conditions of the offer will specify the minimum level of achievement and the level, subject area and awarding institution of the award which needs to be completed.

#### 14. **Unconditional Offers**

An offer of a place to an applicant who has already demonstrated achievement of both the academic and any English language entrance requirements, and has fulfilled all other requirements, will be unconditional. The applicant is not required to demonstrate any further achievement in order to be admitted to the University.

#### 15. **Research Degree Offers**

Departments are responsible for determining that the following three aspects of research study are appropriate before proposing an offer for a research degree:

- Supervisory capacity
- Field of research
- Applicant's capacity to undertake the proposed research.

The University aims where possible to provide the name of the prospective primary supervisor in the offer letter.

For overseas students applicants being made an offer for a relevant programme in Biological Sciences, Health and Social Care, Computer Science & Electronic Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, the Graduate Admissions Office will include a summary of the research area of approximately 200 words in the offer letter in order that applicants can apply for "Academic Technology Approval Scheme" (ATAS) clearance from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

A Research Degree to be completed by distance learning, on either a part-time or full-time basis, may also be offered to applicants who are resident outside the UK, subject to confirmation that supervision can be provided in this mode, and that an applicant will have access to the relevant resources required to undertake their research.

#### 16. **Alternative Course or Research Degree Offers**

The Admissions Selector may determine that the applicant's academic objectives will be best met by taking a course or research degree which is different from that stated in the application. In such cases, the applicant will be notified that their application has been unsuccessful and directly offered a place on an alternative course or research degree.

#### 17. **Tuition Fees**

The tuition fees for the course of study or for the first year of the course if the course is longer than one year, together with the applicant's fee status are normally included in the offer letter issued to the applicant. Where the tuition fee for the course and year in question has not yet been approved, the applicant is advised to refer to information published online.

The University may require Research Degree applicants to pay an additional fee, such as a 'bench fee' to cover the costs of materials and technology required to undertake their research. Where 'bench fees' are applicable, this fee will be included in the applicant's formal offer letter.

#### 18. **Request to Defer an Offer**

The University will not automatically grant a request to defer an offer to a subsequent date of entry. Requests from applicants to defer an offer will be considered by the Admissions Selector, and are subject to the availability of programmes and academic staff in the future.

The Graduate Admissions Office will approve all deferred offers and will check that the status and text of the offer remain appropriate, amending them if necessary. If the entrance requirements have changed since the issue of the initial offer, a deferred offer will be based on the entrance requirements currently in force. Applicants requesting deferred entry must

still be able to meet the academic and English language requirements for the course in the current admissions cycle and in the following admissions cycle. In addition, applicants who require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK will need to meet the relevant Home Office Tier 4 sponsor guidance requirements at the point of entry, including any changes to the guidance that may have been introduced since the initial application.

The Head of Graduate Admissions reserves the right to refuse a deferred offer if there is evidence to suggest that the applicant is not genuine in their intention to study at postgraduate level with the University of Essex.

**19. Unsuccessful Applications and Feedback**

Where the University decides that an offer cannot be made, this is communicated to applicants by e-mail. The University aims to provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants who request this.

**20. Discontinuation, Suspension or Change of Title of Courses**

The University reserves the right to discontinue or suspend a course for which offers have already been issued, but undertakes to do this in exceptional circumstances only. Where a course is discontinued or suspended, applicants holding offers are informed as soon as possible, and where possible and appropriate, are offered a place on an alternative course by the University. Where the title of a course is changed, applicants holding offers are informed as soon as possible of the change.

**CONSIDERATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA IN SELECTION AND OFFER-MAKING**

**21. Applicants with Disabilities**

Applicants who declare a disability in their application are advised to contact the University's Student Support team, which may issue advice and guidance or, where appropriate, make an assessment of the applicant's reasonable adjustment needs and what arrangements may be necessary to enable applicants to meet the course requirements. In individual cases Student Support may invite applicants for an interview to support the assessment process. The Student Support assessment of applications from applicants who declare a disability takes place independently of the academic selection process, which is based entirely on academic merit and takes place in accordance with standard policy.

**22. Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning**

Applicants seeking recognition for prior or experiential learning are handled in accordance with the University's Procedure on AP(E)L. If the AP(E)L request is approved, the offer will note the volume of credit which has been accredited and the changes to the applicant's planned course structure and tuition fee which result from the approval.

Further information on the University's policy and procedure for the accreditation of prior (experiential) learning (AP(E)L) can be found at:

[www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university\\_policies/ap\(E\)L/default.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/ap(E)L/default.asp)

**23. Applicants requesting re-admission**

Applicants who have previously withdrawn from study at the University, and who wish to be re-admitted, will be considered in accordance with the University's policy and procedure on the re-admission of students. Information for applicants can be found at:

<http://www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/readmission.aspx>

24. **Applicants admitted under specific link agreements**

The University may admit applicants to specific degree courses under link agreements with overseas institutions. Link agreements may include specification of the entry requirements for admission to the relevant course.

25. **Assessment of Fee Status**

The Graduate Admissions Office is responsible for determining an applicant's fee status, which will normally be UK (home), EU or Overseas (non-EU), from information provided within the application. If an applicant's fee status is not clear at the point of offer, the applicant record will be set to show Overseas fee status and the applicant will be issued with a Fee Status Questionnaire and explanatory documentation. Fee status assessments are carried out by trained members of admissions staff in accordance with UK fees and awards legislation and guidance provided by the UK Council for International Student Affairs ([www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk)). The University does not exercise discretion when determining applicants' fee status.

The University reserves the right to amend an applicant's fee status after the formal offer has been issued, in light of any relevant evidence of the applicant's immigration and/or residence status in the UK.

Further information about fee status is available on the University's website: [www.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/current/fee-status/](http://www.essex.ac.uk/fees-and-funding/current/fee-status/)

26. **Fraudulent applications**

The validity of documents submitted with postgraduate applications is checked by trained staff in the Graduate Admissions Office. Where possible and appropriate the validity of a document submitted will be checked with the issuing authority. English language test results will be verified with the qualification awarding body (e.g. IELTS).

If discrepancies in documentation, including evidence of plagiarised personal statements or research proposals, are identified at the selection stage, the University reserves the right not to proceed and a record will be kept on the Graduate Admissions database for future reference. An email is sent from Graduate Admissions to the applicant informing him/her that their application has not been successful. If an applicant already holds an offer and submits fraudulent or plagiarised documentation at the confirmation stage, the offer is withdrawn.

27. **Declaration of criminal convictions**

Applicants for courses that are subject to a mandatory DBS check<sup>5</sup> are required by the University to declare all criminal offences that are deemed to be unspent and spent in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013. If the Admissions Selector recommends that an offer be made, such applications will be referred for consideration in accordance with the University's Student Membership and Disclosure and Barring Service Checks Policy. Formal offers of admission will only be made following consideration of the conviction and application in accordance with the policy. Application of the policy takes place independently of the academic selection process, which is based entirely on academic merit and takes place in accordance with standard admissions policy.

<https://www1.essex.ac.uk/dbs/documents/student-membership-and-dbs-policy.pdf>

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<sup>5</sup> A list of the courses that require a mandatory DBS check is published on the University's DBS webpages. These are known as mandatory courses. Courses that require a mandatory DBS check involve regulated activity as defined by the University's Policy on Safeguarding Adults and Children at Risk.

Applicants who are convicted of a criminal offence or receive a police caution after submitting an application for a mandatory course must inform the University. Disclosures can be made in writing to the Head of Undergraduate/Graduate Admissions.

Applicants who accept a place for study on a non-mandatory course are not required to disclose their criminal record prior to admission, but applicants under supervision or currently on licence are encouraged to make us aware of any conditions or requirements which may prevent them from fully engaging with their course and the broader University community. Where possible, the University will undertake to make reasonable adjustments, but if becomes apparent that the applicant is unable to meet the course learning outcomes, they may be required to withdraw their application or transfer to an alternative course.

In all cases, where applicants choose to share information about a criminal offence or police caution with the University, they will be offered support and guidance through the University's specialist support services.

Students studying a non-mandatory course may be required to disclose their criminal record at a later date after registering for the course where they engage in regulated activity that requires a DBS check, for example, through selecting a particular research topic or an optional module.

## **ACCEPTANCE OF OFFERS**

### **28. 14 Day Right to cancel**

Applicants are able to accept an offer of admission from the University via their myEssex portal. A contract is made between the applicant and University at the point an offer of a place is accepted via their myEssex portal. If an applicant changes their mind after accepting their offer, they have the right to cancel the contract within 14 days. The cancellation period ends 14 days after the day on which the offer was accepted, but it is still possible to cancel after the 14 day period.

Further information about the contract and the right to cancel is provided to applicants in their myEssex portal at the initial offer stage (in the *'Important information about your offer'* booklet).

## **CONFIRMATION**

### **29. Firm Acceptance of Places**

The University requires each applicant to firmly accept an offer if they wish to take up a place. An applicant may only firmly accept one offer for a given start date. To firmly accept, an applicant must provide evidence that he/she has met all the conditions stated in the offer and declare a source of funding for the period of study.

30. Applicants that have not met the conditions stated in their conditional offer may still be admitted to the University if the relevant department wishes to make a case to the Dean or Deputy Dean (Education) who has the authority to waive standard entry requirements in individual cases (except where doing so would mean that an applicant was not compliant with Tier 4 requirements).

31. Applicants with full or part sponsorship must provide documentary evidence of the sponsorship. Graduate Admissions will then allocate each applicant a status of "self-funded" or "funded by a specific body", the latter indicating that the tuition fee will be paid in full or part by an organisation that the University will invoice after the point of Registration.

32. Applicants whose fee status is 'overseas', require a Tier 4 visa and who are regarded as self-funded, must pay £1000 in advance in order to receive the University's sponsorship for immigration purposes. This is in line with the University's policy on Tuition Fee Deposits. The current policy can be found at:

[www.essex.ac.uk/tuitionfeedeosit/documents/tuition\\_fee\\_deposit\\_policy.pdf](http://www.essex.ac.uk/tuitionfeedeosit/documents/tuition_fee_deposit_policy.pdf)

33. Applicants that have provided evidence of funding/have paid a deposit and have met all the conditions stated in the offer are categorised as “Firm Accepts” and are regarded as “expected applicants”.
34. Where an applicant requires a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK, confirmation of their place and the issue of a Confirmation for Acceptance of Studies (CAS) will be subject to compliance with relevant aspects of Home Office’s Tier 4 sponsor guidance and University guidance relating to the admission of Tier 4 applicants.

[www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa](http://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa)

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators)

## **COMPLAINTS**

The Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions Offices strive to provide a high quality experience for all applicants throughout the admissions cycle. In the event that an applicant is dissatisfied with any aspect of the University’s admissions process, procedure or policy, they may submit a complaint to the relevant Head of Admissions or to the Director of Communications and External Relations, in line with the ‘Complaints policy for applicants’. This policy can be found in full at:

[www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university\\_policies/Admissions/default.asp](http://www.essex.ac.uk/quality/university_policies/Admissions/default.asp)

## **TRAINING OF STAFF INVOLVED IN ADMISSIONS**

Senior Admissions Advisers are required to undertake training when they are new to the role. Training is the responsibility of the Head of Graduate Admissions. Admissions Selectors are required to make selection decisions in accordance with published policy on entry requirements and qualification equivalencies. The Graduate Directors, or equivalent attend termly meetings, which are chaired by the Dean of Postgraduate Research & Education. These meetings are used by the Head of Graduate Admissions to brief Graduate Directors on any changes to admission procedures which may impact upon selection duties in their department, as well as to identify and share good practice, and updates relating to graduate qualifications and offer making. Specific training is also undertaken by staff involved in the processing and decision-making of international applications when a Tier 4 visa is required.

## **DATA PROTECTION, INCLUDING COMMUNICATION WITH THIRD PARTIES**

The Graduate Admissions Office aims to operate in compliance with data protection legislation and good records management practice. Applicants’ data is treated as confidential by all staff involved in the admissions process and is not divulged unnecessarily or inappropriately. In accordance with University policy, staff involved in admissions communicate only with applicants themselves, unless the applicant has given express permission for a third party to communicate on their behalf. Third parties may be advisers or agents acting on behalf of applicants.

The University’s Privacy Policy explains what data we might hold about our applicants and students, how we use it, who we might share it with and the reasons for doing so:

[www.essex.ac.uk/records\\_management/policies/students.aspx](http://www.essex.ac.uk/records_management/policies/students.aspx)

The University’s Data Protection Policy explains how the University complies with its obligations under the relevant legislation, including the procedures for subject access requests and complaints in respect of personal data:

## SECTION 3 – REGISTRATION AND INDUCTION

### 35. General Induction

The University aims to provide a comprehensive academic and pastoral induction programme in order to support the transition of applicants to registered students at the end of the admissions process. Before arrival at the University applicants are provided with information about registration with the University and academic enrolment and induction activities. This will normally include: information about events provided by academic departments and the Students' Union; services provided by Student Support; arrangements for English language assessment and English language support classes, where appropriate; and general study skills provision, as well as information about good practice in academic writing, such as effective referencing and advice on how to avoid plagiarism.

Where appropriate, applicants will be provided with information about optional modules that are available to them and will be invited to select optional modules online in advance of their arrival at the University. Module selection will depend on the availability of particular modules.

Prior to arrival students also have the opportunity to activate their University of Essex e-mail and IT account which provides access to additional resources and immediate internet access in University accommodation upon arrival. It also allows students to receive specific e-mail communications about arrangements and events during the first week of term.

### 36. Induction for Research Students

The University provides Doctoral Welcome events in October, January and April for new and continuing students. The Doctoral Welcome events are designed to help research students to feel part of a cohort and of a broader research student community. They also provide some initial skills development to assist students with planning their work and managing their relationships with their supervisors.

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