Appendix A

*Administrative Note: a ‘clean copy’ without marked changes is supplied at the end of this document for ease of reference.*

|  |
| --- |
| **Regulations relating to Admission**  1.1. Admission denotes acceptance of a person to begin a programme of study leading to a degree of the University. A programme of study shall be taken to include a programme of study and research. Only persons who have been admitted may be permitted to begin a programme of study leading to an award of the University.  1.2. Only persons who have satisfied the general entrance requirements of the University and the published entry requirements for the relevant programme of study may be admitted and permitted to register as a student of the University.   1. For admission to a Foundation Degree, the General Entrance Requirement is a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education passes at grade C or above, and a pass in one Advanced Level General Certificate of Education, or equivalent. 2. For admission to a Bachelors Degree, the General Entrance Requirement is a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education passes at grade C or above, and a pass in two Advanced Level General Certificates of Education, or equivalent. 3. Equivalencies to the General Certificate of Secondary Education and the Advanced Level General Certificate of Education will be determined by the relevant Admissions Officer and are available on request. 4. For admission to a postgraduate taught or research degree, an applicant is deemed to have met the University’s General Entrance Requirement by virtue of meeting the published entry requirement for the programme of study for which s/he has applied.   ~~1.3. Only persons who have been admitted may be permitted to begin a programme of study leading to an award of the University~~.  1.4. Persons who have been offered a place in the University to begin a programme of study must register as required under the procedures approved from time to time by the University by the end of the period of twenty-eight days starting with the day on which their programme of study commences, normally the first day of the autumn term in the year in which their programme commences. If a person fails so to register, the offer of admission to the programme of study will lapse. It should be noted that, notwithstanding this Regulation, attendance is normally required on academic grounds from the first day of commencement of the programme of study. The University reserves the right, on academic grounds, not to allow students to register after term has started.  X.X *[new regulation number needed]*  Whilst the University has no minimum or upper age limits on entry, those who will be under 18 years of age will be required to comply with University child protection procedures. Offers of admission will only be made to those applicants who will be under 18 years of age on entry who undertake to comply with the University’s child protection procedures.    1.5. A person who, after his/her acceptance for admission as a student, has been convicted of a criminal offence in a court of law or has been formally cautioned by a police officer, is required to notify the Head of Admissions immediately. Such cases will be referred to the Academic Registrar for consideration under the appropriate University procedures and the student concerned may be required to withdraw from or be refused admission to the University. ~~General Entrance Requirements~~ ~~1.6.~~  ~~The qualifications listed below will be accepted as satisfying the University's General Entrance Requirements for an ordinary or honours degree. In addition, aApplicants must have a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education awarded by one of the examining bodies approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families, grade C or above, or acceptable equivalent level 2 of the national qualifications framework.~~   * 1. ~~Passes in at least two subjects of Advanced Level General Certificate of Education, awarded by one of the examining bodies approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.~~   2. ~~An Advanced or progression Level 3 Diploma.~~   3. ~~A National Certificate or Diploma or Higher National Certificate or Diploma.~~   4. ~~Completion of an approved Access Certificate or Diploma or similar course intended to facilitate entry into higher education to a standard specified by the University.~~   5. ~~University of Cambridge International Examinations Pre-U Diploma.~~   6. ~~30 full credits awarded in respect of any course of the Open University at least at level ‘O’.~~   7. ~~A degree awarded by another university in the United Kingdom and by such other universities as may be approved for this purpose.~~   8. ~~Diplomas awarded by a university or university college in the United Kingdom and by such other universities as may be approved for this purpose.~~   9. ~~A full practising professional qualification approved for this purpose.~~   10. ~~An approved certificate of proficiency as a trained teacher awarded after a course of full-time training lasting at least two years.~~   11. ~~Passes in four subjects at the Higher grade of the Scottish Certificate of Education;~~   12. ~~The International Baccalaureate Diploma.~~   13. ~~The European Baccalaureate.~~   14. ~~The Advanced General National Vocational Qualification.~~   15. ~~A twelve unit Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education.~~   16. ~~Six Irish Higher Certificates.~~   17. ~~The Welsh Baccalaureate at appropriate level.~~   18. ~~Other national qualifications approved for this purpose or equivalent to any of the above.~~   19. ~~For some Health and Human Sciences programmes of study the National Vocational Qualification Level 3 is acceptable in specified subject areas.~~  1. ~~The General Entrance Requirement for a Foundation Degree requires a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education, grade C or above, or acceptable equivalent level 2 of the National Qualifications Framework. Applicants must also have a pass in one Advanced Level General Certificate of Education or equivalent awarded by one of the examining bodies approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.~~   ~~1.7. The Senate shall approve qualifications for the purpose of fulfilling the General Entrance Requirements under the provisions of~~ [~~Regulation 1.6.~~](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/cal/admission.shtm#1.6)  1.7  The Head of a department shall be responsible for determining the entry requirements for individual programmes of study annually. Programme-specific entry requirements shall normally be published at least twelve months before the date of commencement of the relevant programme of study.  X.X *[new regulation number needed]*  The Head of a department or his/her nominee shall be responsible for determining an applicant’s suitability for admission to an undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study in accordance with University admissions policy and published entry requirements for the relevant programme of study.  1.8. A Dean may declare applicants who do not satisfy the General Entrance Requirements and/or the published entry requirements for the relevant undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study suitable ~~the following eligible for selection~~ for admission, subject to their submitting satisfactory evidence of previous study and/or employment which demonstrates their capacity to pursue the relevant programme of study. The Dean may delegate this responsibility to a nominee~~.:~~   1. ~~Applicants who do not satisfy any of the~~ [~~requirements listed in Regulation 1.6. above,~~](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/cal/admission.shtm#1.6) ~~but who submit satisfactory evidence of having passed examinations which are considered to be equivalent to any of those listed.~~ 2. ~~In special cases, applicants who submit satisfactory evidence of previous study and/or employment of the capacity and attainments requisite to enable them to pursue the programme of study for which they are applying. The Dean may delegate this responsibility to a nominee.~~   X.X *[new regulation number needed]*  The Head of a department or his/her nominee shall be responsible for assessing the suitability for admission of an applicant for a research degree programme and for recommending the applicant’s admission to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval, in accordance with University admissions policy and published entry requirements for the relevant research degree programme.  1.9. A ~~Dean~~ Head of department or his/her nominee may declare applicants eligible for selection for admission to a programme of study leading to the grant of credits, which may be accumulated towards an award of the University, if they submit satisfactory evidence of the capacity and attainments requisite to enable them to pursue the programme of study for which they are applying.  1.18. Applicants for a programme of study not leading to ~~an examination for~~ a degree or other qualification awarded by the University (eg Exchange Students) must satisfy the relevant University officer of their fitness to enter upon the programme of study which they intend to undertake. ~~Degree Course Pre-Requisites~~ ~~Note: Where reference is made to the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Level or the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), equivalent qualifications may also be deemed acceptable for admission purposes.~~  ~~1.10.~~ ~~Degrees Involving the Study of a Modern Language~~ ~~Applicants for degrees involving the study of a modern language may be required to have a pass at GCE Advanced level in one of the foreign languages they wish to study.~~  ~~1.11.~~ ~~Degrees Requiring the GCSE in Mathematics~~ ~~Applicants for degree schemes including the study of degrees in the The Essex Business School, the departments of Biological Sciences, Computer Science and Electronic Engineering, Economics, Psychology or the School of  Health and Human Sciences or  are required to have at least a C grade pass in Mathematics.~~  ~~[~~[~~top of page~~](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/cal/admission.shtm#top)~~]~~  ~~1.12.~~ ~~Degrees Requiring the GCSE in Science~~ ~~Applicants for degree schemes in the Departments of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering and Biological Sciences may be required to have at least a C grade pass in GCSE Science.~~  ~~1.13.~~ ~~Degrees Requiring GCE Advanced Level Mathematics~~ ~~Applicants for degrees involving the study of Mathematics, Electronic or Telecommunications Engineering are normally required to have achieved a pass in GCE Advanced Level Mathematics.~~  ~~1.14.~~ ~~Degrees Requiring GCE Advanced Level in a Humanities Subject~~ ~~Applicants for degrees involving the study of Drama, Literature or Film Studies are required to have a GCE Advanced Level pass in a Humanities subject.~~  ~~1.15.~~ ~~Degrees Requiring GCE Advanced Level Science~~ ~~Applicants for the three year degree schemes in Biological Sciences (eg Biology, Sports Science) are normally required to have a GCE Advanced Level pass in Biology and a second science.~~  ~~Applicants for either the three or four year degrees involving Biochemistry are normally required to have a GCE Advanced level pass in Chemistry and a second science.~~  ~~Note: A second science includes GCE Advanced Levels in Mathematics, Physics, Electronics, Psychology, Geography or Physical Education.~~ ~~Accreditation of Prior Learning~~ 1.16 Applicants who have evidence of previous relevant learning may be permitted to import credit towards a named University award, within the University’s policy for the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) or Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). ~~English Language Requirements~~ 1.17. Applicants ~~whose mother-tongue is~~ who are not native English speakers must meet the University’s published entry requirements in respect of English language competence. ~~are required to provide to the relevant University officer evidence that their ability to understand and express themselves in both written and spoken English is sufficiently high to enable them to derive full benefit from the programme of study for which they are applying.~~  They ~~are~~ may also be required~~, unless exempted by the relevant University officer,~~ to undertake ~~a test~~ an assessment of proficiency in written and spoken English conducted at the University. ~~The test will normally take place in the first week of the Autumn term in which they enter the University. Students who register after the beginning of the Autumn term will take the test at a time arranged by the International Academy.~~ On the basis of this assessment ~~test~~, students and their departments will:   1. ~~be advised that English classes are not normally considered necessary or~~ 2. be advised that they should take English language support classes and that failure to do so could be detrimental to their studies and, in the event of failure, would be part of the evidence available to Examination Boards; or 3. be advised that attendance at English language support classes is not considered necessary.   ~~1.19.~~  ~~The minimum English language requirement for admission to the first year of an undergraduate degree and to a postgraduate degree, including research degrees, is an overall score of 6.0 in the IELTS test or equivalent. Different English language requirements may apply for admission to individual courses, including foundation level courses. Minimum English language requirements for admission to individual courses are published annually by the University in prospectuses and other admissions-related documentation. This regulation may be waived in individual cases by a Dean or the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor.~~ *EXTRACTS FROM THE HIGHER DEGREE REGULATIONS* |
| Admissions 3.2. A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a taught Masters degree must apply through the Head of Department concerned to be admitted ~~by the relevant Faculty Dean~~ as a registered graduate student within the Graduate School. 3.3. A candidate for a Masters degree must satisfy one of the following admissions criteria:   1. hold a Bachelors (Honours) degree awarded by an institution or body with degree awarding powers in the UK; 2. be a graduate of first-cycle higher education as defined by the Bologna Declaration or a person holding a degree-level qualification from a recognised overseas institution; 3. be a person who is deemed ~~by the Dean~~ to demonstrate an academic standard equivalent to a Bachelors (Honours) degree, documented through professional or vocational achievement.   In the case of applicants who are not native speakers of English, evidence must be produced of a high level of ability in the language, including writing. ~~3.4. An applicant for admission to a taught Masters programme may be required by the relevant Faculty Dean, on the recommendation of the Head of the Department concerned, to register as a graduate student of the University and to follow such modules extending over a period of up to one year as the Head of the Department shall prescribe in order to qualify for admission to a taught Masters programme.~~  3.14. ~~Admission to a Diploma or Certificate programme shall be by the relevant Faculty Dean on the recommendation of the Head(s) of the Department(s) concerned.~~ A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a Diploma or Certificate programme must apply through the Head of Department concerned to be admitted as a registered student within the Graduate School. |

*The following regulation, which relates to research degree admissions, is included for completeness. No change is proposed.*

4.2.  
A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a research degree must first apply to the Head of the Department concerned to be admitted by the Dean of the Graduate School as a registered graduate student within the Graduate School.  
The applicant must satisfy the admissions criteria set out in 4.3 and propose a field of study in which the department is able to offer supervision.  
The Head of Department will recommend such applicants for admission to the Dean.  
When an applicant is accepted for admission to a research degree, the Dean shall approve the appointment of a member or members of the academic or research staff of the University as the student’s supervisor or supervisors.

***Copy of Regulations without tracked changes***

|  |
| --- |
| **Regulations relating to Admission**  1.1. Admission denotes acceptance of a person to begin a programme of study leading to a degree of the University. A programme of study shall be taken to include a programme of study and research. Only persons who have been admitted may be permitted to begin a programme of study leading to an award of the University.  1.2. Only persons who have satisfied the general entrance requirements of the University and the published entry requirements for the relevant programme of study may be admitted and permitted to register as a student of the University.   1. For admission to a Foundation Degree, the General Entrance Requirement is a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education passes at grade C or above, and a pass in one Advanced Level General Certificate of Education, or equivalent. 2. For admission to a Bachelors Degree, the General Entrance Requirement is a minimum of five General Certificates of Secondary Education passes at grade C or above, and a pass in two Advanced Level General Certificates of Education, or equivalent. 3. Equivalencies to the General Certificate of Secondary Education and the Advanced Level General Certificate of Education will be determined by the relevant Admissions Officer and are available on request. 4. For admission to a postgraduate taught or research degree, an applicant is deemed to have met the University’s General Entrance Requirement by virtue of meeting the published entry requirement for the programme of study for which s/he has applied.   1.3. Persons who have been offered a place in the University to begin a programme of study must register as required under the procedures approved from time to time by the University by the end of the period of twenty-eight days starting with the day on which their programme of study commences, normally the first day of the autumn term in the year in which their programme commences. If a person fails so to register, the offer of admission to the programme of study will lapse. It should be noted that, notwithstanding this Regulation, attendance is normally required on academic grounds from the first day of commencement of the programme of study. The University reserves the right, on academic grounds, not to allow students to register after term has started.  1.4.  Whilst the University has no minimum or upper age limits on entry, those who will be under 18 years of age will be required to comply with University child protection procedures. Offers of admission will only be made to those applicants who will be under 18 years of age on entry who undertake to comply with the University’s child protection procedures.  1.5. A person who, after his/her acceptance for admission as a student, has been convicted of a criminal offence in a court of law or has been formally cautioned by a police officer, is required to notify the Head of Admissions immediately. Such cases will be referred to the Academic Registrar for consideration under the appropriate University procedures and the student concerned may be required to withdraw from or be refused admission to the University.  1.6.  The Head of a department shall be responsible for determining the entry requirements for individual programmes of study annually. Programme-specific entry requirements shall normally be published at least twelve months before the date of commencement of the relevant programme of study.  1.7.  The Head of a department or his/her nominee shall be responsible for determining an applicant’s suitability for admission to an undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study in accordance with University admissions policy and published entry requirements for the relevant programme of study.  1.8. A Dean may declare applicants who do not satisfy the General Entrance Requirements and/or the published entry requirements for the relevant undergraduate or postgraduate taught programme of study suitable for admission, subject to their submitting satisfactory evidence of previous study and/or employment which demonstrates their capacity to pursue the relevant programme of study. The Dean may delegate this responsibility to a nominee.  X.X *[new regulation number needed]*  The Head of a department or his/her nominee shall be responsible for assessing the suitability for admission of an applicant for a research degree programme and for recommending the applicant’s admission to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval, in accordance with University admissions policy and published entry requirements for the relevant research degree programme.  1.9. A Head of department or his/her nominee may declare applicants eligible for selection for admission to a programme of study leading to the grant of credits, which may be accumulated towards an award of the University, if they submit satisfactory evidence of the capacity and attainments requisite to enable them to pursue the programme of study for which they are applying.  1.18. *[amend number]* Applicants for a programme of study not leading to a degree or other qualification awarded by the University (eg Exchange Students) must satisfy the relevant University officer of their fitness to enter upon the programme of study which they intend to undertake.  1.17. *[amend number]* Applicants who are not native English speakers must meet the University’s published entry requirements in respect of English language competence.  They may also be required to undertake an assessment of proficiency in written and spoken English conducted at the University. On the basis of this assessment, students and their departments will:   1. be advised that they should take English language support classes and that failure to do so could be detrimental to their studies and, in the event of failure, would be part of the evidence available to Examination Boards; or 2. be advised that attendance at English language support classes is not considered necessary.  *EXTRACTS FROM THE HIGHER DEGREE REGULATIONS* |
| Admissions 3.2. A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a taught Masters degree must apply through the Head of Department concerned to be admitted as a registered graduate student within the Graduate School. 3.3. A candidate for a Masters degree must satisfy one of the following admissions criteria:   1. hold a Bachelors (Honours) degree awarded by an institution or body with degree awarding powers in the UK; 2. be a graduate of first-cycle higher education as defined by the Bologna Declaration or a person holding a degree-level qualification from a recognised overseas institution; 3. be a person who is deemed to demonstrate an academic standard equivalent to a Bachelors (Honours) degree, documented through professional or vocational achievement.   In the case of applicants who are not native speakers of English, evidence must be produced of a high level of ability in the language, including writing.~~.~~  3.14. A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a Diploma or Certificate programme must apply through the Head of Department concerned to be admitted as a registered student within the Graduate School. |

*The following regulation, which relates to research degree admissions, is included for completeness. No change is proposed.*

4.2.  
A person wishing to be accepted as a student for a research degree must first apply to the Head of the Department concerned to be admitted by the Dean of the Graduate School as a registered graduate student within the Graduate School.  
The applicant must satisfy the admissions criteria set out in 4.3 and propose a field of study in which the department is able to offer supervision.  
The Head of Department will recommend such applicants for admission to the Dean.  
When an applicant is accepted for admission to a research degree, the Dean shall approve the appointment of a member or members of the academic or research staff of the University as the student’s supervisor or supervisors.

Appendix B

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX**

**UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy applies to all admissions[[1]](#footnote-1) to full-time undergraduate programmes 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 enrolment and induction for successful applicants.

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY**

The Undergraduate Admissions Policy is approved by the Senate. Implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Deputy Director (Admissions), Communications & External Relations.

**REVIEW OF POLICY**

Monitoring and review of the Undergraduate Admissions Policy is undertaken annually by the Admissions Sub-Committee, which reports to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

**PRINCIPLES GOVERNING UNDERGRADUATE 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 undergraduate 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.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The University acknowledges the principles and precepts governing good admissions practice set out by the Schwartz Report[[3]](#footnote-3) and in Section 10 of the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice[[4]](#footnote-4). The University welcomes the recognition by Schwartz and 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 Undergraduate 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 observe the rules and procedures set down by UCAS, the good practice guidance provided by SPA[[5]](#footnote-5) and to comply with all relevant legislation in relation to its undergraduate admissions activity.

**SECTION 1 – MARKETING AND 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 promulgated through promotional materials and activities 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 recruitment activities include:

* participation at education exhibitions
* collaboration with partner institutions
* working with agents who represent us around the world
* on-campus Open and Visit Days.

Marketing and recruitment information is communicated via a number of different media 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) )
* an International Prospectus which is specifically aimed at non-EU applicants
* social and new media.

Marketing and 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 Undergraduate Admissions Policy.

**SECTION 2 – EDUCATION OUTREACH AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION**

The University is committed to widening participation and fair access and fosters an inclusive and diverse environment for study, providing opportunities for study to individuals who are able to demonstrate the potential to meet the entry criteria for the relevant course and to benefit from study at undergraduate level, regardless of their background. The University’s Education Outreach team is engaged in a range of activity targeted at students from groups that are under-represented in higher education, which aims to raise awareness, increase attainment and suitably prepare students for entering and undertaking study in higher education. Our pre-education outreach activity includes:

* information and advice in schools and colleges
* campus visits for students in primary and secondary education
* summer schools
* individual mentoring
* targeted support for specific groups such as mature students and care leavers.

The University aims to deliver a cohesive approach to widening participation and fair access, which is expressed in its Access Agreement, the Widening Participation Strategic Assessment and the Undergraduate Admissions Policy. Widening participation, outreach and admissions staff maintain a strong working relationship with appropriate representation on formal University committees, to ensure that the admissions policy and education outreach and widening participation strategy are mutually informed, and to maintain a holistic approach to access.

Education outreach activity is informed by the principles set out in the Undergraduate Admissions Policy.

**SECTION 3 - ADMISSIONS**

The University operates a centralised undergraduate admissions function for all applications received via UCAS. Applications are processed by a team of Admissions Advisers who act as the principal contact for applicants throughout the admissions process. However, selection decisions are the responsibility of academic Admissions Selectors.

**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**

All undergraduate applicants are required to meet the University’s General Entrance Requirements as set out in University Regulations ([Section 1](http://www.essex.ac.uk/academic/docs/cal/admission.shtm)). Entry requirements are normally expressed in terms of three A level grades, but they may also be expressed in terms of the minimum UCAS tariff points required for individual courses. Course-specific entry requirements are published annually in the undergraduate prospectus, on the University website and via the UCAS website. Academic entry requirements are reviewed annually and are determined by academic departments following consultation with the Deputy Director (Admissions), and members of the Marketing & Recruitment and International Office teams. Entry requirements may include specific subjects and attainment at GCSE and A level or equivalent.

2. **English language competence**

Applicants whose native language is not English and who have not been educated in an English-speaking environment (country and/or institution) are required to achieve a minimum overall score of IELTS 6.0 or equivalent to be admitted to a first year undergraduate course. The minimum entry requirement for direct entry to the second year of an undergraduate course is IELTS 6.5 or equivalent. A lower English requirement may apply to foundation level study. Approval of English language requirements is the responsibility of the Admissions Sub-Committee. The University accepts a range of English language qualifications as being equivalent to IELTS.

3. **Publication of entry requirements**

Entry requirements are normally determined around two years before the proposed point of admission, e.g. by January 2011 for October 2012 entry, and are published in the printed undergraduate prospectus. The University reserves the right to amend its entry requirements up to 12 months before the proposed point of admission. Amended entry requirements will be published on the University website and the UCAS website.

4. **Acceptable qualifications**

The University accepts a wide range of qualifications from UK applicants, including A and AS level, International Baccalaureate, Cambridge Pre-U, BTEC qualifications, Level 3 Advanced Diplomas, Access courses (approved by the Quality Assurance Agency), Open University qualifications and a range of professional qualifications.

A wide range of EU and other international qualifications is also accepted. The equivalence of such qualifications to Level 3 UK awards will be evaluated in accordance with independent national guidance provided by UK NARIC, UCAS and other recognised sources. The Head of Undergraduate Admissions is responsible for undertaking such evaluations in consultation with Admissions Selectors and the International Office team, and for maintaining the University’s *Guide to* *International Qualifications* for use by Academic Selectors and Admissions Advisers.

5. **Verification of qualifications**

The University will normally verify the result of any qualification that is not received from UCAS through the Awarding Bodies Linkage (ABL). Applicants may be required to submit evidence of results before they are permitted to enrol at the University.

**SELECTION**

6. **Initial checks**

All applications are subject to an initial check on receipt by the Admissions Adviser. The initial check will identify applications which require specific attention (see section on *Consideration of Additional Data in Selection and Offer-Making,* paragraphs 16 to 26 below), in order to ensure that they are dealt with in accordance relevant procedures. On completion of the initial checks the application will be submitted to the academic Admissions Selector, who will make the selection decision.

7. Applications from individuals who do not meet the University’s General Entrance Requirements may be rejected at the initial check stage. In borderline cases such applications will be referred to the Head of Undergraduate Admissions who will determine whether the application should be submitted to the academic Admissions Selector for consideration. If the Admissions Selector recommends that an offer should be made, the application will be submitted to the Dean of the relevant Faculty, who is responsible for determining whether the General Entrance Requirements may be waived.

8. **Selection decision**

In accordance with the University’s commitment to fair admissions, each application is considered individually by an academic Admissions Selector, who will determine whether an offer should be made on the basis of academic achievements to date, predicted academic achievement and other evidence of the applicant’s ability and potential to complete the course for which s/he has applied. This includes evidence of the applicant’s motivation, skills, experience and attitude, as expressed in his/her personal statement and the academic reference.

9. The University does not currently use contextual data in making selection decisions at the point of application. However, extenuating circumstances disclosed in the UCAS application will be considered by the Admissions Selector when deciding whether an offer should be made.

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

Some departments invite all applicants who are based in the UK at the time of application to attend an interview or workshop, which provides an opportunity for applicants to meet one or more members of academic staff in order to provide a mutually beneficial assessment of their suitability for the course. Applicants who are not invited to attend for an interview will receive equal consideration. However, the University reserves the right to reject applications from applicants who are invited to attend an interview and who do not respond to one, or exceptionally two, specific invitations to attend.

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

Applicants to NHS-funded courses in the School of Health and Human Sciences are required to attend an interview and to complete specific tests in accordance with requirements published by the relevant NHS authority.

Applicants to specific courses may be required to provide a portfolio for assessment by the Admissions Selector. Such requirements are set out in the University’s prospectus and will be communicated to relevant applicants direct.

**OFFER-MAKING**

11. **Communication of offer**

Where the University decides to make the applicant an offer, this is communicated to applicants via UCAS Track and in writing by letter from the University. The offer letter will set out any conditions that the applicant must meet.

12. **Conditions of offer**

The offer letter sets out the specific entry requirements that the applicant must achieve in order for his/her place to be confirmed. The offer will be expressed in terms of A level grades or the equivalent for applicants who are taking alternative qualifications. Where appropriate the offer will include the English language requirement that the applicant must achieve in order for his/her place to be confirmed.

The University normally makes the Standard Conditional Officer (SCO) for the course. However, Admissions Selectors make a lower offer in individual cases, in accordance with the published admissions policy for the department or subject in question.

The offer letter may also set out non-academic conditions that the applicant must meet before admission to the course can be confirmed. These may include satisfactory completion of a Criminal Records Bureau check and an occupational health check.

13. **Applicants made an alternative offer**

In cases where the applicant is deemed unlikely to achieve the entry requirements for the course for which s/he has applied but where an alternative course is available, a ‘change of course offer’ may be made.

14. **Unsuccessful applicants and feedback**

Where the University decides that an offer cannot be made, this is communicated to applicants via UCAS Track. Admissions selectors are required to record the reason(s) for not making an offer in each individual case. Feedback is provided to unsuccessful applicants on request to the Undergraduate Admissions Office ([admit@essex.ac.uk](mailto:admit@essex.ac.uk)).

15. **Discontinuation or suspension 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, applicants holding offers are informed as soon as possible, and where possible and appropriate, are offered a place on an alternative course offered by the University.

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

16. **Applicants with disabilities**

Applicants who declare a disability in their application are referred to 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 students 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 students 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.

17. **Mature applicants**

Applications from mature students, formally defined as students over the age of 21, are welcomed and will be given equal consideration with all other applications.

18. **Applicants who will be under 18 at the time of entry to the University**

In accordance with University regulations, applicants who will be under 18 at the time of entry will be required to comply with University child protection procedures. Such applicants will be required to complete the relevant under 18s form satisfactorily, providing parental/guardian approval and details of a UK-based emergency contact who is over the age of 21, before an offer of admission is made.

19. **Deferred entry**

Applications for deferred entry are welcomed and will be given equal consideration with applications for entry in the admissions cycle in question.

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

Applicants wishing to be considered for entry to the second year of study, or wishing to import credits or evidence of prior learning into the course for which they are applying, will be considered in accordance with the University’s policy on Accreditation of Prior (Experiential) Learning.

21. **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 on the re-admission of students.

22. **Applicants admitted under specific education outreach programmes**

The University may admit applicants under specific programmes designed to encourage applications from students who have experienced educational disadvantage. Such programmes include specification of additional consideration that may be given to applicants during the admissions process.

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

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

24. **Assessment of applicant fee status**

Applicants are required to declare their fee status when they complete their UCAS form, selecting from a number of options including UK home, EU or overseas (non-EU) fee status. The Admissions Adviser checks information in the UCAS application relating to fee status, including the nationality, country of residence, address and declared fee status of each applicant. Where the combination of information provided suggests that the fee status declared by the applicant may be incorrect, the University carries out a fee status assessment. Fee status assessments are carried out by trained members of admissions staff in accordance with UK fees and awards regulations and guidance provided by the UK Council for International Student Affairs ([www.ukcisa.org](http://www.ukcisa.org)). 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, where information provided for the purpose of the initial fee status assessment has been withheld or misrepresented.

The tuition fees for the first year of the course of study, together with the applicant’s fee status, are included in the offer letter issued to the applicant.

25. **Fraudulent applications, including similarity detection in personal statements**

Applications submitted via UCAS are subject to the anti-fraud procedures and checks carried out by UCAS. All personal statements submitted via UCAS are subject to the UCAS similarity detection procedure. Where a personal statement contains significant similarities to another previously submitted to UCAS the University is notified of this and of the extent of the similarity.

All applications highlighted by the UCAS Similarity Detection Service are sent to the Admissions Selector for consideration. If the Admissions Selector wishes to make a conditional or unconditional offer, the applicant is invited to submit a revised personal statement by a specific date, normally within two weeks of the request. On receipt of the revised personal statement the application will be scrutinised by the Admissions Selector and a selection decision will be made in accordance with standard procedures. In these cases, Admissions Selectors will give particular attention to the personal statement. If a revised personal statement is not received from the applicant by the specified deadline, the application will be forwarded to the Admissions Selector for consideration, together with the similarity detection report received from UCAS. The Admissions Selector will exercise his/her discretion in light of the evidence received and will make a selection decision accordingly.

26. **Declaration of criminal convictions**

Applicants are required by UCAS to declare criminal convictions that are not spent at the time of application. 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 Criminal Records Bureau 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 policy.

Applicants for specific courses, such as NHS-funded courses, may be required to declare spent criminal convictions and will be notified of this required where appropriate.

**CONFIRMATION**

27. **Consideration of applicant results**

The University considers the results of all applicants who are holding a Conditional Firm (CF) or Conditional Insurance (CI) place before deciding whether to confirm an applicant’s place. A level results and the results of some other qualifications are automatically provided to the University by UCAS. In the case of results not provided by UCAS, it is the applicant’s responsibility to provide the Undergraduate Admissions Office with evidence of the results of academic and English language qualifications. The University reserves the right not to confirm an applicant’s place if he/she does not provide evidence of having met the conditions of his/her offer by the published deadline (normally 31 August).

28. **Verification of results**

The University reserves the right to verify all results by receiving and checking original certificates prior to confirming an applicant’s place and/or permitting enrolment with the University. Where possible, English language test results will be verified with the qualification awarding body (IELTS, TOEFL, etc).

29. **Applicants holding CF offers**

On receipt of the applicant’s results Undergraduate Admissions staff check to see if the conditions of the offer have been met. Where they have, the place is confirmed and UCAS is informed that the applicant’s status is now Unconditional Firm (UF). Where the applicant’s results have fallen short of the conditions of the offer by a narrow margin, i.e. the applicant is a ‘near miss’, the applicant’s place may be confirmed at the discretion of the Head of the relevant department and subject to the availability of places. Where an applicant falls into the ‘near miss’ category, contextual data relating to the applicant’s personal circumstances may be considered, for example, extenuating circumstances that may have affected academic performance, or the educational context in which the applicant has been studying. This may include reference to the performance of the school or college in relation to national benchmarks, such as the percentage of students achieving five GCSEs with grades A\*-C.

30. **Applicants holding CI offers**

The confirmation process for applicants holding CI offers is the same as for applicants holding CF offers. However, where the place is confirmed UCAS is informed that the applicant’s status is now Unconditional Insurance (UI). Applicants whose status is UI only become UF where their first choice University (their original CF choice) rejects them at Confirmation.

31. **Communication of Confirmation Decisions**

All applicants holding CF or CI offers are informed of the University’s confirmation decision in writing by letter, regardless of whether they have successfully secured a place or not.

**COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

There is no right of appeal against the University’s selection decision. However, complaints about the admissions process may be directed to the Director of Communications and External Relations. Complaints should be made in writing within 14 days of the relevant University decision, e.g. to reject an application or not to confirm an applicant’s place. Complaints will normally be considered to be valid only where there is evidence of procedural irregularity, including failure to adhere to the Undergraduate Admissions Policy.

**TRAINING OF STAFF INVOLVED IN ADMISSIONS**

Admissions Advisers and Admissions Selectors are required to undertake training when they are new to the role. Training is the responsibility of the Head of Undergraduate Admissions. Regular briefings for both Admissions Advisers and Admissions Selectors take place during the admissions cycle, with a particular focus on identifying and sharing good practice.

**DATA PROTECTION AND COMMUNICATION WITH THIRD PARTIES**

The Undergraduate 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 his/her behalf. Third parties may be parents, teachers, advisers or agents acting on behalf of applicants.

**SECTION 4 - ENROLMENT AND 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.

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.

Appendix C

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX**

**GRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY**

**SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy applies to all admissions to full and part-time postgraduate[[6]](#footnote-6) 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 enrolment 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 Deputy Director (Admissions), Communications & External Relations.

**REVIEW OF POLICY**

Monitoring and review of the Graduate Admissions Policy is undertaken annually by the Admissions Sub-Committee of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee.

**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 Section 10 of the Quality Assurance Agency Code of Practice[[7]](#footnote-7). 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.

**SECTION 1 – MARKETING AND 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 promulgated through promotional materials and activities 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 recruitment activities include:

* participation at education exhibitions
* collaboration with partner institutions
* working with agents who represent us around the world
* on-campus Open and Visit Days.

Marketing and recruitment information is communicated via a number of different media and includes:

* printed prospectuses at undergraduate and graduate 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) )
* an International Prospectus which is specifically aimed at non-EU applicants
* social and new media.

Marketing and 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 Graduateadmissions function for all direct applications, which are processed by a team of Admissions Advisers in the Graduate Admissions Office, who act as the principal contact for admissions purposes. Applications may also be made by agents, who act on behalf of applicants, and these may be received and processed initially by teams who are responsible for maintaining relationships with agents.

The selection of students for admission is the responsibility of the Dean of the Graduate School (for research students) and Heads of Department[[8]](#footnote-8) for taught students. The Dean delegates the selection of research students to Heads of Department and in practice selection is further delegated to Graduate Directors, Course Directors or Research Directors. The exact arrangements vary according to the organisational structure of the department and the variety of provision within the subject. Those in a selecting role are supported by the post of Graduate Administrator, who will liaise with the relevant 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 International Office may select applications received from agents for taught courses, on behalf of the relevant Head of Department, if the department has entered an agreement with the International Office for selection purposes.

The Graduate Admissions Office is responsible for checking the offer and conditions, and for issuing the formal University offer document. The offer document is binding on the 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 Graduate 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 native language is not English and who have not been educated in an English-speaking environment (country and/or institution) are required to achieve a minimum overall IELTS score and, where specified a minimum score in the writing component of the IELTS test, to be admitted to a postgraduate taught course or research degree. The minimum overall IELTS score for admission to a taught postgraduate course is 6.5 for the majority of courses, but exceptions to this apply and are published on the University website. The minimum overall IELTS score for admission to a research degree is normally 7.0. Approval of English language requirements is the responsibility of the Admissions Sub-Committee. The University accepts a range of English language qualifications as being equivalent to IELTS.

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 Graduate 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)[[9]](#footnote-9) 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 including the World List of universities. The Head of Graduate Admissions is responsible for undertaking such evaluations in consultation with the International Office team, and for maintaining the University’s *Guide to* *International Qualifications* for use by Academic Selectors and 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, before any request to firmly accept a place will be approved.

**SELECTION**

6. **Assessment of Applications**

All applications are subject to an initial check on receipt by the 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 Admissions Adviser will request further evidence or clarification from the applicant if there is insufficient information for the application to be forwarded for selection. On completion of the initial checks the application will be submitted to the relevant Graduate Administrator, who will arrange for the Academic Selector to make the selection decision.

7. 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 check stage. Applications where there is uncertainty about the level of existing academic achievement will be referred to the Graduate Admissions Manager who will determine whether the application should be forwarded for selection.

8. **Selection Decision**

In accordance with the University’s commitment to fair admissions, each application is considered individually by an Academic 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 s/he has applied. This includes evidence of the applicant’s motivation, skills, experience and attitude, as expressed in any personal statements and references.

9. **Interviews, auditions and other evidence**

Interviews are not part of the standard admissions procedure except for pre-registration taught masters courses in the School of Health and Human Sciences. Applicants for NHS-funded courses may also be required to complete specific tests in accordance with requirements published by the relevant NHS authority. Details of the selection of candidates for interview and the role of the interview and any tests in the selection process are contained in the Departmental Graduate Admissions Statement.

If an Academic Selector for a research degree feels that the final decision of whether supervision can be offered needs to be informed by a conversation with the applicant, an interview may be arranged.

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. Such requirements are set out in the University’s Graduate prospectus and will be communicated to relevant applicants within the application form.

**OFFER-MAKING**

10. **Communication of Offer**

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

11. The University aims to respond to all applicants with a decision within three weeks of receipt of a complete application for taught courses and within six weeks for research degrees.

12. **Conditional Offers**

An offer of a place to an applicant who has still to demonstrate achievement of either an academic or English language entrance requirement will be a conditional offer. 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.

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.

IELTS and TOEFL test results need to be dated within two years of the date of admission to be valid. The English language condition will be expressed in a standard format, according to the departmental requirement. The condition will be expressed as an IELTS score unless the applicant has submitted previous TOEFL or PTE (Academic) scores. Applicants that have a valid IELTS (or equivalent) score that is less than or equal to 1.0 band below the entrance requirement for their course or research degree will be offered a Pre-sessional English Pathway at the University as a route to achieving the English language entrance requirement.

13. **Unconditional Offers**

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

14. **Research Degree Offers**

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

* Supervisory capacity
* Field of research

The University aims to provide the name of the prospective supervisor in the offer letter, wherever possible.

For overseas students in Biological Sciences, Health & Human Sciences, Computer Science & Electronic Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, the Graduate Admissions Office will include a summary of the research area of approx 200 words in the offer in order that applicants can apply for “Academic Technology Approval” from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

15. **Alternative Course or Research Degree Offers**

The Academic 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. This will be communicated in the formal offer letter issued to the applicant.

16. **Tuition Fees and Fee Status**

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 included in the offer letter issued to the applicant. If the fee for the course and start date in question is not yet known, this is stated together with the current fee for information only.

17. **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 admitting department or centre, and are subject to the availability of modules and academic staff in the future.

The Graduate Admissions Office will approve all proposals from departments for 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.

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.

18. **Unsuccessful Applications and Feedback**

Where the University decides that an offer cannot be made, this is communicated to applicants via *myEssex.* The University does not routinely provide feedback in respect of unsuccessful applications. Applicants can request feedback by writing to the Graduate Admissions Office ([pgquery@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pgadmit@essex.ac.uk)).

19. **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 at 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**

20. **Applicants with Disabilities**

Applicants who declare a disability in their application are referred to 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 students 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 students 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.

21. **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.

22. **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 on the re-admission of students.

.

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

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

24. **Assessment of Fee Status**

The University has two fee levels for its taught courses and research degrees: the Overseas Fee and the Home/EU Fee. The University publishes a summary of the eligibility criteria for Home/EU Fee status in the Graduate Prospectus and issues guidance to all applicants with their offer. The Graduate Admissions Office is responsible for determining fee status at the point of application based on the information 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 letter. Fee status assessments are carried out by trained members of admissions staff in accordance with UK fees and awards regulations and guidance provided by the UK Council for International Student Affairs ([www.ukcisa.org](http://www.ukcisa.org)). 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, where information provided for the purpose of the initial fee status assessment has been withheld or misrepresented.

25. **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 reports for IELTS, TOEFL and the Pearson Test of English are verified using providers’ online services.

26. If discrepancies in documentation are identified at the selection stage, no offer will be made and a record will be kept on the Graduate Admissions database for future reference. A letter is sent from Graduate Admissions to the applicant informing him/her that their application has not been successful due to discrepancies in their documentation. If an applicant already holds an offer and submits fraudulent documentation at the confirmation stage, the offer is withdrawn.

27. **Declaration of criminal convictions**

Applicants are required to declare criminal convictions that are not spent at the time of application. 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 Criminal Records Bureau 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 policy.

Applicants for specific courses, such as NHS-funded courses, may be required to declare spent criminal convictions and will be notified of this required where appropriate.

**CONFIRMATION**

28.  **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 they have met all the conditions stated in the offer and declare a source of funding for the period of study.

29. 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 who has the authority to waive standard entry requirements in individual cases.

30. 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” the latter indicating that the tuition fee income will be paid by a recognised organisation that the University will invoice after the point of Registration. The Income Office is responsible for assessing the status of such organisations.

31. Applicants who are regarded as self-funded must pay their first instalment of tuition fees in advance in order to receive the University’s sponsorship for immigration purposes. The University has a published Tuition Fee Deposit Policy.

32. 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 students”.

**COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS**

There is no right of appeal against the University’s selection decision. However, complaints about the admissions process may be directed to the Director of Communications and External Relations. Complaints should be made in writing within 14 days of the relevant University decision, e.g. to reject an application or not to confirm an applicant’s place. Complaints will normally be considered to be valid only where there is evidence of procedural irregularity, including failure to adhere to the Graduate Admissions Policy.

**TRAINING OF STAFF INVOLVED IN ADMISSIONS**

Admissions Advisers are required to undertake training when they are new to the role. Training is the responsibility of the Head of Graduate Admissions. Selectors are required to have received the Handbook for Graduate Admissions and to make use of the Handbook in their role. The Graduate Directors attend termly meetings, which are chaired by the Dean of the Graduate School. 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.

**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 his/her behalf. Third parties may be parents, teachers, advisers or agents acting on behalf of applicants.

**SECTION 3 – ENROLMENT AND INDUCTION**

33. **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.

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.

34. **Induction for Research Students**

The Graduate School provides a Doctoral Welcome Conference in week 1. All new doctoral students are invited, together with students from Writtle College. Mini Doctoral Welcome Conferences are run early in the Spring and Summer terms, subject to numbers, for students that have an offer of study starting mid year. The Doctoral Welcome Conferences are designed to help research students to feel both 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.

1. All applications received via UCAS. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Extract from UoE *Widening Participation Strategic Assessment,* submitted to HEFCE December 2009. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Fair admissions to higher education: recommendations for good practice (‘The Schwartz Report’) Admissions to Higher Education Review, September 2004 <http://www.admissions-review.org.uk/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section10/default.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Supporting Professionalism in Admissions* http://www.spa.ac.uk/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 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/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/default.asp#p4.3> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/codeOfPractice/section10/default.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The term department is used generically in this document and includes academic Schools and Centres of the University. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/academicinfrastructure/FHEQ/EWNI08/default.asp#p4.3> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)