



University of Essex



Undergraduate Admissions Policy

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Publication date:	October 2021
Amended:	May 2024
Review date:	May 2025

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Undergraduate Admissions Policy

Scope of policy

This policy applies to all admissions to full-time undergraduate courses 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 to application, receipt of the University's selection decision and the transition to first registration 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 Director of Admissions, Communications & External Relations.

Review of policy

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

Principles governing Undergraduate Admissions

The University recognises the value of diversity and is committed to providing equality of opportunity and an environment in which applicants are treated with dignity and respect.

The University is committed to fair access and encourages applications from all 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 their 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 guiding principles and precepts governing good admissions practice set out by the Schwartz Report and in the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Admissions, recruitment and widening access (November 2018). 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 provides a policy and procedural framework within which admissions decision-making is characterised by transparency, fairness and consistency.

The University observes the rules and procedures set down by UCAS and the Office for Students (OfS) and other good practice guidance provided by the sector (for example by Universities UK), and complies with all relevant legislation in relation to its undergraduate admissions activity. The University is also a signatory of the Fair Admissions Code of Practice co-owned by Universities UK and GuildHE.

Section 1 – Marketing and Student Recruitment

The University is committed to the provision of comprehensive, open and consistent messaging 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, explicit and implemented consistently.

Ensuring consistency is important especially in relation to the very wide range of different countries, in which the University undertakes marketing and recruitment activities.

The University's marketing and recruitment messages are delivered 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 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 recruitment agents who represent us around the world
- on-campus and online Open Days and Offer-holder Days
- working with schools and colleges around the world

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

- the University main website (www.essex.ac.uk) which includes specific pages for international students (www.essex.ac.uk/international) and www.essex.cn for China
- printed prospectuses and other marketing collateral
- email campaigns to enquirers and applicants
- social 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 Undergraduate Admissions Policy.

Section 2 – Outreach and Widening Participation

The University is committed to recruiting students with the merit and potential to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the University, irrespective of their background (e.g., socioeconomic background, ability to pay) or characteristics (e.g., protected characteristics)- Our commitment to levelling up, is demonstrated in our admissions processes, for example recognition of prior work experience (where appropriate) and accepting a wide range of qualifications, including those of a vocational nature. For more information, please see the [University's Access and Participation Plan](#).

The University's Outreach team is engaged in a range of activity targeted at students in schools and colleges that are under-represented in higher education. This includes:

- Information talks and IAG (information, advice, and guidance) for students, parents/carers and teachers/advisors
- On campus and in school visits and workshops
- A year 10 Summer residential
- Attainment raising programmes to support students to pass their Maths and English GCSEs
- Mentoring
- Subject specific activity with departments within the University
- Regular engagement with schools/colleges with low progression to higher education

Alongside working with schools and colleges, Outreach aims to deliver activity to parents/carers to provide information so they can support their young person to make informed decisions.

The University aims to deliver a cohesive approach to widening participation and fair access across the whole student lifecycle, which is expressed in its [Access and Participation Plan](#) and the Undergraduate Admissions Policy. Outreach and Admissions staff maintain a strong working relationship with appropriate representation on formal University committees, to ensure that the admissions policy and Outreach strategy are mutually informed and maintain a whole lifecycle approach to fair access and success.

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 full-time applications received via UCAS and directly. Applications are processed by staff in the Admissions team, who also act as the principal contact for applicants throughout the admissions process. Selection decisions are made by Admissions Selectors, who may be members of academic staff or members of the central Admissions team.

The Admissions Office is responsible for processing the application decision and determining whether there should be any conditions where an offer is made. A formal offer letter and the University's Terms and Conditions (and other documents that form part of the 'student contract') are communicated to successful applicants at the initial offer stage.

Applicants' responsibilities

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 undergraduate study who are under 21 at the point of entry must meet the University's General Entrance Requirements, as set out in [University's Academic Regulations](#).

All applicants for undergraduate study must meet the course-specific academic entry requirements.

Requirements are published annually on the University website and on UCAS.com. Academic entry requirements are expressed in terms of three A-level grades or equivalent, or in terms of the minimum UCAS tariff points required for individual courses from 2 full A-levels or equivalent. Academic entry requirements are reviewed and approved annually and may include specific subjects and attainment at GCSE and/or A-level or equivalent.

2. English language competence

All undergraduate applicants are required to achieve the equivalent of grade C/4 or above in GCSE English, as set out in the University's General Entrance Requirements.

Applicants whose first language is not English are required to achieve a minimum level of English equivalent to GCSE English grade C/4 (for example IELTS 6.0, unless they have already achieved GCSE English grade C/4) to be admitted to the first year of an undergraduate course. Lower English language requirements apply to foundation level study; higher English language requirements may apply to direct entry to the second, third or final year of an undergraduate course and entry to certain accredited courses. The University accepts a range of English language qualifications. The [English language qualifications and tests](#) which are acceptable for entry to the University and the levels required are listed on our website.

Applicants who do not meet the English language requirement for their course may be referred to the University of Essex International College for a pre-sessional English course as a route to achieving this, or to a relevant [Pathways course](#) where a lower English language requirement may be accepted.

3. Publication of entry requirements

Entry requirements are normally determined up to eighteen months before the proposed point of admission, e.g. by January 2024 for October 2025 entry, and are published in the undergraduate prospectus, on the University website and on the UCAS website. The University reserves the right to amend its entry requirements up to 12 months before the proposed point of admission, and in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to amend requirements after this point (but wherever possible this will be done ahead of any offers being made in a new admissions year). Amended entry requirements will be published on the University website and the UCAS 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 a wide range of level 3 qualifications from the UK, including A-level and AS-level, International Baccalaureate, T-Level, BTEC and OCR National qualifications, Access to HE Diploma courses (approved by the Quality Assurance Agency), Open University qualifications and a range of professional qualifications.

A wide range of foundation courses, EU and other international qualifications are also accepted. The equivalence of such qualifications to level 3 UK awards will be evaluated in accordance with independent national guidance provided by UK ENIC, UCAS, Ofqual and other recognised sources.

For courses with subject specific entry requirements at GCSE level, a wide range of equivalent qualifications are also accepted, including components from high school qualifications from outside of the UK.

For second and final year entry, where an applicant may be transferring to an Essex degree from another institution, the University accepts a wide range of level 4, 5 and 6 equivalent qualifications.

The equivalence of such qualifications to level 4, 5 or 6 UK awards will be evaluated in accordance with independent national guidance provided by UK ENIC, UCAS, Ofqual and other recognised sources.

The Head of Admissions (Undergraduate) has overall responsibility for undertaking such evaluations in consultation with Admissions Selectors and recruitment staff, for maintaining the University's Undergraduate qualifications guidance for use by Academic Selectors and the admissions team.

5. Verification of qualifications

The University will normally verify the result of any qualification that is not received from UCAS either directly, or via the Awarding Bodies Linkage (ABL). If the University has not received results from UCAS, applicants will be required to submit evidence of results of their admitting academic qualifications and their English language test/qualification (if applicable), before they are permitted to register at the University. Information and guidance on qualification verification is made available to applicants at both the initial offer and at the confirmation stage of the admissions cycle.

6. Student visa requirements

Where an applicant requires a Student visa to study in the UK, an offer of a place will be subject to compliance with relevant aspects of the Home Office's Student visa sponsor guidance and University guidance relating to the admission of Student visa applicants. In some cases, an interview assessed by a member of University staff will be required to ensure that an applicant intends and is able to follow the course of study concerned.

Selection

1. Assessment of applications and initial checks

All applications for undergraduate degrees, including Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, are subject to an initial check by Admissions staff. The initial check will identify applications which require specific attention (see section on *Consideration of Additional Data in Selection and Offer-Making*, paragraphs 19 to 27 below), in order to ensure that they are dealt with in accordance with relevant procedures. On completion of the initial checks a selection decision will be made.

Applications from individuals who do not meet the University's General Entrance Requirements or the course-specific entry requirements may be rejected at the initial assessment stage.

2. Selection decision

Applicants who have the potential to achieve the course-specific academic entry requirements, but do not meet the University's General Entrance Requirements will be considered by the Admissions Selector against set criteria to determine whether Dean's approval can be granted on behalf of the Faculty Dean (Education) in order to make an offer of admission.

In accordance with the University's commitment to fair admissions, all applicants are considered individually to 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 they have applied. This includes evidence of the applicant's motivation, skills and experience, as expressed in the personal statement and reference.

The Admissions Selector may also take into account any extenuating circumstances which have affected an individual applicant when deciding whether an offer should be made.

We are committed to supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds to access the University of Essex. To support this, relevant contextual information may be accessed (via UCAS) and used as part of our Undergraduate Contextual Offers Policy in order to make an offer below our standard requirements. Full details and eligibility criteria can be found in our [Contextual Offers Policy](#).

3. Interviews and auditions

Interviews are not part of the standard admissions procedure for the majority of undergraduate courses, but exceptions apply, and applicants are notified accordingly during the admissions process where attendance at interview or any other evidence is required. Application processes and requirements are set out on the University website.

Applicants that will be required to attend an interview or audition include:

- applicants to East 15 Acting School are required to attend an audition, interview or workshop as part of the selection process.
- applicants to some health-related courses, for example BSc Nursing, MSci Nursing (Dual Award in Adult and Mental Health), Foundation Degree and BSc (top up) in Oral Health Science, BA Social Work, BSc Physiotherapy, BSc Occupational Therapy and BSc Speech and Language Therapy, are required to attend a compulsory interview as part of the selection process.
- applicants to LB Licence English and French Law (Double Degree) are required to attend a compulsory interview as part of the selection process.

This list is not exhaustive. Applicants to courses with a compulsory interview or audition are offered the opportunity to be interviewed remotely where practical or necessary.

For courses where an interview or audition is required, a formal offer will be dependent on a satisfactory performance at interview or audition.

The University reserves the right to reject applications from applicants who are invited to attend an interview but do not book an interview slot, or who book but then fail to attend.

An applicant can only be interviewed once for the course they have applied for within the same academic year. If an applicant is unsuccessful at interview they cannot apply again for the same course until the following academic year.

Offer-making

1. Communication of offer

Where the University decides to make the applicant an offer, this is communicated to applicants via UCAS Hub and/or via the *myEssex* applicant portal. Applicants will receive an offer letter, '*Important information about your offer*' booklet and information on the University's Terms and Conditions (and

other policies that make up the 'student contract') via the *myEssex* applicant portal. The policies that make up the 'student contract' will also be sent via email, as well as being available on the *myEssex* applicant portal.

2. Conditional offers

A conditional offer will be issued to an applicant who is still to complete an academic or English language qualification, or where a credibility interview or additional documentation is required (for example a reference or receipt of a completed 'under 18' form).

The offer letter will set out the specific conditions that the applicant has been asked to achieve in order for their place to be confirmed. The academic offer will be expressed in terms of A-level grades or the equivalent for applicants who are taking non A-level qualifications, or UCAS tariff points. Where appropriate the offer will also include the English language requirement that the applicant must achieve in order for their place to be confirmed and/or other necessary conditions.

The University has standardised academic requirements for each course, which are set in advance by the relevant department/school, and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. However, Admissions Selectors may make a different offer in individual cases, in accordance with the admissions criteria for the department or course applied for.

3. 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 for their place to be confirmed at the University.

Credibility assessments required in order for the University to make a decision regarding immigration sponsorship can still take place after an offer has been confirmed as unconditional where required in individual cases.

4. Applicants made an alternative offer

In cases where the applicant is deemed unlikely to achieve or has not achieved the entry requirements for the course for which they have applied, but where an alternative course is available, the applicant will be notified that their application has been unsuccessful and directly offered a place on an alternative course.

5. Tuition Fees

The tuition fee for the first **academic** year of the course is included in the offer letter. Further information on tuition fees is provided in the documentation issued with the offer letter.

6. Deferred entry

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

The Admissions Office will consider all requests for deferred entry and will check that academic and English language requirements can be met and the status and text of the offer remain appropriate, amending them if necessary and including any required conditions.

Applicants who currently require a Student visa to study in the UK will need to meet the rules and requirements in force at the point of entry, including any changes to the immigration rules that may have been introduced since the initial application.

Some courses may not be able to consider deferred entry, due to the specific selection processes or where a course is oversubscribed. This includes Foundation Degree in Oral Health Science and some courses in East 15 Acting School.

7. Unsuccessful applicants and feedback

Where the University decides that an offer cannot be made, this is communicated to applicants via UCAS Hub and/or via the *myEssex* applicant portal. Admissions selectors are required to record the reason(s) for not making an offer in each individual case. The University aims to provide feedback, if requested, in accordance with its [feedback policy](#) (.pdf).

8. Discontinuation, suspension or change of course titles

The University reserves the right to discontinue or suspend a course for which offers have already been issued but will do this in exceptional circumstances only. Where a course is discontinued or suspended, applicants holding offers are informed as soon as possible; where possible and appropriate, applicants are offered a place on an alternative course offered by the University or given the opportunity to add a new course choice on their UCAS Hub. Where the title or content of a course is changed, applicants holding offers are informed as soon as possible of the change and given options for how they would like to proceed. Further information about changes or possible closures of courses is provided to applicants at the initial offer stage in the Student Terms and Conditions.

Consideration of additional data in selection and offer-making

1. Access to Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS)

The University's Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) supports registered students who are experiencing difficulties with either their mental health, wellbeing or disability. This support takes place independently of the academic selection process. The selection process, is based entirely on academic merit and takes place in accordance with standard policy. Students can access wellbeing support, access to counselling, signposting to self-help and, for the most at-risk students, caseworkers and targeted learning support. Students can contact SWIS by emailing wellbeing@essex.ac.uk to access support.

Applicants who declare a disability in their application will be contacted by SWIS with information, advice and guidance. Where a disability was not initially disclosed but the applicant would benefit from accessing support or finding out more information, they are advised to contact SWIS as soon as possible after they have applied. Where appropriate, SWIS can make recommendations about any reasonable adjustment that applicants may need to facilitate their access to learning. In individual

cases, SWIS may feel that applicants would benefit from a meeting with SWIS and invite them to discuss and better understand the applicant's requirements.

SWIS are experienced in supporting students from a range of backgrounds and celebrate diversity. All applicants from our diverse student population are welcome to contact SWIS to check what support is available.

2. Mature applicants

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

3. Extenuating circumstances and other events that impact an applicant's studies

As well as the Admissions Selector taking into account any extenuating circumstances which may have affected an individual applicant when deciding whether an offer should be made - the University also seeks to be as responsive as possible to international conflicts and natural disasters. The Admissions Office will show due flexibility and sensitivity in dealing with applicants or prospective applicants who have been affected by global issues including, but not limited to, war and pandemics, including applicants from forced migration backgrounds.

4. 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 the [University's safeguarding policy and guidance](#). 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 their place is confirmed. Applicants who require a Student visa to study in the UK and who are under 18 at the point their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is issued, will also be required to complete the required under 18s form satisfactorily, but are not required to provide a UK-based emergency contact if they will be over the age of 18 at the start of their course. Offers cannot be made to applicants who will be under the age of 16 at the start of their degree course.

5. Accreditation of Prior Learning and Reuse of Credits

Applicants seeking recognition for prior learning are handled in accordance with the University's policy and procedure on [Recognition of Prior Learning and Reuse of Credit](#)(.pdf) If the 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 which result from the approval. Applications for second or final year entry are submitted via UCAS or directly to the University and considered in the normal way.

6. Applicants requesting readmission

Applicants who have previously withdrawn, or been withdrawn, from study at the University, and who wish to be readmitted, will be considered in accordance with the University's policy and procedure on the readmission of students.

7. 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 academic and English language entry requirements for admission to the relevant year of the relevant degree course.

8. Assessment of applicant fee status

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. The University does not exercise discretion when determining applicants' fee status, and an assessment of eligibility for home fees by the University does not guarantee funding from the Student Loans Company/Student Finance England.

Confirmation of the applicant's fee status is included in the offer letter issued to the applicant, however the University reserves the right to amend the applicant's fee status after the formal offer has been issued.

Further information about fee status is available on the University's website.

9. Fraudulent applications and credibility checks, including similarity detection in personal statements

The validity of the documentation submitted by applicants at the initial offer, confirmation and CAS-issue stage is checked by trained staff in the 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), where possible.

Where there is evidence that fraudulent or incorrect information has been included in the application, the University reserves the right not to proceed with the application. Where there is satisfactory or sufficient evidence that fraudulent documents or incorrect information have been used at any point of the admissions process, the University reserves the right to withdraw an offer, a CAS, or a student is registered, their registration status with immediate effect.

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. Applicants highlighted by this service will be sent information about the University's policies on academic offences.

The University reserves the right to carry out further checks at any stage of the admissions process to determine that an applicant is genuine and credible.

10. Declaration of criminal offences

For courses that require an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or Occupational Health check, applicants may not be able to register and/or undertake the relevant course placement, pending successful outcome of these checks.

Applicants for courses that are subject to a mandatory DBS check¹ 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 and 2020. This requirement extends to offences committed in the UK and overseas. 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* (.pdf). Formal offers of admission will only be made following consideration of the offence 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.

Applicants who are convicted of a criminal offence or receive a police caution after submitting an application for a course where a DBS check is mandatory must inform the University. Disclosures can be made in writing to ugquery@essex.ac.uk to the Head of Admissions (Undergraduate).

Applicants who accept a place for study on a course where a DBS check is not mandatory 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 it 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 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.

¹ A list of the courses that require a mandatory DBS check is published on the University's DBS webpages. Courses that require a mandatory DBS check involve regulated activity as defined by the University's Policy on Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk. An overseas criminal record check is required in addition to a DBS check where the applicant has lived outside of the UK for 6 months or more in the last 5 years.

11. Credit accumulation and modular study

Applicants may also be admitted to any programme or individual module that leads to the award of credit and modular study (where individual modules are studied over a period of time and the credits are accumulated towards an award of the University). Applications for modular study are normally processed directly by the relevant department or school, and not centrally by the Admissions Office.

Acceptance of offers

1. Applicant contract and 14 day right to cancel

Applicants who apply to the University through UCAS are able to accept an offer of admission from the University as their firm or insurance choice via UCAS Hub. Applicants who apply directly to the University can accept their offer of admission via the *myEssex* applicant portal.

A contract is made between the applicant and University at the point an offer of a place is accepted as either a firm or insurance choice via UCAS Hub or via the *myEssex* applicant portal. If an applicant changes their mind after accepting the offer, they have the legal right to cancel the contract within 14 days. The statutory 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 14 day right to cancel is sent to applicants at the initial offer stage, in the University's Student Terms and Conditions.

Confirmation

1. Consideration of applicant results

The University considers the results of applicants who are holding a Conditional Firm (CF) or Conditional Insurance (CI) place (UCAS applicants) or Conditional Accept (CA) place (Direct Admissions applicants) before deciding whether to confirm their place. A-level, BTEC and Access to HE Diploma 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 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 they do not provide evidence of having met the conditions of their offer by the relevant deadline.

2. Verification of results

The University reserves the right to verify all results by checking appropriate qualification documentation prior to confirming an applicant's place and/or permitting registration with the University. English language test results will be verified online with the qualification awarding body (e.g. IELTS) where this is possible. The validity of documents at confirmation is checked by trained staff in the Admissions Office. Where results cannot be verified or where there is evidence that fraudulent documentation has been submitted, the University reserves the right not to confirm an applicant's place, or withdraw the place.

3. Applicants holding conditional firm offers

On receipt of the applicant's results, 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). Direct applicants will become either Unconditional Firm (if they do not need to pay a deposit) or Unconditional Accept (if they are required to pay a deposit) and receive this notification via the *myEssex* applicant portal. Where the applicant's results have fallen short of the conditions of the offer by a narrow margin, the applicant's place may be confirmed at the discretion of the Head of the relevant department, commonly delegated to the Admissions Selector and subject to the availability of places. Other factors relating to the applicant's circumstances may be considered for example any extenuating circumstances.

4. Applicants holding conditional insurance offers

The confirmation process for applicants holding conditional insurance offers is the same as for applicants holding conditional firm offers.

5. Communication of Confirmation Decisions

All applicants holding conditional firm offers are informed of the University's confirmation decision via UCAS and/or via the *myEssex* applicant portal.

6. Applicants requiring a Student Visa

Where an applicant requires a Student visa to study in the UK, confirmation of their place and the issue of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) will be subject to compliance with relevant aspects of the Home Office's Student visa sponsor guidance and University guidance relating to the admission of Student visa applicants.

7. Payment of deposits

Applicants who apply directly to Essex and require a Student visa to study in the UK are normally required to pay a deposit prior to receiving their CAS. This is in line with the University's policy on Tuition Fee Deposits (.pdf) (which also includes information about applicants who are exempt from paying a deposit and the amount of deposit required).

Complaints

1. The Admissions Office strives 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 Heads of Admissions or to the Director of Communications and External Relations, in line with the Complaints Policy for Applicants.

Training of staff involved in admissions

2. All members of staff involved in processing undergraduate applications (including higher or degree apprenticeship applications) are required to undertake training. Training is the responsibility of the Head of Admissions (Undergraduate). Regular briefings for both the

Undergraduate Admissions team and academic Admissions Selectors take place during the admissions cycle, with a particular focus on identifying and sharing good practice, and updates relating to undergraduate qualifications, offer making and confirmation and clearing. Specific training delivered by Compliance staff in Admissions is also regularly undertaken by staff involved in the processing and decision-making of international applications, where a Student visa is required.

Data protection and communication with third parties

3. The Admissions Office operates in compliance with data protection legislation and good records management practice. Applicant 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 parents, teachers, advisers or agents acting on behalf of applicants.

The [University's Privacy Hub](#) explains how the University processes your data, your data subject rights and the contact details of the Data Protection Officer. The Hub includes a link to the [Student Privacy Notice](#).

Section 4 – Registration and induction

4. As part of its Welcome and academic induction process, the University provides a comprehensive programme in order to support the transition of applicants to registered students at the end of the admissions process.

Firstly, students are prompted to activate their University of Essex email and IT account. This email and IT account is used to access our Online Pre-registration system and the Online Welcome programme, students are advised to complete this step as early as possible after receiving communications asking them to create their account. This account also provides access to a range of resources once students are registered and throughout their studies at Essex, whilst also enabling free internet access on campus.

Before commencing their studies, all University applicants are prompted to complete Online Pre-registration (including payment of fees and the uploading of relevant immigration/ ID documents where required), followed by an in-person Right to Study check on campus. Online Pre-Registration captures essential information, including a student's term time contact address and emergency contact details, and we advise students to complete this as early as possible so we can contact them with vital information if we need to. Once students have completed these stages, they can access a central Welcome programme as well as their departmental induction.

These arrangements will include registration to the University (comprising Online Pre-registration and in person Right to Study checks) which permits the commencement of studies, a central Welcome programme and academic induction to a student's home department or school supporting the transition to University life. Together these items will provide introduction to the University and Students' Union; introduction to starting studies, including learning and study resources; support with settling into our Essex community and meeting others; support for settling in and signposting to student opportunities, such as arts, sports, volunteering and societies; as well as where to get help and support; and specific information for international students. Additionally, the Welcome and induction activities aim to help create a sense of belonging for students to the learning community within their Department or School.

Document Control Panel

Field	Description
Title	Undergraduate Admissions Policy 2024-25
Policy Classification	Policy
Security Classification	Open
Policy Manager Role	Director of Admissions
Nominated Contact	admsnrteam@essex.ac.uk
Responsible UoE Section	Admissions, Communications and External Relations
Approval Body	Senate
Signed Off Date	June 2024
Published Date	October 2024
Last Review Date	May 2024
Minimum Review Frequency	Annually
Review Date	May 2025
UoE Identifier	0136

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as braille, please contact the nominated contact at admsnrteam@essex.ac.uk.