

Newcastle University

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS POLICY

2014 ENTRY

Scope

1. This policy applies to all undergraduate admissions at Newcastle University. It is intended to provide information about our admissions policies and procedures to undergraduate applicants and potential applicants, to their advisers and family members, and to staff of the University.
2. The policy is underpinned by procedural guidelines issued to admissions tutors from time to time.
3. Other related policies and procedures¹ are:
 - MBBS Admissions Policy (for admissions to the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) degree)
 - School of Dental Sciences Admissions Policy
 - Admissions Policy for Applicants with Disabilities
 - Admissions Procedure for Applicants from PARTNERS Schools and Colleges
 - English Language Policy
 - Policy and Procedures for Admitting Students Under 18
 - General Entrance Requirements (contained in the University Calendar)
 - Undergraduate Admissions Complaints and Appeals Procedure
 - Criminal Convictions Policy and Procedure for Undergraduate Admissions
 - Procedure for Dealing with UCAS Applications Identified through UCAS' Similarity Detection Service
 - The Single Equality Scheme.
4. The policy relates to admissions for entry in the academic year 2014-15. It will be reviewed annually in the Summer Term.

National Context

5. The policy operates in the context of [Government policies and requirements](#) that have implications for our own policies and procedures relating to offer-making.

¹ If you wish to obtain any of the policies and procedures listed, please telephone 0191 208 3333 or enquire online at www.ncl.ac.uk/enquiries .

Institutional Context

6. The University is committed to widening participation and fair access. It wishes to encourage able, highly-motivated and enthusiastic students of all ages, and from all backgrounds and contexts, to apply to its degree programmes.

Responsibility for Admissions

7. Responsibility for undergraduate admissions policy lies with University Learning, Teaching, and Student Experience Committee (ULTSEC).
8. ULTSEC has delegated to the University's Fair Access Committee responsibility for the development and review of undergraduate admissions policy, and for ensuring that policies and procedures comply with relevant discrimination legislation.
9. Responsibility for setting the criteria against which applications are to be considered lies with Boards of Studies for each individual degree programme. Responsibility for applying those criteria in order to make decisions on applications lies with admissions tutors, appointed by Heads of Academic Schools, or by delegation to nominated school or central admissions staff.
10. Responsibility for determining the number of offers to be made to applicants relative to the number of places available on programmes of study rests with admissions tutors (appointed by Heads of Academic Schools) in consultation with Deans of Undergraduate Studies.
11. Responsibility for all communications with the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS), including the transmission of admissions tutors' decisions, is the responsibility of the central Admissions Office.
12. The central Admissions Office is responsible for providing statistical information to enable the University to monitor numbers of applications, offers and acceptances within each application cycle.
13. Overall responsibility for the monitoring of applications, offers and acceptances lies with the Undergraduate Admissions Monitoring Group, reporting to Senate and Council. Monitoring of these elements for equal opportunities purposes is the responsibility of the Fair Access Committee, reporting to the University's Diversity Committee for information, and to ULTSEC for review.

Selection

14. The University accepts a broad range of qualifications and combinations of qualifications for entry to its programmes of study, including vocational and Access qualifications and a wide range of qualifications offered by international applicants. There are, however, restrictions on the numbers of students we may admit with certain qualifications because of the Government's student number controls introduced for 2012 entry onwards.
15. Information about individual programmes and the entrance requirements which guide selection is provided in the Undergraduate Prospectus and other publicity information. The Newcastle University central website will have the most up to date information at any given time²

² www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/

16. All applications received by the relevant UCAS deadline are to be given equal consideration. This means that in some subjects, because of limits to the number of places available, some or all applications are held until after the relevant deadline for consideration in a 'gathered field'.
17. Offers of places to applicants are to be made, within the constraints of the number of places available, on the basis of individual academic achievement, ability and potential to succeed on their chosen programme of study. This is regardless of age, religion or belief, race, ethnicity, gender, being trans gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, or disability. Exceptionally, it may not be possible to make offers to applicants with a disability in cases where the adjustments that would be needed to make a programme of study accessible to a particular applicant are demonstrably unreasonable within the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
18. Applicants are expected to disclose information about any disability, including mental health, that would help the University to identify and provide help with support needs.
19. Admissions decisions are to be based, within the constraints of the number of places available, on professional judgement of applicants' individual academic achievement, ability and potential, taking into account all of the information presented in applications and applying established entry criteria in a consistent manner.

It follows, therefore, that it is the responsibility of applicants and referees to provide full and accurate information in an application and to notify the University of any changes or corrections to the original application.

20. Some degree programmes have particular criteria for assessment of applicants other than entry grade requirements. Admissions tests, portfolios or auditions are examples. Such requirements will be set out in the entrance requirements for individual degree programmes.
21. For UK-domiciled applicants only, contextual information relating to participation in Higher Education and educational factors is provided to admissions tutors to help them identify potential where this is not obvious from examination grades predicted or achieved.
 - a) For this purpose, applicants' postcodes of domicile are used to identify applicants who live in a neighbourhood which has a low rate of participation in higher education.
 - b) Information, where available, about average public examination performance in a given year of the school(s) or college attended by an applicant is provided to show the relative performance of the school(s) or college against the national average and to set the individual's predicted grades in context.³
22. Admissions tutors may also take account, when making a judgement about achievement, ability or potential, of other contextual factors that are disclosed and have affected or could affect an applicant's attainment. These include personal circumstances, opportunities for extra-curricular activities and personal development, parental experience of higher education, disabilities and involvement in special schemes or programmes (such as the University's PARTNERS Programme and the Realising Opportunities Project).
23. As part of our commitment as an accredited Buttle UK institution, applicants who indicate that they have been in care will be offered the opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues or concerns with a Student Recruitment Officer in advance of their arrival.

³ Information on school performance is only available for England

24. In assessing individual applications, admissions tutors are to follow the specific procedures which apply to specific groups (eg. applicants with disabilities, PARTNERS applicants etc.) as set out in the relevant documents (see 3 above). For example, they are to ensure that appropriate adjustments are made to enable disabled applicants to engage in the same or equivalent application procedures as other applicants without disadvantage.
25. In any given admissions cycle, the terms of conditional offers made to applicants will not normally differ significantly from the entry requirements published in advance in respect of the admissions cycle concerned. Any necessary amendments to typical entry requirements which take place during the admissions cycle will be published on the University's central website.
26. Where entry requirements for a degree programme are expressed as a range of grades (eg AAA-ABB), each offer will be determined on an individual basis, taking account of an applicant's profile. Account also has to be taken of the broader competitive context and the relative merits of each applicant within the whole group of those who apply. It is not possible therefore to advise enquirers whether they will receive an offer, or of the offer they are likely to receive within a range, before their application has been considered. Subjects and qualifications being taken, predicted grades, contextual data, and information in the personal statement and reference all contribute to an individual's profile.
27. Unless a particular A or AS level unit is necessary for entry to a course, unit grades will not normally be included in offers to applicants.
28. A level A* grades will not normally be included in offer conditions. They may, however, be used during Confirmation to help distinguish between applicants who do not fully meet the terms of conditional offers where a limited number of places is available.
29. Admissions tutors have discretion to make conditional offers which differ from the typical entry requirement, if in their judgement the typical entry requirement would not be appropriate because of the particular circumstances of an applicant.
30. Admissions tutors are responsible for ensuring that prospective students are appropriately qualified for the degree programmes to which they are admitted. This may sometimes mean that it is not possible to include certain subjects, or a combination of subjects, in an offer of a place where the admissions tutor considers that they do not provide an appropriate preparation for the degree programme concerned.
31. Where it is judged that an applicant is not appropriately qualified for the programme applied for, an application may be considered for entry to an alternative programme or stage.
32. Applicants who do not fully meet the terms of conditional offers may nevertheless have a place confirmed during Confirmation, subject to the availability of places. In considering such applicants, admissions tutors may take into account factors such as unit grades, overall performance (which may include performance at interview) and personal or educational circumstances which may have affected attainment.
33. Where an admissions tutor decides, after taking all relevant factors into account, that an applicant should not be made an offer, the reason or reasons for the decision are recorded. This information is used for audit and monitoring purposes.
34. The University reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers, but will treat each case on its merits.

Confidentiality and Declaration of Interest

35. All individuals involved in the admissions process are to observe the relevant regulations and principles of confidentiality and data protection.
36. Any member of staff who has personal connection with or other interest in an individual applicant is to declare that interest to his or her line manager who will determine how the application is to be considered.
37. Representations on behalf of candidates made other than in the application will be given such weight, if any, as is appropriate under this Undergraduate Admissions Policy. Any perceived improper pressure from any person, whether employed by the University or not, will be disregarded and reported in the first instance to the Senior Undergraduate Admissions Manager.

Fraud

38. Applicants suspected of providing, or found to have provided, false information shall be referred to UCAS if their application was originally submitted through that service.
39. The University reserves the right to cancel an application and withdraw any offer if it is found that the application contains false or misleading information.
40. The Academic Registrar may exclude from the University students who are found to have gained admission through the provision of false or misleading information, or through failing to disclose information that would have materially and adversely affected the determination of the application for admission. A student so excluded shall not have an automatic right to a full refund of tuition fees.

Feedback

41. The competitive nature of admission to many of the University's degree programmes means that many good applications are unsuccessful. For most subjects, the University does not provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants automatically, but will provide written feedback to unsuccessful applicants who submit a written request.⁴
42. Feedback will be provided to an applicant only, not to any third party, unless an applicant has given specific permission in writing for the third party to act on his/her behalf.
43. The University will not enter into discussions with applicants about the academic judgement behind decisions on applications.

⁴ Requests for feedback should be made to Undergraduate Admissions, Newcastle University, King's Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU, with the exception of requests for feedback on decisions for Medicine and Dentistry. For Medicine, requests should be made to: Faculty Undergraduate Office, Medical School, Newcastle University, Framlington Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4HH
For Dentistry, requests should be made to: School of Dental Sciences, Newcastle University, Framlington Place, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4BW

44. The University maintains an Undergraduate Admissions Complaints and Appeals Procedure.⁵
45. No applicant who requests feedback, or complains about or appeals against the decision of an admissions tutor, shall be disadvantaged in any way in any future applications to the University as a result of the feedback request, complaint or appeal.

Queries about this Policy

46. Any queries about this policy should be directed to the Senior Undergraduate Admissions Manager, Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate, Newcastle University, King's Gate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU.

Undergraduate Admissions
Marketing and Student Recruitment Directorate

Approved by Fair Access Committee of University Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee, June 2013

⁵ Available from 0191 208 3333 or online at www.ncl.ac.uk/enquiries .