

University of Huddersfield
Admissions Policy (Taught Courses)

1. General Statement

The University of Huddersfield has as its mission statement: 'To deliver an accessible and inspirational learning experience, to undertake pioneering research and professional practice, and to engage fully with employers and the community'. In pursuit of this, the Admissions Policy sets out the means by which we will encourage and welcome applicants with different educational and social backgrounds and ensure that no student with the potential to meet our entry requirements is deterred from applying. All applications are considered and evaluated on the basis of individual potential.

This policy is aligned with the University's Strategic Plan and is consistent with good admissions practice in higher education, as defined in the Quality Assurance Agency's Code of Practice¹, The Schwartz Recommendations for Good Practice² and the Supporting Professionalism in Admissions project³ and complies with current legislation affecting the admission of students.

This policy covers admission for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses, including courses based at partner institutions (eg PGCE courses) as students on these courses are registered University of Huddersfield students.

This document has been agreed by the University's Teaching and Learning Committee and represents the University's policy on the admission of 'Taught' students. The policy is the responsibility of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and will be subject to a major review every three years, with minor updates being made in the interim, as required.

2. Admissions Criteria and Selection

2.1 Qualifications for Entry

The University welcomes applications from appropriately qualified offering a wide range of qualifications. The overriding principle is that the University is satisfied that the applicant has the necessary background and skills to benefit from their studies.

The University's general minimum entry requirements are listed below. The list is not exhaustive and individual course minimum requirements are, for many courses, higher.

First Degree Courses

¹ The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (2006) *Code of Practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education. Section 10: Admissions to higher education – September 2006*

² Admissions to Higher education Steering Group (2004) *Fair admissions to higher education: Recommendations for good practice*

³ Supporting Professionalism in Admissions *Admissions Policies: Guidance for higher education providers – 4th draft – February 2009*

- Passes in five subjects at GCE/VCE/GCSE which must include 12 units of study at A2 level with at least one 6 or 12 unit award.*
- A Scottish Certificate of Education with passes in five subjects, three at the Higher Grade or passes in four subjects at the Higher Grade.
- Advanced Diploma
- An Access to HE Diploma
- A National Certificate or Diploma awarded by Edexcel Foundation (formerly BTEC).
- A National Certificate or GSVQ at level 3 awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
- A European Baccalaureate.
- An International Baccalaureate.
- The Irish Leaving Certificate with grade C or above in four subjects at Higher Level.

HND Courses

- Passes in four subjects at GCE/VCE/GCSE which must include six units of study at A2 level.*
- A Scottish Certificate in Education with passes in five subjects, of which two are at Higher Grade.
- Advanced Diploma
- An Access to HE Diploma
- A National Certificate or Diploma awarded by Edexcel Foundation (formerly BTEC).
- A National Certificate or GSVQ at level 3 awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
- The Irish Leaving Certificate with grade C or above in two subjects at Higher Level and three at Ordinary level.

Foundation Degrees

- Relevant achievement or performance in a workplace or community setting that demonstrates outcomes consistent with those expected at level three of the Qualifications and Credit Framework.
- Passes in four subjects at GCE/VCE/GCSE which must include six units of study at A2 level.*
- A Scottish Certificate in Education with passes in five subjects, of which two are at Higher Grade.
- Advanced Diploma
- An Access to HE Diploma
- A National Certificate or Diploma awarded by Edexcel Foundation (formerly BTEC).
- A National Certificate or GSVQ at level 3 awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.
- The Irish Leaving Certificate with grade C or above in two subjects at Higher Level and three at Ordinary level

*Note The minimum level of attainment must not include an Advanced Subsidiary GCE in the same subject as an Advanced GCE.

Postgraduate Entry

The admission requirements for taught postgraduate programmes shall normally be a good honours degree of a recognised university or comparable institution or qualifications regarded by the University as equivalent.

The University operates a Progression module with schools and colleges in the region and accredits this with 30 UCAS Tariff points. As part of the West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network (WYLLN), the University operates a number of Progression Agreements to facilitate transition from study in local Further Education Colleges to higher education. The University also offers a number of foundation years (year 0) which provide entry to higher education for students who may not have the specific subject qualifications for direct entry to their chosen area of study. Progression routes from Foundation Degrees to articulated Bachelors Degrees are identified in the relevant programme specification documents. The International Study Centre delivers preparation programmes for non-EU international students whose academic or linguistic qualifications do not meet the standard entry requirements for undergraduate or postgraduate study. ISC courses, which combine academic and study skills modules with English Language training, offer assured progression to degree programmes. Full details of available courses can be accessed through the International Office web pages.

2.2 Competence in English Language

Teaching and assessment will normally take place in English therefore applicants must be competent in the English language and most courses require GCSE English grade C, or an equivalent qualification.

Applicants who have not completed their education in an English-speaking country must satisfy the University's language requirements before admission to a course. This requirement means that they must have a satisfactory command of the English language in terms of reading, writing, listening and speaking. The minimum currently acceptable qualifications are detailed on the university's website: www2.hud.ac.uk/international/english_language/index.php

2.3 Specific requirements at GCSE or equivalent

In addition to the above, individual courses within the university may set minimum entry requirements for levels of attainment at GCSE or equivalent, particularly in English Language and/or Mathematics. This information will be clearly stated within entry requirements for specific courses.

2.4 Suitability of subjects and subject combinations required

Whilst we normally consider a wide range of subjects as appropriate for entry to our courses, applicants are advised to check individual course requirements, where we will in some cases advise on preferences in respect of particular subjects or subject combinations that we believe provide the best preparation for study on that course.

2.5 Other criteria

In addition to qualifications, we will also consider whether an applicant is suitably motivated to complete their chosen programme of study, and whether the provision will challenge and benefit the student.

In our assessment of an application, we will take into account information provided within the personal statement and reference, and will consider academic ability, motivation and experience. We will also consider relevant interests outside of studies, such as work or voluntary experience. We will not, however, use additional contextual information such as socio-economic data, school performance, ethnicity, disability in our decision-making process for admission.

3. Commitment to fairness transparency and consistency

To ensure a fair and consistent admissions process, the University of Huddersfield will ensure that the following principles are adhered to:

- All courses will clearly state their entry criteria, including academic qualifications, along with appropriate experience and skills required for entry
- Entry criteria will be easily accessible through our website and prospectus
- Applicants will be informed in general terms how they can demonstrate their achievements (both academic and experiential) and motivation to study
- We will provide clear information on required entry points or points ranges. Any amendments made after points or points ranges have been printed in the University's prospectus will be publicised on the University website and through the UCAS and GTTR websites
- Offers will normally be made within the publicised points range
- An offer below the normal points range may be made in exceptional circumstances where there is evidence that the applicant's grades may have been affected by individual extenuating circumstances.

Where courses include interviews or auditions as part of their selection criteria we will make this explicit to applicants, and provide details on how the interviews will be conducted and the criteria used to select successful candidates.

The University may use tests to evaluate GCSE English Language and/or Maths equivalence where applicants do not meet minimum entry criteria in these areas.

4. Feedback to applicants

Where applicants are unsuccessful, feedback will be available on an individual basis in response to receiving a formal request (not e-mail) from the applicant within 6 weeks of the decision being made.

The formal request must include:

Full Name

Date of Birth

Course name Applied for

UCAS personal ID Number (if application received via UCAS)

Feedback will only be given in written format (not over the telephone or in person) normally within 8 weeks of receipt of the request. The University undertakes to reply to all written requests for feedback, but applicants should note that we prioritise making decisions on applications over providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants and therefore at certain times of the year there may be a delay in providing feedback. In line with our Data Protection policies, we are unable to provide feedback to anyone other than the applicant, unless the applicant gives prior, express and voluntary consent in writing for someone else to act on their behalf. The feedback given will be with reference to the selection criteria for the course and will normally be sent to the e-mail address the applicant has provided on their application form. Unsuccessful applicants should not use this feedback to review and then resubmit their application documentation in the same admissions cycle. Applicants may reapply the following year, having taken the feedback into consideration.

5. Late applications

Applicants to undergraduate courses who apply by the required UCAS deadline will receive equal consideration. Applications received after the UCAS deadline will be considered on an individual basis, and only where there are still places available on the course to which they have applied.

6. The Application in Context

Application forms now include a number of questions which give us details about the context in which applicants have achieved their academic qualifications. These factors include:

- Family circumstances
- Socio-economic background
- Having a first language other than English
- Illness or illness/death in the family
- Interrupted schooling
- Part time employment due to financial hardship
- Having no family members who have undertaken higher education
- Having 'Looked after' status
- Having refugee or traveller status
- Having home responsibilities
- Having a disability

Whilst we do not use this information to inform our decision making, there may be occasions where the applicant and/or their referee asks us to take account of certain contextual factors which may have affected performance, and to consider this in making an offer.

Evidence of one or more of these contextual factors does not mean that preference will be given to applicants, as each case will be considered on its individual merits. However, in cases where there is clear evidence that contextual factors have affected performance and achievement, and where the applicant is able to demonstrate motivation and potential to achieve, the University may consider this as part of its assessment of the application, and may take this into account in deciding whether to make an offer.

7. Admissions procedures

The University is committed to providing a professional admissions operation in order to provide the best service to applicants and to the institution. In order to achieve this we operate a centralised admissions process for some courses. Within the centralised admissions process, Admissions tutors within the academic schools remain involved and are responsible for agreeing the entry criteria and selection processes and for setting offer-ranges for each of their courses.

The consideration of individual applications for courses may take place either in academic schools or in the Admissions and Records or International and European Offices, where specialist admissions staff review the application on the basis of achieved and predicted qualifications, alongside the personal statement and reference. Where the applicant has non-standard qualifications or on occasions where the applicant narrowly misses the qualifications for the standard offer for a course, the application is always referred to the academic school for consideration.

The Admissions and Records Office is responsible for all communications with UCAS and GTTR, including the transmission of admissions decisions. The office is also responsible for providing statistical information to enable the University to monitor numbers of applications, offers and acceptances within each application cycle.

The University ensures that all staff involved in the admissions process are appropriately trained and offer a professional service based on good practice and up to date knowledge. The University expects that all Admissions tutors are trained, mentored and do not hold sole responsibility for admissions decisions in their first year in an academic role within the institution. The Admissions and Records Office, in conjunction with other central services, has responsibility for training staff involved in the admissions process and disseminating information on admissions policy and procedures. This includes an annual training workshop where staff are updated with relevant changes in legislation, research and entry qualifications. Final criteria for courses of study are completed and agreed with Admissions tutors before the start of the application cycle. All staff involved in the admissions process are issued with guidelines informing on procedures and information relating to qualifications and are expected to keep abreast of changing requirements on an ongoing basis.

8. Responsibility of applicants in the application process

It is the responsibility of applicants to provide full and accurate information in an application and to notify the University of any changes or corrections to the original application.

By accepting an offer of admission, the applicant agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the University. Copies of the regulations can be found on the University's website:
www2.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulations_student_handbook/student_handbook_index.htm

In the light of additional information, which was not available at the time of offer, an offer may be amended or, in exceptional circumstances, withdrawn. The University

also reserves the right to correct errors where they have been made in the communication of decisions and offers, but will only withdraw an offer made in error where all conditions have been satisfied with the applicant's consent.

The University reserves the right to exclude an applicant who is considered on justifiable grounds to be unsuitable for a place on a particular course according to individual circumstances and following the guidelines laid down in the University's 'Fitness to Practice' regulations which can be found at <http://www2.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulations.php>

At all times, the University expects staff involved in the admissions process and applicants to act in a courteous manner.

9. The offer making process

On receiving an application, the applicant will be contacted (normally via e-mail) to acknowledge receipt of the application.

Where an applicant has applied through UCAS or GTTR the University will communicate its decision through the official channels provided. Where an applicant has applied directly to the University, a formal decision will be made and communicated directly to the applicant by the Admissions and Records Office or the International and European Office.

In some cases where an applicant has applied for one course and is not successful, an alternative course may be offered. The alternative offer will be officially communicated via UCAS or GTTR, where appropriate, and applicants will also be contacted by the University to confirm and discuss a changed offer decision.

An offer, whether conditional or unconditional, will be made in good faith taking into account information as supplied by the applicant. In some circumstances, an offer may be conditional upon non-academic requirements eg a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure or health assessment which is deemed satisfactory.

10. Confirmation of results

The confirmation process is the procedure involved in analysing examination results in relation to the offer made by the University of Huddersfield. If an applicant has met their academic and non-academic conditions, the University will be in a position to 'Confirm' their place.

The confirmation procedure uses information systems to confirm places via UCAS or GTTR (where appropriate). This system is not, however, used as a stand-alone process, and the University reserves the right to amend an offer in light of an electronic error.

The University will consider each and every application on individual merit. All extenuating circumstances will be considered when identifying applications that have not met their required qualification grades.

11. Fraudulent statements/omissions and Plagiarism

Applicants suspected of providing, or found to have provided, false information will be referred to UCAS/GTTR, if their application was made via UCAS/GTTR. The same is true of applicants who are suspected of omitting, or found to have omitted, information that they are required to disclose.

Applications identified by UCAS' Similarity Detection software to contain plagiarised material will be considered on an individual basis by Admissions tutors, taking into account the nature, relevance and importance of the plagiarism. In such cases, Admissions tutors may contact applicants to discuss their application in more detail.

The University reserves the right to cancel an application or withdraw any offer if it is found that an application contains false, plagiarised or misleading information.

12. Further Information

There are many policies that the University needs to adhere to in order to ensure complete transparency and fairness in its admissions processes. The policies below provide detailed and specific guidance.

12.1 Equal Opportunities

The University is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and aims to provide a working, learning and social environment that is free from unfair discrimination. The university's admissions process must therefore ensure that it is transparent, fair and consistent regardless of gender, religion, socio-economic background, disability, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

12.2 Students under 18

The University welcomes applications from people of all ages and applications will be considered on their individual merits. If an offer of a place is made to an applicant who will be under the age of 18 at the time of admission, certain legislative procedures may be necessary in order to fulfil the University's duty of care for students. Further information can be found at <http://www2.hud.ac.uk/teaching1/qa/institutional.php>

12.3 Disability

The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities and aims to ensure that their participation in both the academic and social life of the University is as successful as that of other students. Applicants who declare a disability are considered according to the same principles as for other candidates. If made the offer of a place, applicants who have declared a disability are contacted by the Admissions and Records Office and asked to complete a questionnaire to be returned to the Disability Support section of Student Services, which enables them to discuss their likely requirements with Disability Support officers, to reduce any barriers that might confront them when seeking to study at the University of Huddersfield and provide appropriate support for their studies. A decision may need to take into account any overriding health and safety concerns, barriers relating to professional body requirements or the University's ability or inability to make any

necessary adjustments. In such instances, cases will be considered on an individual basis.

12.4 'Looked after' Students

The University welcomes applications from 'Looked after' students. If made the offer of a place, applicants who have made a declaration are contacted by the Admissions and Records Office and given the details of the University's Support and Liaison Officer: Looked After Young People. Based in Student Services, this member of staff can offer advice and support for applicants prior to entry and during the transition to study at the University.

12.5 Mature students

The University encourages applications from non-school and college leavers. The University recognises that some applicants will offer a range of experience and perhaps non-traditional qualifications, which will be taken into account when the application is considered. Each application will be considered on its individual merits. Non-school leavers may be required to show that they have undertaken some recognised systematic course of study within recent years.

12.6 Procedures for Criminal Records Bureau Disclosures

For certain courses, as specified by government, the University is required to undertake a check of the applicant in conjunction with the Criminal Records Bureau.

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) is an executive agency of the Home Office. The Disclosure Service offers organisations such as the University, a means to check the background of applicants to ensure that they do not have a history which would make them unsuitable for the training/employment they will be undertaking.

Disclosure checks are required for all students joining courses which lead to employment in areas involving contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, for example courses in the areas of teacher training, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, social work.

At an early stage in the application process, applicants are required to complete a Disclosure form in order that any issues may be identified. For applicants who accept the offer of a place on such courses the University will submit the Disclosure form to the CRB for checking.

The University reserves the right to exclude a student from the course should he/she have omitted to declare relevant information on a Disclosure form

Disclosure information will be:

- Passed only to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties;
- Used only for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given;
- Stored separately and securely with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties;

- Destroyed by suitable secure means and not retained for longer than is necessary;

The University will not unfairly discriminate against the subject of disclosure information on the basis of conviction or other details received.

Further information on the courses that this applies to can be found in the University's 'Fitness to Practice' information on the website:
<http://www2.hud.ac.uk/registry/regulations.php>

12.7 Applicants who disclose a criminal conviction

The University considers applicants who disclose a criminal conviction on an individual basis, and in the light of the course applied for. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from studying with us. This will depend on the nature of the post or course applied for and the circumstances and background of your offence(s).

12.8 Deferred Applications

The University is normally happy to consider applicants who intend to take a gap year between school/college and university. Applicants should indicate what they intend to do during this year on their application form so that this can be taken into account as part of the selection process. It should be noted that for some courses, where demand exceeds the number of places available, it may not always be possible to offer deferred places. In such cases applicants will be advised to re-apply the following year.

12.9 Complaints Policy

Applicants who wish to make a complaint regarding their application must first request written feedback as detailed in 4 above. If having received written feedback they remain dissatisfied a complaint should be submitted to the Office of the Head of Registry within 10 working days from the date on the feedback letter. The Head of Registry will investigate the complaint and respond to the applicant within 20 working days. The University reserves the right to make a reasonable extension during vacation periods. If following investigation discrepancies are identified the complaint will be referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and a formal complaints hearing will be convened. The decision of the hearing will be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the appeal is not upheld the applicant will be informed in writing with reasons for its rejection.

12.10 Discussing your application with others

In line with Data Protection legislation, the University will not discuss an application with any person(s) other than the applicant themselves, although information being given to the University will be accepted without confirmation that the applicant is applying to the University.

Where applicants have given the names of third parties to act as a point of reference (referee) then it is assumed by the university that the provision of this information gives the university permission to contact the third party for further information in support of the application.

In the case of international applicants applying through educational agents or consultants, the individual will be asked to confirm that they agree to the sharing of information with the third party.

12.11 Nominated Representative

In exceptional circumstances, applicants may nominate one individual to discuss their application. This person will not be able to make any decisions or change any of the applicant's personal details such as current address.

12.12 Interview Policy

Some courses use interviews/selection days as part of the admissions process. Applicants will be informed of the format of the interview/selection day at the time of invitation and advised of any examples of work they are required to bring with them.

12.13 Credit transfer arrangements

The University operates a system of accrediting prior learning and experience. Applicants are encouraged to discuss their application for accreditation with Admissions tutors who will be able to offer guidance and support for the processes involved. Applications for direct entry to second or subsequent years of a course should clearly indicate the point of entry and the reasons for this.

13. Promotional Material

It is the responsibility of Admissions tutors to ensure that promotional material is clear, accurate and up to date. Any amendments made after course information has been printed in the University's prospectus will be publicised on the University website and, where appropriate, through the UCAS and GTTR websites.

14. Disclaimer

The University reserves the right to make variations to course contents, entry requirements and methods of delivery, and to discontinue, merge or combine courses, both before and after a student's admission to the University, if such action is reasonably considered necessary by the University.

In the event that, prior to the student commencing the first term of study, the University discontinues the course, the student may either:

- a) withdraw from the University without any liability for fees, or
- b) transfer to such other course (if any) as may be offered by the University, for which the student is qualified, subject to approval by the appropriate academic authorities

If in these circumstances the student wishes to withdraw from the University and to enrol in a course at a different University, the University shall use its reasonable endeavours to assist the student.

15. Further Information

Further information on the University's admissions processes can be obtained from the Admissions and Records Office:

Telephone: 01484 473969

Fax: 01484 472765

e-mail: admissionandrecords@hud.ac.uk

www: hud.ac.uk/aro

In person: Student Centre, Level 4, Central services Building

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