



Faculty of Health

Admissions Policy

1.0 Introduction

This Policy sets out the Faculty of Health Admissions Policy for home and overseas students, and is reflective of the University's Policy for the Admission of Students.

1.1 University Regulations governing the admission of students

The University's regulations governing the admission of students are set out in Section D of the Academic Regulations and Policies. These regulations set out the normal minimum entry requirements for each of the University's awards and give guidance on requirements for international students in relation to English Language qualifications.

1.2 Principles

The overriding principle of admission is that there should be a reasonable expectation that the applicant will be able to meet the learning outcomes of a programme and achieve the standard required for the award. Because admission to programmes in the Faculty of Health is competitive and limited by the number of places available, admission decisions are based on the qualifications, experience, needs and aspirations of applicants and the likelihood of them being able to fulfil the learning outcomes of the programme they wish to study.

1.3 Mission and Context

This Policy applies to all programmes offered by the Faculty of Health in accordance with the University's Mission and Faculty of Health's Mission statement.

The University's Mission is to be a powerful force for learning, creativity and enterprise, promoting economic, social and cultural wellbeing. It aims to provide an educational experience of the highest quality with a strong commitment to employability and to flexible and practice-based learning. Programmes are informed by our engagement with business, the professions and the community and the University's centres of excellence in research and investigative practice. The vision includes being recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a force for equality and inclusion.

The Faculty of Health's Mission is to provide the highest possible quality of student centred education using the latest technological / pedagogic advances to demonstrate excellence in preparing professionals, conducting research and advancing service development within the Health and Social Care sectors.

The University and Faculty of Health are therefore committed to admitting students who have the potential and motivation to succeed, who will benefit from the experience of higher education and who will contribute positively to the University community.

To achieve these aims the Faculty of Health will:

- welcome applications from prospective students from a diverse range of backgrounds who have the potential to successfully complete their chosen programme of study;

- work with partner organisations, other institutions and schools to develop progression routes for applicants and widen participation;
- meet the changing needs of applicants through the continuous development of our portfolio of activities and our delivery methods;
- use the Faculty's planning processes to ensure that we continue to provide learning opportunities in a range of subjects, through a variety of modes of study and at a range of levels;
- ensure that no prospective student is excluded from the Faculty on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs or other form of discrimination, complying with relevant legislation including equal opportunities;
- provide opportunities for applicants to visit the Faculty and meet with staff. International applicants will receive comprehensive information about studying and living in the UK.

1.4 Faculty of Health Admissions

This Faculty of Health Admissions Policy is made available to applicants at <http://www.bcu.ac.uk/health/courses> and is disseminated to staff in the Faculty of Health and its practice partners by the Faculty of Health Quality Office.

The policy acknowledges relevant legislation, takes account of the QAA Code of Practice for Admissions, the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies and good practice concerned with admissions. It also incorporates the procedures of the clearing house UCAS.¹

1.5 Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) namely the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) set standards and requirements for entry to programmes that they have approved.

Programme Directors and Admission Tutors must ensure that admissions, including interview and selection processes adhere to PSRB standards and requirements.

PSRB entry requirements are communicated to applicants in programme information which is available on the Faculty of Health's web site, online prospectus and other publicity materials.

2.0 Admission Tutor

Each programme and / or named pathway award within a programme will have a named Admission Tutor(s) who will deal fairly and consistently with all applications. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure there is a named member(s) of academic staff to undertake the role of Admissions Tutor.

Academic members of staff who undertake the role of Admissions Tutor must comply with the Faculty of Health role guidance and role descriptor for Admission Tutor. It is the responsibility of the Head of Department to monitor this process and where there is non-compliance the Head of School must be informed who will communicate with the appropriate Associate Dean.

¹ UCAS is the University and Colleges Admission Service.

3.0 Pre-Application

The Associate Dean (Business Innovation Marketing and Admissions) will work with Programme Directors and programme teams to ensure the Faculty of Health continues positive and effective engagement with schools, colleges, careers and HE advisors to;

- raise aspirations and awareness of the value of higher education;
- increase and widen access and participation by implementing and supporting Master classes, open days and taster days;
- ensure there is transparent and accurate information for potential students.

4.0 Recruitment and Admission Target Numbers

Recruitment targets are set for each programme by the Executive Dean, in accordance with NHS and Military commissions and in compliance with the Faculty's student number count. The targets are agreed with the Dean's Advisory Group as part of the annual planning process. Any changes to these targets are communicated to the appropriate individuals as soon as possible.

The Health Admissions Manager, based in academic registry, has the responsibility to rigorously monitor the numbers of offers made to applicants who apply to enter a programme of study. The Admissions Manager will communicate on a regular basis with the appropriate Associate Dean the number of offers made for each programme of study offered in the Faculty of Health.

The Health Admissions Team and Admissions Tutors must make every effort to ensure that programmes only recruit to target numbers. Recruitment to target numbers is monitored by the Deans Advisory Group, Marketing, Admissions and Retention Group and Recruitment Attrition and Completers on Time Group.

4.1 Admission Requirements

Clear, accurate and current information and guidance is produced and published about each programme, its entry requirements and procedures.

Guidance about each programme's admission requirements must be fair, transparent and consistently applied which must be published to applicants their advisers, parents and agents through the Faculty of Health's web site, online prospectus and other publicity materials.

4.2 Programme detailed admissions requirements

Each programme must;

- define the knowledge, skills, competence and / or experience required for entry and admission to programmes and subsequent stages of the programme;
- explain how evidence of applicants' abilities, relevant educational and professional experience will be obtained;
- define the criteria and process through which applications will be considered and admissions decisions made. This should clearly explain the admissions process for each category of applicant, for example, international, home and EU, full-time and part-time applicants, state any professional, statutory or regulatory body requirements for entry and time line for completion of a programme;

- where programmes have additional selection methods such as interviews, numeracy and literacy assessments or the review of portfolios, the information published about these programmes will detail the nature of these requirements;

4.2 Verification of Visas and Work Permits

The UK Border Agency requires International Students to hold an appropriate visa, and, where relevant, work permits. The International Office will advise on requirements and verify that appropriate original documents have been provided.

5.0 Admissions Administration

All applicants will receive timely responses from the central admission team and Faculty based Admission Tutors to enquiries and applications. Applicants will also receive appropriate information throughout the application process, together with preparation for enrolment as a student with the University.

5.1 Enquiries

The Faculty of Health Admissions Team is normally the first contact for applicant's enquiries. Applicants will receive a prompt response to an enquiry. The response will be no later than 2 working days from the initial enquiry.

All undergraduate / postgraduate programme specific enquiries will then be directed or forwarded to the Admission Tutor / Professional Navigator for that particular programme.

5.2 Applications

All applications are dealt with confidentially and are only seen by those staff who make decisions or administer the admissions process.

Applications received by the relevant deadline will be given equal consideration. Late applications will also be considered, depending upon the availability of places at that time.

Where applicants apply directly to the University the Admissions Team will send a University application form to an applicant.

All applicants are expected to provide true and accurate information to support their application.

Once a completed application form is received by the Admissions Team it will be sent to either, the Admissions Tutor(s)/pathway lead or the Director of Continuing Professional Development

The application form and admissions proforma identifying the next stage of the application process will be returned to the Admissions Team.

The next stage in the application process may include:

- an invitation to an interview and open day;
- an offer which may be unconditional / conditional;
- a rejection;

The Admissions Department will communicate the next stage of the application to an applicant.

5.3 Applications for modules of study to ‘gain credits only’

All applications from applicants who wish to undertake continuing professional development modules of study to gain academic credit only will be sent to the named pathway or module lead for a particular programme.

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5.5 Applicants References

Each applicant must submit at least one reference plus the name of a further referee who may be asked to supply a further reference for the applicant. The initial reference must be from either the most recent employer or from the applicant’s last education establishment or preferably both.

All references must either have an official stamp or be written on the organisations headed paper, photocopies are not acceptable.

6.0 Enhanced Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure

All programmes / modules of study in the Faculty of Health that involve working with children and / or vulnerable adults will require applicants to have enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Disclosures, before they can be fully enrolled as a student of the University and engage with placement learning opportunities.

The information required for enhanced CRB disclosures are made clear to applicants via the Faculty of Health website. Advice about the procedures will be sent to relevant applicants during the admissions process along with CRB application forms.

Registrants applying to undertake a programme of study must be able to demonstrate they are of good character and good health which means they will be capable of safe and effective practice upon completion of their programme of study. In some instances, registrants may be required to undertake an enhanced CRB Disclosure.

Applicants are required to declare unspent criminal convictions. Convictions that are spent, as defined by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, do not come under this Act for programmes in the Faculty of Health where placement learning opportunities require contact with children and / or vulnerable adults.

An unspent criminal conviction will not necessarily preclude an applicant from being offered a place at the University. The Faculty of Health will assess all applications from individuals with unspent relevant criminal convictions in order to ensure protection of children and vulnerable adults, other students, or staff. Such applications are considered in accordance with the University’s Procedure for considering Applications from Applicants with Previous Criminal Convictions, and will be invited to attend a Criminal Records Bureau Panel held in the Faculty of Health.

An applicant’s failure to advise the Faculty of any unspent criminal convictions may lead to an offer of a place being withdrawn or referral to a Criminal Records Bureau panel.

Where an applicant fails to advise the Faculty of any unspent criminal convictions and they have enrolled on a programme and they are hence regarded a student of the University they will be referred to a Fitness to Practice panel held in the Faculty of Health.

No student will be allowed to commence placement without evidence of a CRB clearance and it is in the applicant's best interests to return CRB forms as quickly as possible.

6.1 Occupational Health Assessments

Applicants are required to have an Occupational Health Assessment with clearance prior to full enrolment on a programme or module of study where they have to undertake placement learning opportunities and have contact with patients / clients.

The information required for Occupational Health Assessments is made clear to applicants via the Faculty of Health website. Advice about the procedures will be sent to relevant applicants during the admissions process along with the application forms.

An applicant's failure to advise the Faculty of Health of any relevant health problems that may put patients / clients at risk may lead to an offer of a place being withdrawn.

Where an applicant fails to advise the Faculty of Health of any relevant health problems and they have enrolled on a programme and are hence regarded a student of the University they will be referred to Fitness to Practice panel held in the Faculty of Health.

6.3 Good Health and Character Declarations

Where students are sponsored or seconded by an organisation to undertake a programme of study that involves working with children and / or vulnerable adults the organisation will confirm to the Admissions office that there has been an enhanced CRB check undertaken or the CRB is current, and students will sign a self-declaration upon enrolment

6.4 Re-enrolment

Students enrolled on programmes in the Faculty of Health that involve working with children and / or vulnerable adults will also sign a self-declaration during the re-enrolment process each academic year / or when they return to the University after a period of interruption to their studies. The declaration will be signed to confirm that there has been no change to their enhanced Criminal Record Bureau Assessment and health status since enrolment.

7.0 Selection Process

The selection process must always include face-to-face engagement where it is a Professional or Regulatory body requirement. This will normally take place through interview or attendance at a group discussion.

Representatives of Faculty of Health practice partners should normally be directly involved in the interview and selection process. Wherever possible, users should also be involved. Depending on local circumstances they may be involved directly or indirectly in;

- planning for recruitment and selection;
- assisting in determining interview and selection criteria;
- monitoring the effectiveness of selection processes;
- giving presentations or meeting with potential candidates;
- part of the selection panel;

The views of all individuals directly involved in the interview and selection of applicants will normally be taken into account when making final decisions on whether to accept or reject a candidate.

7.1 Literacy and numeracy

The Faculty of Health has policies on assessing the literacy and numeracy skills of applicants. This Policy should be read in conjunction with these policies and these can be accessed from the Faculty of Health Quality Office website.

7.1.1 Competence in English Language

All the University and Faculty of Health programmes are taught in English. Therefore, each student's command of English must be sufficient to meet all the requirements of their programme. The Faculty's admissions regulations specify that all applicants, not just international applicants, must meet either GCSE grade C or above, or equivalent in English Language in order to be admitted to the University. Additional support for English language can be provided for eligible candidates.

Where a PSRB sets an International English Language Test (IELT) score for international student's eligibility to enrol on a programme or apply for registration upon successful completion of a programme this will be communicated to students in the programme specifications.

7.1.2 Competence in Mathematics

The Faculty's admissions regulations specify that all applicants, must meet either GCSE grade C or above, or equivalent in Mathematics in order to be admitted to the University

7.2 Student Identity

All students must produce original photographic identification (passport or driving licence) at interview and enrolment to verify identity.

8.0 Applicants with Disabilities

Applications from people with disabilities are welcomed, and assessed against the published admission requirements for the programme. Such applicants will be asked to contact the University's Student Services to discuss their needs and the support that may be required / available.

The Disability Services Team can provide an information booklet detailing support mechanisms for students with disabilities and the Faculty of Health Disability Tutor will ensure that reasonable adjustments are implemented where appropriate and evaluated to enhance the learning experience of students.

9.0 Clearing

Programmes that enter Clearing use the published admission requirements to select applicants recruited at that time unless a variation to these requirements has been specifically authorised by the relevant Executive Dean or his nominee.

Face to face engagement will take place with applicants who are selected through clearing where it is a Professional / Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement.

10.0 Making an Offer to an Applicant

Once an offer has been made to an applicant the information sent will include the deadline for responding to the offer, programme specific information, CRB form where applicable, financial information and information about becoming a student (including arrangements for arrival at the University, induction and enrolment arrangements).

11.0 Admission with Academic Credit

The Faculty of Health have procedures for considering applications for the accreditation of prior learning (AP(E)L). All applicants who wish to gain accreditation for prior learning must submit a formal application to the Personal Development Department. Where an applicant has achieved AP(E)L they will be sent a letter of approval from the Personal Development Department.

12.0 Programme Transfers

Students who commence study on a programme in the Faculty of Health may be able to transfer to an alternative programme in the Faculty or to another programme at the University providing they satisfy the admission requirements for the programme in question and places are available. Decisions about admittance to an alternative programme with credit will be taken in accordance with the University's procedures for AP(E)L.

13.0 Unsuccessful applicants

Wherever possible, unsuccessful applicants will be invited to apply for alternative programmes which may be more suitable for them.

Feedback on individual applications will be provided on request. Requests should be sent to the Admissions Officer who communicated the decision to the unsuccessful applicant. Feedback will only be provided to the applicant and not to a third party, unless specific permission has been granted by the applicant.

14.0 Closure of Programmes

Exceptionally, a decision to close a programme may be taken after the recruitment process has started due to low numbers of applications not making the programme viable.

Where a programme is oversubscribed, a request will be made to Academic Registry to close the programme in order to avoid over recruitment.

The Academic Registry will advise affected applicants at the earliest opportunity and wherever possible will recommend alternative programmes that may be of interest.

15.0 Quality Monitoring and Enhancement

Admissions criteria for programmes of study must be reviewed and approved through the University's approval / re-view and re-approval procedures. All programmes with named awards must have completed programme specifications which include the admissions criteria. Programme Directors must ensure they complete the University programme specification Template using the university guidance.

All completed and approved programme specifications must be sent to the Centre for Academic Quality to be uploaded onto the Quality Office website and sent to Academic Registry.

Admission requirements must be reviewed annually by Board of Studies (preferably at the last meeting of the academic year) as part of the annual monitoring process to ensure they continue to take account of national guidelines on qualifications, prior learning and experience of applicants and any Professional / Statutory and Regulatory body requirements.

Where changes are required to the admission requirements these should be submitted and approved by;

- Board of Studies;
- Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee;

Monitoring of the entry requirements and procedures for individual programmes is undertaken annually at Faculty level. This monitoring takes account of statistical analyses published by the University about applications, in relation to offers, acceptances and applicants and if necessary will seek to address issues of under-representation.

The Planning and Statistics Office in the Faculty of Health will provide Programme Directors with statistical data about applications, offers, acceptances and applicants and an analysis through exception reporting will be provided in the Programme Annual Monitoring Report.

15.1 Good Practice

Admissions Tutors and the Faculty of Health Marketing, Admissions and Retention (MAR) Group will inform the Faculty Quality Office of Good Practice that will be considered for admissions to all programmes, and this information will be shared through iCity.

15.2 Continuing Staff Development

The Director of Faculty Administration will ensure all Faculty administration staff are trained appropriately to undertake admissions and clearing activities and the Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching, Research and Scholarship) will ensure they have access to regular updates.

The Associate Dean (Learning, Teaching, Research and Scholarship) will ensure Admission Tutors are trained appropriately to undertake admissions, and have access to regular updates.

Regular updates will consist of;

- sessions provided by the Faculty and central departments on;
 - changes to policy, procedures and legislation related to admissions
 - equality and diversity
 - disabilities
 - selection and interview techniques

The Director of Faculty Administration, via the deputy Director of Faculty Administration for administration staff and the Director of Academic Quality for academic staff, is responsible for disseminating information to relevant Faculty staff in relation to admissions which includes:

- new external qualifications;
- changes to national and University policy and procedures;
- changes to the entry requirements and / or procedures for Faculty programmes, also ensuring that relevant central departments are informed of these changes;
- how to obtain advice when this is necessary to help them deal with particular enquiries and applications;

Careful consideration will also be given to the support and training of users and / or students involved in the recruitment, interview and selection process.

Practice partners involved in the interview and selection process of students will confirm to the Admissions Tutor that they have undertaken appropriate training and have access to regular updates adhering to their organisations requirements.

16.0 Admissions Complaints

Where, exceptionally, an applicant believes that s/he has valid reasons for complaining about how her/his application has been treated the complaint will be heard under the University's Procedure for considering Complaints about Admissions. An applicant cannot appeal against the outcome of a selection decision because this is a matter of academic judgement.

The University's Student Complaint Procedure does not apply to applicants and the Office of the Independent Adjudicator will not consider complaints relating to applications.

17.0 Quality Monitoring

This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Director of Faculty Administration and the appropriate Associate Deans when new standards and guidance are published by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies

Where amendments are made to this Policy it will be submitted to the Faculty Academic Standards and Quality Enhancement Committee (FASQEC), a sub-committee of Faculty Board, for review to ensure that it remains current and continues to reflect good practice and relevant legislation. Faculty Board will receive the reviewed Policy to approve its implementation in the Faculty of Health.

The amended policy will be received by Faculty Board and approved for implementation in the Faculty of Health.

Birmingham City University's commitment to equality means that this policy has been screened in relation to paying due regard to the general duty in relation to the relevant protected characteristics, the use of comprehensible inclusive language, and the avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request.

Centre for Academic Quality and Governance
Marketing Admissions and Retention Group
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