

# Section 13



Nottingham Trent  
University

## **Quality Handbook**

**Part D: Course Design, Management and  
Enhancement**

### **Section 13: Admissions - Requirements**

# Section 13

## Contents

1. Remit of Policy .....	3
2. Contextual Statement .....	4
Fair and Transparent Process .....	4
Widening Participation.....	4
Contextual Data .....	4
3. Criteria For Admissions.....	5
4. Responsibility for Admissions .....	6
5. Application Processing: Information, Advice and Guidance .....	9
Accessible Formats .....	9
Prospective Student Enquiries .....	9
Prospective Student Events .....	9
Up-to-date Information .....	9
Unforeseen Circumstances.....	9
6. Application Process: General .....	10
Accelerated Learning.....	10
Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer.....	10
Admission to Particular Awards .....	10
Application Processing Times .....	11
Applying or Requesting Deferred Entry .....	11
Decision Errors.....	12
Entry with Advanced Standing.....	13
Fraudulent Applications .....	14
Further Information and Work Requests .....	14
Interview Conduct .....	15
Near Misses and Alternative Offers .....	15
Unconditional Offers .....	15
Contextual Offers .....	15
Previous Study at the University.....	16
Re-remarks and Re-Takes of Qualifications .....	16
Qualification Verification .....	17
Terms and Conditions .....	17
7. Application Processing: Specific Applicant Groups .....	18

# Section 13

Care Leavers (UCAS prospective students only) .....	18
Disabled Prospective Students .....	18
Safeguarding and Support for Minors and Vulnerable Adults .....	19
Mitigating Circumstances.....	19
Scholarships .....	21
Transition .....	22
8. Application Processing: International Student Admission .....	22
Academic Technology Approval Scheme .....	22
Admission Requirements For International Students .....	23
Assessment of International Applications.....	23
Educational Agents .....	23
English Language Entry Requirements.....	24
In-country Offer Making .....	24
International Qualification Equivalences .....	24
Visa Information.....	25
Enhanced Admission Checks to Support UKVI Compliance .....	25
9. Application Processing: Self-declared Criminal Convictions And Disclosure And Barring Service And Other Checks .....	25
Criminal Convictions .....	25
Disclosure and Barring Service Checks .....	27
Health and Fitness and Other Fit to Practice Assessments.....	28
Suitability Panel for Prospective Social Work Students.....	29
10. Application Processing: Fees And Funding .....	29
Fee Assessment .....	29
11. Appeals.....	30
Applicant Appeals/Complaints Procedure .....	30
Procedure for Submitting an Appeal/Complaint .....	31
12. Applicant Behaviour.....	32
13. Monitoring Governance .....	32

# Section 13

## 1. Remit of Policy

**The University has procedures for admission that are designed to be fair, clear and explicit; and defined roles and responsibilities to ensure they are implemented consistently and monitored routinely.**

1.1 This policy covers the recruitment, selection and admission to all taught courses delivered by the University.

### Further information

- For specific detailed guidance relating to the application process for taught courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level please see [Quality Handbook Supplement \(QHS\) 13A](#), for research degrees please see [QH 11](#) and for further education courses please see [QHS 13B](#).
- 1.2 Prospective students attending institutions delivering NTU courses will normally be subject to the relevant recruitment, selection and admissions policies of those institutions. However, it is expected that all institutions responsible for the delivery of NTU courses will adhere to relevant Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements and to the principles of good practice for fair and transparent admissions as outlined in this policy.
- 1.3 All collaborative courses are subject to approval and review processes, annual monitoring and academic liaison tutor or School-based collaborative academic lead visits which includes consideration of recruitment, selection and admission policies.
- 1.4 The policy incorporates and complies with relevant legislation and associated NTU policies, including but not limited to: Equality policy & legislation; Home Office UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) regulations and legislation for international students; Fee Assessment Regulations; the Data Protection legislation; Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) regulations and legislation.
- 1.5 Where applicable, sector best practice guidance has been incorporated into this policy and is adhered to in the daily operation of the Admissions Policy unless otherwise stated. Examples include:
- a. [UK Quality Code for Higher Education 2013-2018 \(Chapter B2 Recruitment, Selection and Admissions to HE\)](#);
  - b. QAA Quality Code for Higher Education 2018, Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access;
  - c. Operational & procedural guidance provided by: [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service \(UCAS\)](#);
  - d. UCAS Good Practice Statements;
  - e. The Department for Education postgraduate teacher training route;
  - f. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) guidance (including but not limited to the Bar Standards Board, Solicitors Regulatory Authority, the

Health and Care Professions Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council and the Teaching Regulation Agency).

## 2. Contextual Statement

---

### Fair and Transparent Process

- 2.1 The University's application processes are designed to promote transparency and consistency. They provide equal consideration for all prospective students who apply by the relevant closing date (if applicable), or apply in good time to complete all admissions processes, and meet any relevant external regulatory requirements (including visa requirements) before the start of their course.
- 2.2 The University ensures all promotional materials are accurate, relevant, current, and accessible in order to provide information that will enable prospective students to make informed decisions about their options. On occasion, it is necessary to amend course titles, content or entry criteria after the details have been published and in these circumstances the University will take reasonable steps to ensure the changes are communicated to relevant stakeholders.
- 2.3 All courses have a comprehensive course profile on the University's website, and where applicable a UCAS entry profile, detailing the qualifications, subject knowledge, qualities and skills required for the course along with the details of any non-academic (pre-enrolment) requirements such as the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and Fitness to Practice (FTP) checks.
- 2.4 All courses are required to secure a good match between the abilities and aptitudes of the potential student and the demands of the course, thus leading to the selection of prospective students who can reasonably be expected to complete their studies.

### Widening Participation

- 2.5 The University is committed to developing confident and ambitious graduates equipped to shape society, whatever their background. The University encourages applications from those who have the ability to benefit from the course of study by achieving the standards required for the award.
- 2.6 As part of the University's commitment to widening participation and ensuring fair access, courses encourage applications from a wide range of backgrounds, experience and achievements, and are committed to developing an inclusive community.

### Contextual Data

- 2.7 The University is provided with contextual information to supplement its UCAS data set.
- 2.8 The University undertakes in-depth analysis of data relating to its applicant trends and establishes statistical relationships between prior attainment and subsequent achievement of NTU's widening participation and equality groups. As an institution, NTU recruits a diverse student body and proactively uses contextual data for targeting its outreach and retention initiatives.

# Section 13

## Further information

- Further information can be found in the [University's Access and Participation Plan](#).

## 3. Criteria For Admissions

---

- 3.1 A prospective student may be admitted to an NTU course on the basis of evidence to suggest that he/she/they will be capable of achieving the intended learning outcomes of the course and/or competence in standards required for the award.
- 3.2 Entry requirements are set for each taught course, and will state the basis on which a prospective student will be admitted to the course, by:
- a. listing the specific requirements of all relevant entry qualifications, including number and level of awards, minimum grades or UCAS tariff points and any essential subjects;
  - b. stating whether additional qualifications, experience, skills or competencies are required;
  - c. ensuring that basic admissions requirements for each course are publicised in the prospectus and on the University website.

## Further information

- For research degrees, the admissions criteria are set within [QH Section 11: Research Degrees - Requirements](#).

- 3.3 Prospective students may also be expected to meet other specific requirements in order to be eligible to take up a place, such as performance in an interview. The University retains the right to limit the number of places available on its courses of study.
- 3.4 Admissions staff can consider a wide range of factors when assessing applications including:
- a. Examination grades;
  - b. Skills and experience;
  - c. Personal statements;
  - d. References.

## Further information

- A reference is required for all UCAS and Department for Education (DfE) Teacher Training applications.
- A reference is only required by exception for postgraduate taught courses, and prospective students should refer to the course profile on the website to check for this requirement.

# Section 13

- e. Non-standard entry qualifications, such as vocational qualifications or partial credit;
  - f. Industrial/professional experience;
  - g. Performance at interview;
  - h. Submitted work.
- 3.5 Entry requirements for all courses can be found on the NTU website on the applying tab of the [course profiles](#).
- 3.6 Entry Criteria for all courses are reviewed annually under the University's Entry Criteria Review Process which reviews the operation of the requirements in the previous cycle and any new PSRB requirements.
- 3.7 For UCAS prospective students, offer strategies will be applied equally to prospective students applying through the same entry route (e.g. main cycle, Extra, Adjustment, Clearing). However, different strategies may be used by entry route to enable the University to manage its numbers.

### Further information

- For example, during the main application cycle (deadline of 15 January) the University may require applicants to achieve grades BBC (112 UCAS tariff points) for a particular course and all applicants before the deadline will be given equal consideration against this same strategy. If following 15 January the numbers on a course are limited the University may increase its offer strategy to grades BBB (120 UCAS tariff points) in order to help manage its numbers.

## 4. Responsibility for Admissions

---

- 4.1 The University ensures that the roles of key participants in the admissions process are clearly stated and understood.
- 4.2 The Associate Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment has overall responsibility for the development, operation and monitoring of the University's Admissions Policy. The Admissions Team or admitting School is responsible for its implementation. These operational responsibilities include:
- a. oversight and review of the admissions process across the University to ensure that it continues to support the mission statement and strategic objectives of the University and remains current and valid in light of the changing external environment;
  - b. reviewing the decision-making process and assessment methods (for example the development and use of admissions tests, the use of interviews) to ensure they continue to comply with University guidelines and sector best practice;

# Section 13

- c. ensuring that admissions staff are trained and receive appropriate staff development (both Admissions and School-based) in the admissions decision-making process;
  - d. monitoring the implementation of the policy and instituting change where needed.
- 4.3 The Admissions Team, working in coordination with Academic Registry, Academic Schools, Marketing teams, NTU Global and the International Development Office (IDO), is responsible for policy implementation and specifically for:
- a. coordinating the assessment of all applications and ensuring that all those involved in this process are informed of the policy and procedures of the University, School and course team;
  - b. making arrangements for assessing the suitability of prospective students and liaising with Schools to arrange interviewing where necessary;
  - c. allocating conditional and unconditional offers as appropriate, and communicating these to prospective students via appropriate methods, and ensuring that prospective students are aware of the obligations placed on prospective students at the time of the offer;
  - d. ensuring that successful prospective students receive information on acceptance procedures;
  - e. keeping records confidential;
  - f. liaising with the Executive Deans of School, Course Leaders and course teams during the admissions cycle, and drawing their attention to any developing trends in applications;
  - g. liaising with admissions tutors and University staff involved in the admissions process to ensure that the admissions process is applied consistently throughout the University;
  - h. ensuring that relevant legislative frameworks are complied with in respect to admissions and PSRBs;
  - i. identifying prospective students requiring fee assessment to determine the appropriate fee level of either UK/EU or international fee rates;
  - j. to ensure that prospective students declaring criminal convictions are assessed on their academic suitability before being dealt with under the University's policy and process for self-declared criminal convictions;
  - k. providing general advice and guidance for admission to courses and referring queries to the relevant School as necessary;
  - l. following up non-responses to offers and offers of acceptance.
- 4.4 The NTU Outreach Team within the Centre for Student and Community Engagement (CenSCE) are responsible for liaising and coordinating with external schools, colleges and academies as part of the University's widening participation and recruitment strategies. The Outreach Team delivers an extensive programme of activities designed to help young people access and succeed at university.
- 4.5 The NTU Outreach Team, along with the Success for All Steering Group, are responsible for using, analysing and interpreting relevant data and statistics on

# Section 13

applications, offers and acceptances to ensure that the Admissions Policy is being applied fairly and consistently within the University.

- 4.6 Schools liaise with the Admissions Team to ensure the policy is implemented consistently across the University, and specifically for:
- a. monitoring, analysing and reporting applications and enrolment data to ensure compliance with the University's Equality and Diversity Policy;
  - b. developing and making available the School's policy on feedback to unsuccessful candidates;

### Further information

- The University is committed to providing unsuccessful applicants with useful feedback on their application. All applicants will normally receive a brief reason for their declined decision at the point of decision. However, it is appropriate for Schools to vary their more detailed feedback arrangements dependent on the course, its form of application process and the volume of applications, e.g. the feedback may be 'on demand' or limited in terms of UCAS applications, but routinely provided in more detail for specialised postgraduate courses or for those courses where an additional assessment (such as an interview) is required. Feedback will only be provided to third parties with the explicit permission of the prospective student.
- c. making assessment criteria explicit when using portfolios, admission tests, interviews and/or essays or other forms of assessment as part of the admissions process;
  - d. making explicit how selection decisions are made when applications have comparable qualifications but numbers of places are limited;
  - e. providing feedback to prospective students on Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) outcome decisions;
  - f. informing the Admissions Team of any significant changes to a course after offer of a place and before enrolment is completed, so that students can be advised of the options available to them in the circumstances.
- 4.7 Schools determine the kinds of evidence appropriate for each course; such evidence may take the form of educational qualifications, RPL, appropriate personal qualities, enthusiasm for the subject, or a combination of any of these. In order to ensure the selection procedures are fair and implemented consistently, Schools must give careful consideration to the reliability, relevance and validity of the methods used to gather evidence about a prospective student's merit and potential to succeed.

## 5. Application Processing: Information, Advice and Guidance

---

### Accessible Formats

5.1 The University makes information available in a range of accessible formats.

### Prospective Student Enquiries

5.2 The University has central points of contact for all admissions enquiries regarding [taught courses](#), [research degrees](#), [further education](#) and [apprenticeship](#) courses to ensure consistency in its advice and guidance to prospective students. The University regularly reviews the content of its website to ensure that information is relevant and up to date. It should be noted that advice and guidance is only accurate at the point given, and whilst the University endeavours to 'future proof' advice this is not always possible and PSRB requirements will always take precedence.

### Prospective Student Events

5.3 The University offers several opportunities throughout the application cycle for prospective students to visit the University. These events are designed to enable a range of students (along with their support networks including parents, guardians, teachers and friends) to make informed decisions about the best course for them. Additional information on the student experience at NTU, including information on residential life, practical issues and individual support is also provided to inform prospective student choice.

5.4 The Admissions Team, CenSCE staff or NTU Doctoral School are present at relevant Open Days and prospective student events to offer advice and guidance to applicants and other NTU staff. Where appropriate, the Admissions Team prepare briefing sheets and/or training for staff especially when significant changes are due (e.g. changes to qualifications, new qualifications coming on stream, regulatory changes etc.) ahead of such events to ensure consistency of message.

### Up-to-date Information

5.5 The University recognises that prospective students require information, advice and guidance in a range of different formats. The University endeavours, and takes all reasonable steps, to ensure that printed information is as up-to-date as possible. However, applicants should look to the University's website for the latest course information including full details of course entry requirements.

5.6 The University is committed to ensuring that information on external websites is kept as up to date as possible but cannot be held responsible for information provided by third parties without the explicit consent of the University.

### Unforeseen Circumstances

5.7 In the exceptional circumstances that changes are made to a course during the cycle, the School Management Team in conjunction with the Admissions Team will ensure that all prospective students are informed at the earliest opportunity of any

# Section 13

significant changes to a course made between the time of the offer and completion of the enrolment process, and that they are advised of the options available to them in the circumstances.

- 5.8 On occasion it may be necessary to withdraw completely a course of study as the University deems it is no longer viable to offer that particular course. The University will contact prospective students at the earliest opportunity and where possible offer alternative options within NTU or with other providers if necessary.

## 6. Application Process: General

---

### Accelerated Learning

- 6.1 The University recognises that some prospective students may have taken some qualifications, for example one or more GCSEs, Scottish Highers, AS levels or A-levels earlier in the educational cycle than the norm. Applications are welcomed from these applicants and the University will assess their applications on a case by case basis.

### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Credit Transfer

- 6.2 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is a process for assessing and, as appropriate, recognising prior experiential learning or prior certificated learning for academic purposes. Recognition of prior certificated learning (RPCL) relates to prior learning (such as professional development awards or employment-based awards) which is at higher education level but which has not led to the award of credits or qualifications positioned on the relevant higher education qualifications framework. Recognition of prior experiential learning (RPEL) is a process through which learning achieved outside education or training systems is assessed and, as appropriate, recognised for academic purposes. RPL may allow a student without the formal entry requirements entry to the start of a course. This recognition may also be counted towards the completion of part of a course and the award(s) associated with it (admission with advanced standing). [Quality Handbook Supplement 15C](#) sets out the policy and expectations for the application of RPL.
- 6.3 Credit transfer allows a student to utilise credit awarded by a UK higher-education degree awarding body in accordance with the relevant higher education qualifications framework towards a similar or related course at another university. The University to which the student is applying for credit transfer determines the status of the credit gained and the extent to which it can be utilised in relation to the course the student has applied to study. This process does not guarantee that credit gained will be accepted in part or full by another University but does allow students to potentially utilise existing credit towards another course, thereby making it easier to transfer. [Quality Handbook Supplement 15C](#) sets out the policy and expectations for the application of credit transfer.

### Admission to Particular Awards

- 6.4 In establishing equivalence of qualifications, admissions staff will normally be guided by the published UCAS tariff or the most relevant Government qualification framework.

# Section 13

- 6.5 The University considers all equivalent qualifications, unless there are external regulatory conditions which take precedence, providing they are at the appropriate level of study according to the latest Government framework e.g. Level 2, Level 3 etc. Exceptions are made when the nature of the course applied for requires a breadth and depth of subject knowledge which may not be achieved from an equivalent level qualification which is not of an equivalent size in terms of content and guided learning hours.
- 6.6 After considerable research, the University has reviewed the tariff points awarded to the International Baccalaureate Diploma by the UCAS Tariff Scheme and applies its own [equivalence](#). Prospective students may also be required to meet specific scores for one or more of the six courses of the Diploma to meet the grade requirements for compulsory subject(s) stated for their chosen course.
- 6.7 The University has reviewed the tariff points awarded to the Access to HE Diploma by the UCAS Tariff Scheme and applies its own [equivalence](#). Prospective students may also be required to meet specific grades in specific credits and/or units of the Diploma to meet the grade requirements for compulsory subject(s) stated for their chosen course.
- 6.8 The UCAS Tariff is only applicable to UK regulated qualifications. The University considers international A levels/AS levels/GCSEs as equivalent to UK regulated versions of these qualifications. Where applicable, the UCAS Tariff applied to UK regulated qualifications is used as a basis of equivalence for international versions of these qualifications.
- 6.9 The University does not use the UCAS Tariff for EU/International qualifications, and applies its own equivalence based on in-country experience and knowledge, in conjunction with the International Development Office (IDO) and NTU Global.

## Application Processing Times

- 6.10 The processing time for applications will vary according to the course admissions processes as outlined on the NTU website course profiles. At certain points in the academic cycle the volume of applications received will impact the expected processing times outlined below and the University will make all reasonable efforts to keep prospective students informed.
- 6.11 On average, UCAS applications not requiring an interview, work submission or further information, will be processed in 10 working days. Please note the University is closed between Christmas and New Year.
- 6.12 UCAS or DFE prospective students, subject to interview, work or further information requests, can normally expect to receive a decision in 20 – 40 working days.
- 6.13 Applications for postgraduate, professional or part-time courses are normally processed in 10 working days, although this can also be affected by the nature of the admissions process and the quality of the information received.

## Applying or Requesting Deferred Entry

- 6.14 The University welcomes deferred applications from prospective students, either as part of their initial application or after acceptance, who wish to undertake a 'year out' before commencing their studies, and does not usually require a specific

# Section 13

reason for a deferral. Any fees payable or terms and conditions of offer are as of the year of entry and not the year of application.

- 6.15 Prospective students who have accepted an offer and wish to defer must submit a request to the [Admissions Team](#).
- 6.16 Deferral requests will be considered for most courses; however, where there are space limitations (e.g. placements or allocations from external bodies) a deferral will not always be granted. The Admissions Team will advise prospective students if a deferral is not possible for their chosen degree course.
- 6.17 Deferred applications will be treated equally up until the point of confirmation. However, it may not be possible to allow a prospective student to defer based on the confirmation strategy in the year of application i.e. the entry requirements for the course may be changing in a future year.
- 6.18 Prospective students may only defer on one occasion (for courses with multiple start dates the deferral policy covers one calendar year, and includes research degrees). If the admission entry requirements change for a course once a prospective student has already been allocated a deferred place, the admission entry requirements at the time of acceptance will apply providing they still meet any PSRB requirements.
- 6.19 If a prospective student still wishes to undertake the course after a deferral period has lapsed, a new application will need to be made and they will be assessed against the entry criteria at the time of the new application.
- 6.20 On some occasions, a prospective student may not be granted permission to defer if the University has already published its entry criteria for the following cycle at a higher level or if the applicant has been admitted with qualifications lower than the standard entry criteria (e.g. at confirmation or clearing).
- 6.21 The UCAS Clearing process is for prospective students looking for spaces in the year of application. Prospective students applying through Clearing will only be granted deferred places in exceptional circumstances.

## Decision Errors

- 6.22 The University is committed to ensuring high quality decision making but accepts that on occasion it may accept or reject a prospective student in error.
- 6.23 Where the University rejects a prospective student (who has, in fact, met the conditions as laid down in our entry requirements and/or their offer), it will work with the affected prospective student to rectify its mistake and to minimize any inconvenience. The Admissions Office will liaise with the other departments, including but not limited to Student Accommodation Services, to minimize the impact of any errors.
- 6.24 It will be at the discretion of the University whether applicants rejected, based on information provided by them on their original application form, are reinstated following the receipt of any additional information. Any offers will be subject to the availability of places.
- 6.25 Where the University accepts a prospective student who has failed to meet the academic conditions as laid down in their offer, it will work with the affected prospective students to ensure they understand the academic rigor of the course

# Section 13

and the possible challenges they may face. Where minimum criteria are laid down by a PSRB, the offer may have to be withdrawn and where possible an alternative course offered.

- 6.26 In the case of international students who are accepted in error and do not meet the minimum requirements as laid down by the UKVI, the offer will be withdrawn. Where possible, but only in accordance with UKVI requirements, an alternative course may be offered.

## Entry with Advanced Standing

- 6.27 The term 'advanced standing' applies to prospective students who are requesting entry into the second or later years of a course from a Foundation Degree, HND or other degree/course or using other prior learning or experience (RPL/credit transfer).
- 6.28 Prospective students applying for advanced standing will be asked to provide detailed information of their current experience or relevant qualifications which will be forwarded to the course leader for assessment. The course leader will only make an offer if confident the prospective student has studied the pre-requisite course content required for the year of entry. Applicants under the age of 18 at the start of the course will not be considered for Advanced Standing.
- 6.29 Prospective students applying from partner colleges with Advanced Standing Agreements will be made offers (according to the terms of the agreement), providing they are applying for the exact route articulated in the agreement. If the application is outside of any agreed articulation route it will be considered by a course tutor for compatibility and relevance in the same way as any other prospective student applying for advanced standing.
- 6.30 Prospective students for entry with advanced standing applying for full-time undergraduate courses will need to submit a formal application through UCAS, with one exception outlined in 6.31.
- 6.31 The University has an agreement with partners from Midlands Enterprise Universities to make the process of transferring academic credit more transparent and to support students who are thinking about leaving university or have left university without completing their studies. Under this agreement only, the University will accept Direct applications from full time undergraduate students wishing to transfer their credit to NTU from a partner institution. Further information, including the list of partner institutions is available here: <https://midlandsenterpriseuniversities.co.uk/midlands-credit-compass/>
- 6.32 Current (enrolled) NTU Students applying to transfer courses do not need to apply through UCAS and should contact their School for further information.

## Further information

- For more information on admission with advanced standing using RPL or credit transfer, see [Quality Handbook Supplement 15C](#).

# Section 13

## **Fraudulent Applications**

- 6.33 The University reserves the right to terminate the registration of any student who has failed to disclose information material to the consideration of his/her application, or who provides false or misleading information.
- 6.34 The University has, within the framework of its Admissions Policy, a commitment to minimising the risk of fraudulent applications to its courses. Prospective students to full-time undergraduate courses will normally have their qualifications verified by UCAS and will not normally require independent verification by the University. However, all prospective students whose qualifications have not been verified by a third party will be required to evidence their conditions of offer prior to an unconditional offer being made.
- 6.35 For direct applications to the University (for postgraduate, professional, or part time courses), the Admissions Team or Academic School will undertake its own checks to ensure that results are genuine, including but not limited to using the on-line verifying services provided by examining bodies and if necessary contacting the awarding institution.
- 6.36 Prospective students applying directly to the University who are found to have included fraudulent claims or documentation (e.g. evidence of qualifications or grades) or where the University has been unable to authenticate any element of the application will be presented with the University's findings in writing. They will be given an opportunity to respond and provide further information; however, their application may be withdrawn until further verification can be provided by the prospective student or a validated third party. Applicants who feel that they may have been misjudged have the right of appeal under the Appeals Procedure for applicants.
- 6.37 Where suspected evidence of fraud is identified, the details will be reported to the relevant authorities, for example, the UCAS Fraud & Verification Unit, any relevant professional accrediting body, the UKVI in the case of applications from international students and/or the Student Loans Company.

## **Further Information and Work Requests**

- 6.38 On occasion, the University may need to contact prospective students to request further information to help understand the prospective student's circumstances or require specific information about the prospective student's qualifications, skills and experience to enable a judgement to be made on their eligibility for the course.
- 6.39 Some courses require prospective students to submit work (usually a portfolio of images and/or written work). Any courses requiring a work submission will explicitly state this on the NTU website course profile. The requests for work sent to the applicant will include explicit submission criteria (word count, size of files, number of images etc.) which will be applied consistently to all applicants.
- 6.40 All submissions of work will be assessed against agreed assessment criteria and the weighting given to the work submission will be fair and transparent.
- 6.41 Applicants failing to respond to requests for further work or information by the given deadline will be withdrawn. Requests to reactivate an application will be subject to the availability of places.

# Section 13

## Interview Conduct

- 6.42 The University adheres to the [Good Practice on Interviews](#) produced by Supporting Professionalism in Admissions (SPA) for all of its courses. A summary of the Best Practice for Interviews is available on the Admissions Staff Handbook SharePoint Site and is reviewed annually against its operation in the previous cycle, the findings of any appeals and updated PSRB guidance.
- 6.43 Prospective students with access requirements will be contacted by the relevant academic School to ensure these are discussed ahead of any face to face meetings. Academic Schools will work with Student Support Services to ensure that suitably trained staff are sourced to provide support as required by the prospective student.
- 6.44 Prospective students who feel they are unable to attend an interview are strongly encouraged to contact the academic School to discuss their concerns.

## Near Misses and Alternative Offers

- 6.45 The University will review the results of all prospective students and may on occasion, subject to the availability of places and an assessment of the prospective student's ability to succeed, confirm offers below the publicised entry requirements.

### Further information

- For example, following receipt of the A-level results in August the University may take the decision (on a course by course basis) to offer applicants a place at minus 8 UCAS tariff points thus giving preference to applicants who confirmed the University as their first choice over Clearing applicants.
- 6.46 For some courses, applicants who are not expected to achieve, (at application) or fail to achieve (at confirmation) the required entry requirements, an offer for an alternative course may be made (usually a course with lower entry requirements). Details of the alternative course will be communicated by email to the prospective student at the point the alternative offer is made.

## Unconditional Offers

- 6.47 NTU may make unconditional offers to the following:
- a. Mature applicants with achieved qualifications/experiential learning;
  - b. Students transferring from other institutions after one or more years, thus meeting the conditions for their point of entry;
  - c. Applicants who were made unconditional as a result of a portfolio/interview;
  - d. Applicants who had already achieved the necessary grades in their qualifications;
  - e. Applicants who had pending qualifications when they applied, but received their results prior to August (e.g. IB students, some vocational qualifications).

## Contextual Offers

# Section 13

6.48 The University also makes contextual offers to applicants from disadvantaged backgrounds (using contextual data received via the UCAS form, UCAS MEM group and/or POLAR4 quintile). This is generally a conditional offer up to two grades below our published entry criteria. We view this approach to be in the best interests of students and in support of our commitment to social mobility.

## Previous Study at the University

- 6.49 Prospective students applying for readmission after being withdrawn by the University following the decision of a Board of Examiners will not be readmitted to the same course, nor normally be readmitted to a course in the same School, and in some cases will not be readmitted to the University. Prospective students who were previously withdrawn by the University under any other University policy may not be automatically readmitted to the same course, nor normally be readmitted to a course in the same School, and in some cases will not be readmitted to the University. In all cases the prospective students must submit a new application for consideration. Readmission decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the relevant School, taking into account the circumstances of the student's previous withdrawal. Schools may apply discretion in cases where students were withdrawn under University welfare policies, provided there is confidence that the student is now suitable for readmission.
- 6.50 Current students applying for a course transfer (internally or through UCAS) within or between Academic Schools will normally be expected to pass their current/previous course of study.
- 6.51 Students who have not passed their current/previous NTU course, despite meeting the published entry requirements for the course, may not be re-admitted if they have not demonstrated dedication and commitment to their studies.

## Re-marks and Re-Takes of Qualifications

- 6.52 The University understands that there may be occasions when a prospective student feels the need to appeal the examinations results on which their place is conditional upon. Where the University has already made an admissions decision, in good faith, based on the original mark this decision will stand until official notification of the remark is received.
- 6.53 For UCAS courses the University will do its utmost to reconsider prospective students with remarked grades if the revised grades are received by the UCAS cut off deadline of 31 August. However, it may not always be able to guarantee entry, especially where student number controls are determined by external regulatory bodies or by resource limits at the University (e.g. access to laboratory or workshop space etc.). After the 31 August the University will review each application for reconsideration in conjunction with the availability of places.
- 6.54 If a prospective student, finding themselves in this situation, is holding a room in the University's UPP Halls of Residence or other managed properties, the room will be released until such time as the official notification of the remark is received (and the place confirmed). Where possible, the University will reinstate the original booking or alternatively support the prospective student to find alternative accommodation.

# Section 13

6.55 Where applicants have sat the same qualification in a previous sitting but have achieved a lower grade, the University will normally accept the highest qualification.

## Qualification Verification

6.56 Students applying directly to NTU courses may be required to produce qualification evidence and must send either their original certificates or copies to the University as evidence of their achieved qualification(s) in advance of being made an unconditional offer of a place on their course of study. The student will not be allowed to enrol fully until the verification process has been completed. Prospective students applying for RPL or credit transfer will need to provide copies of their transcripts and modular content of their previous course of study and evidence of relevant work experience if appropriate.

## Terms and Conditions

6.57 All applicants will be sent at 'offer acceptance' (firm and insurance) stage, a link to a PDF copy of the University's terms and conditions which includes the University's regulations by which a student will be expected to abide by should they go on to enrol with the University, including but not limited to:

- a. The Student Handbook;
- b. Academic Regulations;
- c. Student Code of Behaviour;
- d. Fee Payment Conditions;
- e. Equality & Diversity Policy;
- f. Complaints Procedure;
- g. Computer User Regulations;
- h. Intellectual Property Policy for Students;

6.58 Some applicants applying earlier in the cycle may receive the information retrospectively and if any significant changes are made all applicants will be updated.

6.59 In addition to the above, applicants will be expected to abide by course handbooks and codes, rules and regulations of any other relevant organisation or institution (where applicable)

6.60 Applicants applying via UCAS will also be sent the 'key facts' (course fee, module information etc.) about their course at 'offer acceptance' (firm and insurance). Prospective students are strongly advised to print a copy of this for future reference.

6.61 Applicants have a statutory fourteen days from the date of the offer acceptance communication (email) to cancel their place without incurring any financial penalties. However, under the University's [Fee Payment Conditions](#) students (except those applying or enrolled on online distance learning courses) have up to 21 days from the scheduled course start date (of any given academic year) where no tuition fee will be payable for that year in the event of cancellation. (Prospective

# Section 13

students applying or enrolled on online distance learning course should refer to the Fee Payment Conditions for online courses.)

- 6.62 Applicants can cancel their place by emailing the admissions team at [enquiries@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@ntu.ac.uk) or can download the [course cancellation form](#)

## 7. Application Processing: Specific Applicant Groups

---

### Care Leavers (UCAS prospective students only)

- 7.1 Care leavers are defined as prospective students who have been in the care of the Local Authority for a period of 13 weeks or more spanning their 16th birthday. This leads to entitlement to 'aftercare services' until the age of 21 or 24 if in full time higher education.
- 7.2 Prospective students are encouraged to indicate on their UCAS application form if they are care leavers. All applications will be first assessed for academic suitability against the agreed entry criteria for their chosen course. Once an offer is made the University's Student Support Services will contact the prospective student where necessary for further discussion about any specific support needs.

### Disabled Prospective Students

- 7.3 The University is committed to developing an inclusive learning environment for all students and seeks to reduce any barriers that might confront a student with a disability seeking to study at NTU.
- 7.4 Disabled prospective students are encouraged to declare their support needs at application stage. All applications are assessed for academic suitability against the agreed entry criteria for their chosen course.
- 7.5 Once an offer is made, the University's Student Support Services will contact the prospective student to provide information about provisions that can be made available and for further discussions about specific support requirements. This is to ensure that any necessary reasonable adjustments are in place for the start of their studies and to ensure a smooth transition into life as a student at the University. This will include arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction.
- 7.6 Most disabled prospective students will be admitted to a course using the same entry criteria as any other prospective student; however, adjustment to entry criteria may be made where it can be shown that a disabled prospective student will be capable of meeting the course's learning outcomes. The University offers tailored guidance for disabled applications and this is available in alternative formats from the [Disability Support Service Team](#).
- 7.7 The admissions procedure for disabled prospective students aims to ensure that:
- applications indicating support or access requirements are given the consideration they require in an effective and timely way, taking into account the prospective students' views and using the specialist expertise available within Student Support Services;
  - the University meets all obligations under current Equality legislation;
  - disabled prospective students are made aware that the disability information provided by them will be used as part of the process of determining any

# Section 13

- particular access and support arrangements that may be required and are given the opportunity to discuss their requirements prior to entry;
- d. there is no unnecessary delay in the processing of offers;
  - e. any information disclosed is handled securely and confidentially whether at the application stage or any other stage of the student life cycle;
  - f. the University follows the necessary steps to enable the prospective student to make an alternative choice of course or institution if an offer cannot be made for reasons related to their disability.

## **Safeguarding and Support for Minors and Vulnerable Adults**

- 7.8 The University is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students studying at the University, but takes additional steps in relation to those aged under eighteen years of age who are considered children in English law.
- 7.9 The University requires parental/carer consent before admitting any student who will be under the age of eighteen at the point of enrolment. These prospective students are therefore identified as part of the application process and both the prospective student and the parent or carer are asked to sign and return a confirmation or consent form. However, if a prospective student is living independently from their parents and can evidence their independent living status, the University will not require parental consent.
- 7.10 The content of some modules and courses at university can sometimes include legitimate themes, discussions or viewing of films rated 18, which could be considered of an adult nature. Where students under the age of eighteen are enrolled on a course of study, course leaders will be made aware of their presence and asked to adapt their approach as appropriate.
- 7.11 Students under the age of eighteen whose parent/carer is not based in the UK are required to provide details of a UK based guardian who can act as a contact in the event of an emergency. The UK based guardian can be a nominated friend or relative living in the UK, or a guardian appointed through a guardianship organisation who offer such services.
- 7.12 Schools are responsible for making the student's academic tutor and course leader aware of minors enrolled on their courses and course leaders are responsible for amending content appropriately. The School Administration Managers have access to an Under 18 report on the COGNOS dashboard to help inform this process.
- 7.13 The details of students' parent/guardian contact details for students under the age of 18 at the start of each academic year will be indexed on the University's Student Record system.
- 7.14 It is the responsibility of the Executive Dean to ensure that prospective students whose parent or carers are non-UK based have an appropriate UK based guardian appointed from induction. Prospective students without an appropriate guardian may be withdrawn from their studies until the situation can be resolved.
- 7.15 Further details on **safeguarding and support for minors, vulnerable adults, and other groups** are available on our website: [Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Policy](#)

## **Mitigating Circumstances**

# Section 13

7.16 The University recognises that a prospective student's pending or achieved qualifications may be affected circumstances beyond their control.

7.17 The University understands that prospective students can experience significant interruptions to their studies, due to circumstances outside of their control. These circumstances may include illness or bereavement, resulting from existing medical conditions and disabilities, or be as a result of difficult home situations.

- a. For chronic (long-term) medical conditions or disabilities (including learning difficulties), the University would normally expect that reasonable adjustments would have already been put in place to support you throughout your studies.
- b. For short to medium term health or personal issues, the University would expect that these types of extenuating or mitigating circumstances are reported via the special consideration processes, offered by the various Examination Board(s) or Awarding Bodies.

7.18 The University is happy to consider individual requests for exceptional mitigating circumstances, providing the request is made by the applicant or with their full knowledge / consent. Requests from third parties (including the UCAS-nominated contact) will not be considered without the explicit consent of the applicant. By exceptional, the University is mainly referring to circumstances that have had an on-going impact for several months, including but not limited to:

- the serious illness or death of a parent, sibling or partner;
- extended hospitalisation following unexpected illness;
- serious domestic disturbance;
- victim of crime.

The University reserves the right to make a judgement about whether these circumstances should have been dealt with by prior mitigating processes, and whether it believes it has impacted an applicant's education as described. In some cases, and regardless of the seriousness of the circumstances, the University may not be able to make an offer or confirm a place.

7.19 The University is unable to consider requests, including but not limited to:

- teaching, learning or assessment irregularities (including, but not limited to, teacher absence, use of supply teachers, curriculum teaching errors, interruptions to timed assessments, transport issues travelling to assessments, and IT issues relating to work)
- existing medical conditions or disabilities
- common personal or family circumstances (including, but not limited to, the bereavement of grand-parents, parental separation or divorce, relationship break-ups).

7.20 For a small number of students who do not meet their offer but provide strong evidence of exceptional circumstances, the University may be able to offer a place providing there is clear evidence that the student is capable of achieving the intended learning outcomes of the course and/or competence in standards required for the award. Examples of evidence will vary depending on the circumstances of the request, and may include but not be limited to:

# Section 13

- Requests relating to significant unexpected illness – a medical note or letter from the student’s doctor/consultant, which must clearly state the dates the illness impacted the student’s education or assessments.
  - Requests relating to extreme personal circumstances – a letter from a third party such as a doctor, teacher or other professional (police, social worker etc).
- 7.21 The University may be unable to take into account mitigating circumstances which are brought to its attention after a decision has already been made.
- 7.22 All requests for mitigating circumstances must be submitted by the applicant (or with their full knowledge) on the University’s Mitigating Circumstances Notification Form (which for applicants in further education must be countersigned by the School).
- 7.23 By submitting a request, applicants are consenting to their information being shared with members of the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. Furthermore, where circumstances are likely to be on-going in nature (and have not been declared as a disability previously) shared with the University’s Student Support Services, please be assured that all information is kept securely and will in no way reflect negatively on a student’s application.
- 7.24 For consistency, requests for consideration of mitigating circumstances for taught courses are dealt with by the University’s Mitigating Circumstances Panel, made up of the Associate Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment, Head of Admissions and Applicant Services and/or a nominated experienced Admissions Associate, and representation from the School and/or Student Support Services.
- 7.25 All correspondence regarding requests for mitigating circumstances will be directly with the applicant.
- 7.26 Where possible, students will be informed of the outcome of their request for mitigating circumstances before Confirmation (for UCAS students the main Confirmation period is the three weeks leading up to A-level results day). However, decisions prior to receiving achieved results may not always be possible and students should check their UCAS Track or Applicant Portal for updates.
- 7.27 The University will make best efforts to reach a decision quickly following the receipt of the results. However, for some more complex cases the University may require further information or the panel may need to convene to discuss the student’s case in more detail.
- 7.28 The University will not normally confirm applicants (regardless of the circumstances) who achieve below Confirmation or Clearing Tariff points.
- 7.29 The University will not normally accept requests for mitigating circumstances from applicants applying through Clearing regardless of the circumstances.
- 7.30 Students applying for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account who either meet their conditions of offer, or are accepted, should make themselves aware of the University’s ‘Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure’ and ‘Crisis Intervention Policy – Students at Risk or Causing Concern’.

## Scholarships

# Section 13

- 7.31 The University provides a limited number of Scholarships to new students and these are advertised via the NTU website and also where applicable information is sent to targeted groups of applicants (e.g. by school, residency, level of course etc.). Further information about the University's [Scholarships](#) can be found on the University website.
- 7.32 Applicants will be informed in writing, of the outcome of any scholarship application and must accept the offer by the given deadline. Applicants can apply for more than one scholarship scheme; however, they would not normally be allowed to accept more than one offer.

## Transition

- 7.33 The University recognises that the transition to University, which may or may not involve a move away from a student's usual support networks, can be quite challenging for some students.
- 7.34 The targeted communications plans will keep prospective students informed of the progress of their application and with details of any relevant pre-enrolment checks they may need to complete before arriving at University.
- 7.35 Schools and Marketing teams will contact all new students who have accepted a place to provide them with the details for enrolment, registration, and induction. This includes providing further information about their course team, pre-reading and equipment lists, 'Starting at NTU' website, timetable information and Welcome Week activities. Prospective students starting at key non-standard start dates (e.g. January) will also be contacted with relevant information.
- 7.36 The University organises a series of transition events designed to help new students settle into the University environment. Further information about activities can be found on the Starting at NTU and International Students websites.

## 8. Application Processing: International Student Admission

---

### Academic Technology Approval Scheme

- 8.1 The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) requires all international students subject to existing UK immigration permissions, who are applying to study for a postgraduate qualification in certain sensitive subjects, knowledge of which could be used in programmes to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) or their means of delivery, to apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate before they can study in the UK.
- 8.2 The requirement for an ATAS certificate applies to all students whose nationality is outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland, irrespective of country of residence at the point of application.
- 8.3 A letter to support an application for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate will be issued to a prospective student on request or at the point of application. The University requires a copy of the certificate on record before the

# Section 13

issue of a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS); therefore, the ATAS certificate will be requested as a condition of offer.

## Admission Requirements For International Students

- 8.4 In addition to a completed application form, international prospective students will be required to submit the following documentation:
- All relevant academic transcripts and certificates from previous studies (original copies and certified English translations where appropriate);
  - English language test results (if appropriate);
  - A reference/letter of recommendation (where a reference is required it is the responsibility of the prospective student to ensure this is sent to the University);
  - Personal statement or supporting information;
  - A copy of their current passport and any in date immigration documents (or past immigration documents showing previous UK study);
  - Prospective students who are identified as International for fee purposes will be required to pay an advanced payment of £6000 or the full fee (if less than £6000) unless they provide an official sponsorship letter for the course fees.

## Assessment of International Applications

- 8.5 International applications are assessed using the same entry criteria as all other applications in addition to confirmation that English language requirements are met. Some applications may require further consideration through other assessment methods such as a telephone interview, an in-country interview, submission of written work, completion of an admissions test or alternates. Where this is the case, full details will be provided to the prospective student.
- 8.6 Prospective students classed as overseas for fee purposes are advised to check their immigration or visa status before applying.

## Educational Agents

- 8.7 The University works with a number of Educational Agents located in-country who are contracted by the University to recruit students for courses of study. The University is committed to working with agents who are well-respected, competent and knowledgeable (about the UK education system) and who have a good reputation for providing high quality students.
- 8.8 Educational agents are recruited according to the agreed University regulations and policy. The operation and performance of agents is regularly reviewed and agents are given explicit information about the University's expectations of them. Agents that do not meet the expected standards, as outlined in the policy, will have their contracts terminated.
- 8.9 For international prospective students who apply through an Agent who has formal ties to the University, it will be assumed the prospective student's consent has been given to send all communications to both the prospective student and the nominated Agent.

# Section 13

## Further information

- Further information about the policy of recruitment and monitoring of Educational Agents is available on request from the University's International Development Office (IDO).

## English Language Entry Requirements

- 8.10 Prospective students whose first language is not English need to provide evidence of English language proficiency. The University will normally make an assessment of a prospective student's first language based on the information provided on the application form, including (but not limited to) country of origin, country of permanent residency and qualifications.
- 8.11 The standard University requirement for taught courses is IELTS 6.5 with a minimum of 5.5 in each element (or equivalent). For all research degrees, the standard University requirement is IELTS 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each element (or equivalent). A full list of course requirements and agreed exceptions can be found on the [international section of the website](#).
- 8.12 The University reserves the right to change the English Language Requirements depending on the performance of students, due to the access or availability of test centres and due to regulatory changes.

## In-country Offer Making

- 8.13 The University's IDO staff, as well as dedicated academics, are mandated to recruit students whilst working away on behalf of the University. The recruitment may take place at, but not be limited to, organised Recruitment Fairs, Educational Agent's Offices or through activity in conjunction with the British Council or other interested parties.
- 8.14 An offer made remotely from the University in the applicant's country of residency is usually referred to as an 'in-country offer'.
- 8.15 An in-country offer allows the applicant to receive an immediate offer and the application processing is fast tracked by the Admissions Team. The applicant's details are provided to the Admissions Team who send a formal offer email and ensure that copies of the required documentation (including UKVI documents) are received and indexed on the University Admissions System.
- 8.16 All in country offers are subject to the same regulations as standard offer making and are checked by the Admissions Team for consistency.
- 8.17 Training, along with detailed documentation, is provided by the IDO to all IDO staff and academics who use this process in-country.

## International Qualification Equivalences

- 8.18 Advice and information on the comparability of international qualifications is compiled from a range of sources, including National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), Educational Agents, British Council and insight from country visits. The agreed equivalences are stored centrally and are accessible for

# Section 13

the Admissions Team and University's IDO to access for consistent information, advice and guidance.

- 8.19 Applications which are referred to the School for a decision include information from this central source to help academic staff make informed and consistent decisions.

## Visa Information

- 8.20 The University complies with the Home Office UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI) [student visa requirements \(formerly Tier 4\)](#) for international students.
- 8.21 The University is obliged to check that all international prospective students applying to the University are eligible to study on their chosen course according to the conditions of their immigration status and/or visa.
- 8.22 International students wishing to apply for a student visa will be issued with a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) once they have completed the admissions process. Only prospective students, who have met all the conditions of their offer, including making an advance payment, can be issued with a CAS.
- 8.23 The University is required to report to the UKVI when a student holding a student visa fails to enrol on their course within the enrolment period. The University is also required to maintain up-to-date contact details for students and hold copies of all relevant passport and visa documents. Immigration documents will be collected as part of the enrolment process at the start of the course. Documents must be presented in their original format within the enrolment period. Students who fail to provide the required documents within the timescales specified will be reported to the UKVI.

## Enhanced Admission Checks to Support UKVI Compliance

- 8.24 The University is committed to admitting only those students who have a genuine intention to study. Where a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) compliance risk is identified, such as a high rate of visa refusals or non-enrolment from applicants resident in a specific country, the University may apply additional conditions prior to enrolment to safeguard its UKVI sponsor licence. These additional conditions may include:
- An online interview with a University representative;
  - Linking the application to one of our contracted overseas agents;
  - Full payment of the first year's tuition fees before a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is issued;
  - Withholding or withdrawing an offer or CAS where necessary.

## 9. Application Processing: Self-declared Criminal Convictions And Disclosure And Barring Service And Other Checks

### Criminal Convictions

# Section 13

- 9.1 Whilst operating an admissions system committed to equality of opportunity, the University must consider the welfare of all students and staff and any possible risk to them, when considering allowing prospective students with known convictions to study on University premises.
- 9.2 Where an applicant applies to a course leading to certain professions or occupations exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974), such as teacher training or social work, they are asked to declare whether they have any criminal convictions, including spent convictions, that are not filtered. This is a mandatory question, and students who apply for these courses will be subject to a DBS check before they start the course. Students who apply for other courses will not be asked a question about criminal convictions as part of the application process.
- 9.3 All applications are initially assessed for academic suitability against agreed admission criteria for their chosen course. If a prospective student has declared a criminal conviction, the University will contact the prospective student for further information about their convictions when an offer is being considered. No further action will be taken for applicants who are not academically suitable for admission.
- 9.4 Students will be required to declare any unspent relevant convictions as part of the enrolment process but not as part of the admissions process (unless their course is covered by 9.2). This will be communicated to applicants in advance, to ensure that if they can declare prior to this if they wish to do so, and that there may be a risk that their place is withdrawn if they are not risk assessed in an appropriate timeframe.
- 9.5 At the point of acceptance, an email communication will be sent, advising that unspent, relevant convictions can be declared in confidence to [disclosures@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:disclosures@ntu.ac.uk) and will be given the named contact of the Compliance Officer. Relevant convictions will be defined as:
  - e. Any kind of violence including (but not limited to) threatening behaviour, offences concerning the intention to harm or offences which resulted in actual bodily harm;
  - f. Offences listed in the Sexual Offences Act 2003;
  - g. The unlawful supply of controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking;
  - h. Offences involving firearms;
  - i. Offences involving arson;
  - j. Offences listed in the Terrorism Act 2006; and
  - k. Offences of human trafficking, slavery and forced labour.
- 9.6 Students taking part in University services, such as accommodation or the Students Union, may be asked to declare as part of this process. This will be separate to the Admissions process. Any decisions relating to information declared through any question will be in relation to the student's suitability to participate in that particular function and not their suitability to study.
- 9.7 If anonymous information regarding applicants and criminal convictions is received this is treated with caution and will only be followed up if there are reasonable grounds to do so.

# Section 13

- 9.8 Applicants who are found to have intentionally omitted information about a criminal conviction from their application will be dealt with in line with our fraudulent applications process (see paragraph 6.29).
- 9.9 Information regarding convictions is requested for certain courses so that an application can be considered fully and will not be used for any other purpose. The information provided will be held confidentially, however, where a prospective student applies for a course that may involve placements working with children/vulnerable adults, or the course is governed by an external accreditation body such as the Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC), the information prospective students provide may be shared with the relevant placement provider prior to an offer being made. Students applying for Social Work courses will be considered by the School of Social Sciences Suitability Panel chaired by the Executive Dean of School.
- 9.10 Prospective students may be withdrawn if they fail to respond to requests for further information or where the University is unable to obtain information from nominated references through no fault of its own.
- 9.11 On receipt of further information (and providing the conviction is not spent) the application will be reviewed by a designated Compliance Officer who will determine whether it needs to be referred to the Serious Criminal Conviction Panel. For minor 'relevant' offences the decisions may be made by the designated admissions manager and/or Compliance Officer.
- 9.12 Prospective students with serious criminal convictions, usually defined by a custodial sentence (suspended or otherwise), will be referred to the Serious Criminal Conviction Panel (SCCP). The SCCP is made up of the Associate Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment, Head of Admissions and Applicant Services, Executive Dean of the admitting School, Head of Student Support Services, Student Community and Liaison Manager (who forms part of the Accommodation department) and the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar.
- 9.13 For students applying to NTU under the Admissions Policy but attending at another organisation (e.g. Confetti Institute of Creative Technologies), a senior member of staff from the relevant organisation will be consulted as part of any risk assessment process.
- 9.14 The Chief Operating Officer and Registrar, as the Vice Chancellor's nominated representative, is responsible for chairing the panel and the final decisions rests with the Chair.
- 9.15 The University strongly believes that students entering Higher Education have a responsibility to demonstrate a change to their previous behaviours under their own recognisance. Therefore, the University reserves the right to decline applicants with relevant convictions who are still serving their sentence, who are possibly subject to probation or licence conditions or the end of their supervised period is close to their course start date.
- 9.16 Students wishing to appeal an admissions decision based on a criminal conviction risk assessment should do so through the appeals procedure outlined below.

## Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

# Section 13

- 9.17 For some courses, usually in the areas of health, teaching and social work, prospective students will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at confirmation but before commencement on their course. For courses requiring an Enhanced DBS check, prospective students will be required to declare all convictions including convictions, cautions, admonitions, reprimands, final warnings, bind over orders or similar, including those classified as 'spent' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 that would display on an enhanced disclosure.
- 9.18 Applicants who do not reside in the UK will also be requested to provide police/criminal record checks from the country in which the applicant lives.
- 9.19 The University will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that prospective students for courses have completed the DBS process before starting their course. Where it is unable to do so, for example, due to delays with DBS processing, a late offer or the late receipt of results, the prospective student may be allowed to commence their studies but will only be allowed to 'conditionally enrol' until the clearance has been received.
- 9.20 Students who are only conditionally enrolled will be checked where appropriate against the Barred List (on-line register of people barred from working with children or vulnerable adults) before the start of their course. Once on placement, relevant students will be subject to strict conditions of supervision by the placement provider.
- 9.21 Students who fail to complete the actions required to submit the form to the Government's Disclosure and Barring Service will be automatically withdrawn under the University's Enrolment Conditions (terms and conditions 4.5) normally two weeks after the course start date (excluding Welcome Week).
- 9.22 Prospective students who are cleared following an enhanced DBS check will be allowed to complete the enrolment process on their chosen course providing they have met all other outstanding conditions of offer.
- 9.23 For prospective students whose DBS certificate contains content not previously reviewed through the 'self-declared' criminal convictions process (as above), the prospective student will be processed accordingly and may be referred to the Serious Criminal Conviction Panel for a suitability decision.
- 9.24 Prospective students who fail to declare relevant convictions, at the earliest opportunity, may be withdrawn from their course or be unable to qualify for their course of study.
- 9.25 Any student who gains a conviction after receiving an offer or after enrolment is required to bring this to the Universities attention.
- 9.26 The University uses an external company, **First Advantage**, to undertake all its DBS checks.

## **Health and Fitness and Other Fit to Practice Assessments**

- 9.27 For certain professional or vocational qualifications, usually in the areas of education, health and social care, the University requires prospective students to complete a health declaration and or a medical screening questionnaire. In some cases, prospective students will be referred to an Occupational Health Unit to determine the suitability for their chosen course.

# Section 13

- 9.28 The requirement for a health and fitness assessment will be clearly outlined on the course profiles section of the NTU website.
- 9.29 For teaching courses students will be required to undertake checks as required by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), including but not limited to, Prohibition Order and Childcare Disqualification checks.
- 9.30 Students who fail to complete the actions required within two weeks (excluding Welcome Week) will be automatically withdrawn under the University's terms and conditions (4.5).
- 9.31 All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

### **Suitability Panel for Prospective Social Work Students**

- 9.32 The University adheres to the guidelines and good practice of the HCPC and as such the School of Social Sciences operates a Suitability Panel for prospective social work students. Prospective students for Social Work courses with declared criminal convictions will be considered by the panel for their suitability for both the course and profession before being made an offer.
- 9.33 The Suitability Panel will also assess the professional suitability of prospective students with serious health issues or local social care service users as declared on the suitability declaration form completed prior to interview.
- 9.34 Decisions of the Social Work Suitability Panel, where relevant, will need to be ratified by the Chair of the Serious Criminal Conviction Panel.

## **10. Application Processing: Fees And Funding**

---

### **Fee Assessment**

- 10.1 It is the responsibility of individual Higher Education Institutions to assess the fee status of potential students. In most cases, the University will be able to determine a prospective students' fee status on the basis of information provided on their application form. However, where this is not possible, a formal fee assessment process is carried out to determine their fee in line with the 'The Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007' and 'The Education (Fees and Awards) (England) Regulations 2007 (Amendments) Regulations 2011'.
- 10.2 Prospective students who fail to provide the necessary information to allow a full fee assessment will be defaulted to overseas fees until such time they provide the necessary evidence to assess a change of status. If the prospective student fully enrolls, they will be deemed to have accepted the default assessment and changes will be at the discretion of the Executive Dean upon submission of the appropriate evidence of home fee status.
- 10.3 Appeals against fee status must be made within three months of the fee assessment having been carried out or at the point of enrolment, whichever comes first.
- 10.4 An appeal will not be processed retrospectively after enrolment on a course.

# Section 13

- 10.5 Students wishing to know their fee status before making an application can do so by reviewing the criteria shown on the UK Council for International Student Affairs ([UKCISA](#)) website.
- 10.6 The University reserves the right to amend a fee status if further information comes to light and changes will take with immediate effect.
- 10.7 The University will assess a prospective student's fee rate as of the first date of the first academic year. Further information about the definition of the 'first date of the first academic year' can be found on the UKCISA website.
- 10.8 The University will only reassess a student's fee rate mid-course if they meet the criteria as outlined in the regulations. Further information can be found on the UKCISA website.

## 11. Appeals

---

### Applicant Appeals/Complaints Procedure

- 11.1 The University is committed to the provision of an admissions service to all prospective students which is fair, efficient and transparent. However, the University recognises that there may be instances where a prospective student feels aggrieved with the University's admissions decisions or processes and wishes to bring their concerns to our attention either formally or informally.
- 11.2 This Procedure is for the use by applicants applying for admission to the University (where the admissions procedure is the sole responsibility of the University) and should not be confused with the complaints procedure for students which is not open to applicants.
- 11.3 The University, where possible and whilst being sensitive to the concerns of the prospective student, will aim to deal with issues informally. Many issues can be dealt with appropriately in this manner and the University's appeals procedure has been designed with this in mind. This is not to say they will be treated with less importance and will still form an important part of the University's regular review of its service delivery.
- 11.4 Any Appeal will be handled in isolation from the application and will not prejudice current or future applications.
- 11.5 The University will only normally accept an Appeal directly from the prospective student, unless a third party has the explicit consent to act on their behalf.
- 11.6 Prospective students who feel that they have grounds for Appeal should raise the matter within 10 working days' of the last action action/correspondence or admission decision of the University.
- 11.7 For the purposes of this procedure an Appeal is defined as a request from an unsuccessful prospective student to review the outcome of an admissions decision and should only be submitted on the following grounds:
  - a. they can demonstrate/evidence that the University has deviated from its own policy, procedures and practice; or

# Section 13

- b. further information, which was not available at the time of application, is presented to the University; or
  - c. there is a perception or indication that the prospective student has been treated differently to another applicant in a similar situation.
- 11.8 The high level of competition for some courses means that it is unavoidable that the University will disappoint some prospective students with a selection decision. It should be noted that prospective students have no right of appeal against decisions that are based on the academic or professional judgement of the University about suitability for admission. For example, academic judgement may be used to determine the suitability of prior learning (accredited or otherwise) for entry in lieu of formal qualifications, or an assessment of the suitability of subject knowledge from less traditional qualifications.

### Procedure for Submitting an Appeal/Complaint

- 11.9 **Stage 1:** request for feedback or clarification: Before submitting an Appeal a prospective student should normally contact the [Admissions Office](#), by telephone or in writing, to request feedback or to discuss their concerns.
- Stage 2:** Appeal: Before submitting an Appeal, the prospective student should ensure that they have read the grounds outlined above. An Appeal should be submitted in writing to the [Head of Admissions and Applicant Services](#).
- Stage 3:** Where the prospective student remains dissatisfied with the outcome at Stage 2, the prospective student may request a review of the Stage 2 decision. The prospective student must provide clear reasons/evidence for requesting a review (for example, evidencing that information had not been taken into account at Stage 2). The outcome of Stage 3 will be considered final and therefore the prospective student is unable to take the matter further with the University. A review can be requested in writing to the [Associate Director of Admissions and Student Recruitment](#).
- 11.10 As a minimum guideline an Appeal (Stage 2) should include the following information:
- a. Prospective student name and any relevant application reference numbers provided either by the University or third parties such as UCAS;
  - b. Contact details;
  - c. Details of the grounds for the Appeal;
  - d. Any further information that the prospective student feels relevant to their case.
- 11.11 An acknowledgement of an Appeal (Stage 2) or Review of an Appeal (Stage 3) will normally be made within five working days. The [Head of Admissions and Applicant Services](#) or their nominee, will investigate in conjunction with any relevant School(s) or Department(s) and the outcome will be communicated within 10 working days from acknowledgement. If for any reason these timescales for response cannot be met, the prospective student will be updated of expected timescales within the 10 working days from acknowledgement.

# Section 13

11.12 Where the Appeal relates to a selection decision, and is upheld, the University cannot guarantee admissions to the academic year initially requested, however where possible an alternative point of entry may be offered.

## 12. Applicant Behaviour

---

12.1 The University expects that all interactions between prospective students, students, supporters and staff will be conducted with mutual understanding and respect. Any unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and may prejudice an application or appeal. The expected standards of behaviour include all interactions and communications, including social media.

12.2 Applicants and prospective students are expected:

- a. To be considerate and respectful to the needs of fellow prospective students, students and staff of the University;
- b. To comply with reasonable requests or instructions from members of University staff;
- c. To conduct themselves appropriately in all forms of communication, including personal social media and when using official NTU social media groups;
- d. Not to submit false claims against other prospective or current members of the NTU community in order to actively discredit an individual.

12.3 Any behaviour which fails to meet the University's stated expectations (above) in respect of applicant behaviour, or which otherwise damages the University, or its reputation, can be considered a breach of these expectations.

12.4 In exceptional cases, where the seriousness of the behaviour has breached accepted norms, further action may be taken including, but not limited to, withdrawing an offer and cancelling an accommodation application.

12.5 For UCAS prospective students, where inappropriate behaviour leads to the withdrawal of any offer, the University will report its actions to UCAS.

12.6 In exceptional circumstances, the University may feel morally or legally obliged to report its findings to other authorities.

## 13. Monitoring Governance

---

13.1 The University keeps its admissions policy and procedures under regular review and monitoring.

13.2 On behalf of Academic Board, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee (ASQC) will monitor the policy and procedures set out in this section and ensure that they continue to support the strategic objectives of the University, and remain current and valid in the light of changing circumstances. The University Research Degrees Committee (URDC) will undertake the same actions on behalf of Academic Board for research degrees.

13.3 It is the Head of Admissions and Applicant Services' responsibility to ensure appropriate governance of the Admissions Policy working in conjunction with key

# Section 13

stakeholders, including but not limited to School Standards and Quality Managers, School Administration Managers and the International Development Director.

- 13.4 The Policy is reviewed on an annual cycle and approved by ASQC each year for operation in the application cycle immediately following.
- 13.5 The Policy is reviewed in light of its operation in the current cycle (including applied learning from complaints or issues which may have arisen), any new or upcoming PSRB requirements or good practice statements by bodies such as SPA and the QAA.
- 13.6 This policy is operational for a full academic cycle starting in the October of each year.
- 13.7 This Policy is operated in conjunction with the following policies and good practice guidelines, including:
  - a. [QH Section 11 - Research Degrees - Requirements](#)
  - b. [QH Supplement 13A – Admissions: taught course guidance](#)
  - c. [QH Supplement 13B – Application process for Further Education courses](#)
  - d. [QH Supplement 15C – Recognition of Prior Learning](#)
  - e. University Terms and Conditions
  - f. Advanced Payment Policy for International Students
  - g. NTU’s Good Practice for Interviews & other pre-admission activity (Admissions Staff Handbook).
  - h. NTU’s Good Practice for Admissions Tutors (Admissions Staff Handbook).
  - i. NTU’s Access and Participation Plan
  - j. NTU’s Selection Policy for Agents.

# Section 13

# Section 13

<b>Policy owner</b>
Admissions

<b>Change history</b>			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2016	30.09.16	01.10.16	Clearer rules on applicants with previous study Confirmation of the 'terms and conditions of offer acceptance' Addition of new mitigating circumstances provision
Sept 2017	12.09.17	01.10.17	Updated information on Criminal Convictions
Dec 2017	06.12.17	04.01.18	Updated terminology – appeals process not complaints process. Updated 6.43 to include readmission following removal by board of examiners or other university policy.
Sept 2018	10.10.18	10.10.18	None
Sept 2018	N/A	28.03.19	Update to contact details in para. 11.12
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	Routine updating Clarified requirement for references for different types of courses
Feb 2020	06.02.20	06.02.20	Updated to align with the new Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) policy set out in Quality Handbook Supplement 15C. Changes include updates to terminology and definitions, and removal of detailed process (covered in the accompanying Supplement). Inclusion of institutional approach to unconditional and contextual offers and updating of policy relating to self-declared criminal convictions and DBS (and other) checks.
Nov 2020	24.01.21	01.03.21	Removal of references to Colleges. Updates to reflect move of responsibility and policy for Doctoral admissions to Doctoral School and new RPL policy. Updated references to relevant supplements. New section 12.1-12.6 Applicant Behaviour. Update to Fee Assessment section.
Nov 2021	08.11.21	08.11.21	None
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Oct 2023	30.10.23	30.10.23	Removal of references to UCAS Teacher Training.
May 2024	17.05.24	21.05.24	Update to 8.4f relating to advanced payments of international fees.
Jan 2025	10.01.25	10.01.25	Links updated.
Feb 2025	28.02.25	28.02.25	Minor update to section on safeguarding.
June 2025	25.06.25	25.06.25	Inclusion of section on enhanced admission checks to support UKVI Compliance.

<b>Equality Impact Analysis</b>		
<i>Version:</i>	<i>EA date:</i>	<i>Completed by:</i>
Sept 2016	10.10.2014	CADQ